

**CGYG-LIFE Marriage-Family Life group**  
**Session 4: (June 11, 2011)**  
**Raising Children, part 2**

**Recap of previous session:**

- The goal of parenting: Godliness - “Has not the Lord made them one?... And why one? **Because He was seeking godly offspring...**” (Malachi 2:15)
  - all other goals/ambitions we may have for our children need to be subservient to this one
  - requires intentional effort in our own lives, and in the ordering of our family life
  
- Training and instruction/education of children
  - primary responsibility for educating children lies with the parents, **not** with the state, school or church
    - these can be helpful, but ultimate responsibility lies with the parents
  
  - most instruction in Scripture regarding teaching children deals with issues of character/training in godliness
  
  - our responsibility as parents is not limited just to instruction about “spiritual” things
    - e.g. responsible for providing sufficient education for kids so they can make a living; teaching wisdom for all aspects of life
  
  - training & instruction includes both “formal” and “informal” instruction – both should be age-appropriate
    - “**informal**” instruction – not necessarily structured or planned, but takes place by example, and as opportunities arise in the ebb & flow of life; includes teaching basic life skills (e.g. Deut. 6:7)
      - but it does take intentional effort to structure your lives so that opportunities can arise, and to take the opportunities as they arise
        - the examples you set as parents → are you demonstrating wisdom and godliness?
        - ordering family life in a way that shows that God is the priority → What are the priorities in your family life family? Does the way you spend time & money show your kids that God is central?
        - requires being available and having time to spend together, to talk & develop relationships
        - requires an awareness of what the influences are in your children’s lives
        - requires that you are sufficiently grounded yourself to be able to answer your kids’ questions
  
- “**formal**” instruction – structured/planned times of teaching
  - within the home**
    - Scripture memorization**
      - “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119:11)
      - start early – can start at age 2-3 (or younger for some) – tremendous capacity for remembering
      - start with simpler verses & work your way up to passages/chapters
      - include Scriptures on who God is, Creation, sin, redemption & the plan of salvation, holy living, etc.
  
    - Family devotions** & other times of teaching (e.g. table talk – combination of formal/informal)
      - regular time(s) set aside daily for Bible reading & instruction, worship, prayer
        - preferably led by father, as head of the family
        - may be brief with young children (5-10 minutes); longer with older children
        - for younger children, children’s Bible stories; for older, Bible passages with explanation/discussion
        - singing/worship – may need to teach younger children songs by memory; songbooks/hymnbooks helpful with older children
        - prayer – open prayer time, with time for requests
  
  - supplement to, not a replacement for, personal devotions (both for parents and children)

### -“**home schooling**”

- start developing your child’s mind early, even before starting anything too structured
  - e.g. playing, music, reading, Scripture memory, social interactions, other learning activities
- toddler/preschool years
  - basics of 3 R’s (reading, writing, arithmetic)
    - reading – alphabet & sounds, rules of phonics & sounding out words, lots of practice!
    - writing – printing, spelling – words → sentences, simple rules of grammar
    - arithmetic – counting & numbers, simple functions (e.g. addition, subtraction), multiplication tables
  - can begin with formal time around age 3-4 – work the time into a routine → part of developing a discipline of life
    - start small (10 minutes, 1-2x/day), and increase time gradually (30-60 minutes/day)
  - instruction in Bible/Godly living – can be structured around family devotions
  - social interactions – don’t neglect these - relational skills are an important part of learning!
  - other learning activities – e.g. field trips, informal teaching opportunities through the day
- school age years (5+)
  - home-school curricula available for those who want to home-school – in Ontario, registration with school board required beyond age 6 for home schoolers
  - for those in school, you may want to supplement the kids’ learning during extended holidays, to keep their minds active (e.g. summer break +/- Christmas break) – workbooks, reading
- don’t overdo it
  - help kids make most of their God-given potential, but remember, the ultimate goal is still godliness – keep academic advancement/achievement in proper perspective & proper priority
  - instructing vs. embittering your children
  - children have amazing potential for learning and we should help develop that, but each child is different → each learns at own pace, each has own strengths/weaknesses
    - need to discern between inability vs. unwillingness to learn

### -**outside the home**

- need to consider how these will help or hinder you in your responsibility to teach & instruct your children
- important particularly for teaching outside the home to aware of what is being taught
  - also, who their friends are, and what are the influences in their lives what they are reading, what they are watching (TV, internet) or involved in (social media, etc)
- church** –kids in Sunday school; getting involved in teaching children/youth in the Church
- school** – public vs. private vs. Christian vs. homeschooling
  - get to know the school you’re interested in – principal, teachers, values/emphases
  - know your kids’ teachers and engage them about what they are learning
    - esp. need to be aware of potential conflicts worldview/moral issues particularly in public schools → heightened vigilance re: what is being taught if kids are in public school
    - not all Christian schools are equal (particularly wrt the place of Christianity)
  - homeschooling groups – different options possible if multiple families homeschool together
  - balancing protecting your children vs. equipping them to engage the world around them
- other settings** (music lessons, sports, camps, etc.) – how will these help or hinder?