

## **LESSON 19: PARENTING AND CHILDREN**

### **HUSBAND AND WIFE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Read Psalm 139:13-16 and Jeremiah 1:5**

▶ What two things does God say in these passages about children?

1. God forms children – God uses the genetics of the parents and gives all children talents and physical abilities.
2. God times children – God gives everyone a particular number of days to live on earth.

**Read 2 Kings 20:1-5**

▶ Can you lengthen or shorten those days?

King Hezekiah is the only man that we know of who lengthened his days. God heard his cries and gave him 15 more years. During this “extra” time, he fathered the most wicked king in the history of Israel. This evil king would go on to kill Isaiah by cutting him in half.

You can shorten your days. Your sin can overrule what God has planned for your life. If you remain inside God’s will then His time frame is going to be fulfilled.

*Example: If I go out and get drunk and flip my car and die, I don’t think that is God’s timing for my life. I think that my sin is overruling what God would have wanted for me.*

### **YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT YOUR OWN**

**Read Jeremiah 1:4-5**

▶ What does God say about children that leads us to believe that our children are not our own?

God forms me, times me, and has a purpose for my life. God forms me to fit into that purpose.

You did not form or time your children, and it is not your plan for their life that matters. This is why our children are not our own. They are merely on loan to us to teach them how to fit into God’s purpose.

This also means that all children, even those that are unplanned or a product of rape or incest, have a God-ordained purpose. Clearly, with this point of view, abortion is never a valid option.

### **CHILDREN’S ACTIONS**

As parents, you must ask yourself two things. Are your children’s actions what you taught them or are they going against what you taught them?

If they are taking what you have taught them or what they have seen you do, then you should take the blame. On the other hand, if they are doing what you did not teach them or exemplify in front of them, then it is not your fault. All children inherit the sin nature and will mess up.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AS PARENTS**

### **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:8**

▶ What three major things are said in this verse about parenting?

1. Paul loved the church in Thessalonica. This feeling was automatic. As parents, you do not have to work at loving them. The only unconditional love you will ever learn is learned by having kids.
2. Paul says that he gave them himself. As parents, we need to give ourselves to our children. Your children may not remember presents you gave them for birthdays or Christmases, but they should remember the times you spend with them.
3. Paul also tells them that he gave them God's truth. It is important to ensure that your children are in church and that you teach them the truth of God's Word.

It is vital that there be a balance of teaching God's truth as well as being involved in your children's lives. If you only do one or the other, then you will not make a positive effective on your child's life. You must give your children yourself and the Gospel.

### **Read Ephesians 6:1-2**

▶ What two things should you produce in your children?

Obedience and respect or honor for parents. To get them to obey, you are going to have to discipline them. According to Proverbs 13:24, your discipline should be physical when they are younger. As they get older, this will change.

## **PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE**

1. Your discipline has to be pretty strong. Your children should know that the pain of the discipline outweighs the joy of the rebellion. Your children need to get to a point where they anticipate the discipline before doing what is wrong. This leads them to making the right choices.
2. Your discipline should be immediate. You clearly tell them not to do something, explain what the rules are, and only discipline when the rules have been clearly explained. You should discipline actions and not accidents. If they accidentally do something wrong, then do not discipline them. If it is a conscious choice to disobey, then you must discipline them.

3. Your discipline should be consistent. If your children continue to disobey, then you must continue to discipline.
4. Your discipline should not be because of the personality differences.
5. You should explain the discipline to them. If you cannot explain why you are disciplining them, then you should not be disciplining them, especially when you are angry. You explain why you are disciplining and then you love them when it is over. You should never discipline out of anger.

As parents, you must have a balance of teaching and disciplining. When your children are young, you will do more disciplining. Once your children are teenagers, you will begin to teach more than discipline. There is no magic age, but at some point when your children are older, physical discipline is out. At this point, you can begin to take away whatever is valuable is to your child.

### **PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING**

1. You teach them directly: It is important to have time as a family to walk through a Bible study together.
2. You teach them indirectly: As your children get older, it is important to continue the Bible study, but also to take opportunities as they come to teach your children. When situations come up, discuss them with your child and what happened as a result.
3. Don't hand your children to a counselor when they are struggling. Get involved in your child's life and give them the teaching they need as they need it. Walk with them through the hard times. Remember that God has a purpose for your child, formed them, timed them, and gave them to you because He knows you are the best person for them. You need to be involved in your children's lives and be available when they need to talk to you. Every child will be different, but you need to be available and flexible to fit in your children's lives.
4. It is a good idea when your children are in high school to connect them with a well-grounded, Christian college kid to disciple your child.

Overall, you want your children to know how much you value them. There is no magic age, but when they hit 16, you need to make this a special moment. Get all their friends and the adults in their lives to write your child a letter affirming the character they see in your child. You want to affirm their character and not their giftedness. It is easy to get caught up in the teaching and forget to affirm your children. When your child does something good, praise them.

It is also important to teach your children that when they do fail, God can rescue and redeem them. It is easy to let them know that they can come to you, but they also need to know that they can go to God in the hard times.

You need to teach your children that if they do fail, they can come back to you, must be repentant, and can be redeemed if repentant. They must also know that there will be consequences for their actions, and God is not done with them no matter what they do.

### **CONCLUSION**

You put yourself in their life. You affirm their character. You correct their lack of character. You discipline them. You teach them to love and respect you. You give them truth. You take those opportunities when they are there. Make sure they know that when they make a mistake that God can still redeem their life and do something with them.