

## Lesson 6: Preparation for Effective Parenting

Knowing a child's spiritual needs and a father's responsibility, what can a father do in personal preparation?

Yes, God alone saves—a father must remember that he is not the Savior of his children—but God uses means. Like Job, a father should intercede in prayer for his children (Job 1:5) and prepare to be used for his children.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9** – *The Importance of Parenting in the Worship of God*

1. The priority of personal worship (vv. 4-5).

Is the one God *your* God (v. 4)?

Is this one God your one love (v. 5)?

Fundamentally, parenting is about *God*—the fear of God, faith in God, and finally, love for God and His glory!

2. Teach with integrity (v. 6).

God's word must first be upon the father's heart before he impresses it upon his children (v. 6-7a).

e.g. Tell stories of personal faith and obedience (Proverbs 4:1-9).

“When I was a boy, my father told me to seek wisdom...” and Solomon later did (1 Kings 3).

By design, those being trained do not rise above leadership but imitate those leading (Luke 6:40).

Proverbs warns against bad company:

e.g. fools (13:20; 14:7), gossip (20:19), heavy drinkers and eaters (23:20), angry man (22:24-25), political agitators (24:21) – how awful if a father himself proved to be bad company to his children!

Conversely, parents' good character blesses their family:

e.g. deliverance (11:21), security (14:26), inheritance (13:22), stability (14:1), blessing (20:7; 24:3-4).

3. Fill the heart and home with the word of God.

- (1) Heart – formal, direct *penetration*

Impressing the word of children runs counter to our culture of letting children “think for themselves.”

Left to themselves, children become fools (Pr. 22:15; 29:15).

Do not dictate their beliefs (i.e. try to force them), but fill their minds with truth.

This is not taking unfair advantage, but taking responsibility.

If you believe God's words, how could you hold back on informing your children?

After all, you warn them on earthly things with conviction.

- (2) Home – informal, indirect *saturation*

Fill home-life with Scripture:

e.g. talk about Scripture all the time, during lots of informal time

e.g. write Scripture everywhere, on clothing and as household decoration

Principle: Unless parents lack integrity, children can never get too much Bible.

Saturation is possible only with a considerable amount of casual, informal time with the children.

Therefore, consider carefully the structures of your home (cf. Titus 2:5; Proverbs 31):

e.g. meal times together? working together? working at home or away?

Much modern problems with the family is due to *both* dad and mom working outside the home.

4. Plan for a transition from your conscience to their conscience.

Given the differences between OT and NT on freedom, we must add one adaptation to this counsel:

As your son or daughter transitions from childhood to adulthood, allow them to make moral decisions.

As you do, recognize that not all your decisions *should* be their decisions—even if you are right.

Note: Their decisions are not necessarily wrong, if they do not violate the gospel or the moral law.

The larger question concerns faith and love:

Can they worship God through their decision and in a way that cares for others?

Rem: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom—not the fear of dad.

According to Proverbs 2, they should begin to *love* wisdom and so discern every good path.

Ironically, the OT/NT distinction reflects this transition to sonship (Gal. 4:1-7).