

## Home Builder's

### Making Marriage Work in a Broken World

#### Lesson 9: Raising Godly Children in an Ungodly World. Part 1

- I. Get past behavior to see the heart. Proverbs 4:23 | Mark 7:21
  - A. The basic issue is not a child's behavior, it is his/her heart from which that behavior flows.
    1. Behavior can be irritating and thus command attention; however, we must not be content with merely addressing nuisances.
    2. Two children are fighting over a toy (an irritating behavior). The question is posed, "who had the toy first?" This corrective, though, misses the heart and makes the issue solely a matter of justice. However, when we look at the situation as a heart issue, we may find that we have two heart problems manifesting themselves. Both children are operating selfishly. Neither children is concerned with anything other than their own happiness.
    3. All sinful behavior is linked to a sinful heart.
  - B. Since all sinful behavior flows from sinful hearts, parents must learn to shepherd their children's hearts.
    1. You must help your children see themselves as sinners in need of God's grace.
    2. You must help your children see that nothing short of Christ can satisfy their souls.
- II. Parents must provide structure to shape their children.
  - A. Your children will become a product not only of their life experiences, but how they interact with those experiences.
  - B. Shaping influences a child can have: (note: these are not exhaustive lists)
    1. Family Life
      - a. nuclear family
      - b. how many children
      - c. Personality
    2. Family Values
      - a. What is important to the parents?
      - b. How do the parents handle stress?
      - c. Philosophies
      - d. How seriously does the family take their faith?
    3. Family Roles
      - a. Are both parents engaged?
      - b. Are both parents lovingly involved?
    4. Family Conflict Resolution
      - a. Does the family know how to talk about their problems?
      - b. Does the family resolve things?
      - c. Are problems handled in a biblical manner?
    5. Family Response to Failure
      - a. Are children made to feel like fools when they fail?
      - b. Does the family find amusement at the shortcomings of the children?
    6. Family History/Stability
      - a. Births/deaths
      - b. Divorce/remarriage

- c. Frequent moving
  - d. Poverty
- C. It is a mistake to view shaping influences in either a deterministic way or to deny that they have any effects on children.
1. Your parenting and home life matter!
  2. There is grace for our failure!
  3. Don't fall into the trap of being deterministic.
    - a. "If I can control the environment enough (protect/shelter) then they will turn out ok."
    - b. This thinking fails to account for the heart.
- D. Children are not merely passive receivers of shaping; they are responding actively.
1. Therefore, you must take their heart into account.

III. Parents must orient their children toward God. Proverbs 9:7-10

- A. A child's Godward orientation determines their response to shaping influences.
- B. Your child either is actively worshipping God or something less. (Romans 1:18-19)
  1. A child may not be conscious of their orientation, but their heart is never neutral.
  2. Modern idols may not be made of wood or stone, they are more likely to be idols of the heart that manifest as:
    - a. Fear of man
    - b. Lust
    - c. Pride
    - d. Evil desires
  3. Note: all of the above issues flow from a child's fundamental beliefs about life.
  4. The question is not, "will our children worship?" It is "Whom do they worship?"

Conclusion:

- Your children are not neutral beings.
- It is your responsibility to structure their lives biblically.
- It is your responsibility to orient your children towards God.

**Discussion:**

**Next Week:**

Raising Godly Children in an Ungodly World. Part 2