

## Lesson 7: The Child-Raising Home

### I. Introduction

- a. When God adds a child to a home, He takes an incredible risk
  - i. A human soul is introduced to the world
  - ii. That soul is totally vulnerable and dependent on the adults around it
  - iii. the blessings and responsibilities of that home increase
  - iv. If it is going to survive physically, its basic needs must be met
  - v. If it is going to thrive as a complete human being all its needs must be met
  - vi. This requires understanding what a child is and what its needs are
- b.

II. KEY THOUGHT: A home blessed with children is responsible for raising them in the training and the admonition of the Lord

### III. What the Child is and is not

- a. What a Child is not
  - i. A blank slate, capable of being molded into any form imaginable
    1. If this were true, the care giver could create any type of person by simply controlling the input and experiences of any generic child
    2. E.g. A Brave New World
    3. A child has
      - a. Unique personality
      - b. Unique physical traits
      - c. Patterns of mental thought
      - d. Unique inclinations and inborn talents
    4. He also has a conscience and moral sense that can be damaged but not rewritten or removed
  - ii. An intrinsically evil, morally depraved human being (Eze. 18)
    1. If this were true, a punitive and restrictive upbringing would be necessary to attempt to get any good at all out of each innately sinful child
    2. E.g. The typical unhappy childhood of a Dickens character, like Oliver Twist
    3. In fact, the child is not born with a sinful nature
    4. Just desires for comfort and sustenance that are necessary for survival
    5. She is morally undeveloped and innocent of wrong
  - iii. A totally self-directing, self-sufficient being needing only parental support, self-realization and self-expression to become perfect
    1. If this were true, the child would simply any needs he expressed supplied until he developed into his true self. Any attempts to mold, inform or direct his development would be misguided and harmful
    2. In fact, every inclination a child has is capable of being indulged too much, with the result of a spoiled child

3. Children do not know what they need and do not need and are unable to distinguish, without training, between needs and wants.
4. Starshine Roshell: "Parents can be so smug. We think we have life's puzzles solved and that our kids are callow dimwits desperate for our guidance.

Admit it: We think of them as dense, doughy biscuits requiring the heat of our unparalleled wisdom to rise to their fluffy full potential.

Lately, though, I've been wondering if we're wrong. If, in fact, our car seat-bound offspring are the ones who have the answers and we grown-ups are too culturally programmed, too set in our ways, to see it.

The notion strikes when I ask my 3-year-old to put on his shoes. Or clean up his toys. Or turn off his video, come upstairs and take a bath. That's when he looks at me with utter impunity and says, "I won't."

There's no willfulness in his voice. No shame. No guilt.

"I won't."

He's simply stating a fact, letting me know we're going to have a problem here if I insist on pursuing this ridiculous mandate.

There's a look of -- is that peace? -- that crosses his peanut butter-smearred face when he says it, and I'll admit the whole situation stymies me....

But his behavior also kind of inspires me....

Because there are lots of times when I'd like to look people smack in the face and tell them dispassionately, "I won't."

The hostess, for instance, who tells me I have to wait 20 minutes for a patio table. Or the Costco cashier who informs me that these coupons aren't valid until tomorrow and I'll have to come back then.

This must be how my son feels when I impose my agenda on his. It's not personal. It's not a plea for autonomy. It's this: The information he's just heard registers as utterly, abominably

wrong. It offends his sense of fairness, stings his understanding of how the world should operate.

"Look," his two words tell me. "I kept my shoes off the couch. I ate those ghastly green beans. All I want is to go about my business without you bossing me around for 10 minutes. Is that so much to ask?"

...

I'd like to be humble enough to respect my son's defiant decisions and learn from his fearless approach to life. I'd like to be free-willed enough to look society in the face and occasionally say, with peace on my face, "ain't gonna happen." Roanoke Time "I won't say it, but my 3-year-old certainly will" 5/5/2009

- b. What a child is
  - i. A human being, having an immortal soul, made in the image of God - Genesis 1:26-27
  - ii. Four components – Luke 2:52
    - 1. Physical
    - 2. Mental
    - 3. Social
    - 4. Spiritual
  - iii. Not good or bad, morally undeveloped, just as she is mentally and physically undeveloped
  - iv. But capable of great good and great evil
  - v. Each area of the child's humanity needs understood, nurtured and developed John Rosemond: "A child, lacking farsightedness, does not know how to govern himself. He does not know what is in his best interest. He is apt to prefer that which is bad for him and reject that which is good for him. Thus, he would rather drink a soda than a glass of water, eat a bowl of ice cream than a helping of broccoli, play video games than do chores, stay up than go to bed at a decent hour, disobey than obey, and so on. His parents and teachers must provide the restraint and direction he cannot provide himself.

Proper restraint and proper direction are essential to turning the ... toddler into a disciple who will trust and look up to his parents, follow their lead, and subscribe to their values. In the same order, that's respect, obedience and loyalty. And "proper" in both cases means with lots of love." – Weekly Column "Living with Children" Published 5/5/2009

#### IV. What the child needs

- a. Their unique personhood recognized, nurtured, strengthened and directed
  - i. We cannot make them who we want them to be
  - ii. We cannot make them who we wanted to be ourselves
  - iii. We must help them become who God made them to be
- b. Love and Acceptance
  - i. Do we let them know that we consider them a blessing from God
  - ii. Do we consider them as our most valuable assets
  - iii. Do our children feel treasured?
  - iv. When a child feels he cannot get the acceptance and love of his parents, he gives up. This is called, “provoking your children to anger.”
- c. Knowledge of and Love for God
  - i. Discussed in lesson 5
  - ii. This will be provided by raising the child in a God-centered home
- d. Protection from harm
  - i. Spiritual safety tips
  - ii. Pray for your children – “Do not lead them into temptation but deliver them from evil”
  - iii. Monitor and control what goes into their minds
    - 1. Television
    - 2. Magazines
    - 3. Radio
    - 4. Movies – ScreenIT
    - 5. Internet –
      - a. Public computer area
      - b. Filtering software
- e. Character traits that have been
  - i. valued
  - ii. demonstrated,
    - 1. A father was one day teaching his little boy what manner of man a Christian is. When the lesson was finished, the father got the stab of his life, when the boy asked, “Father, have I ever seen a Christian?”
    - 2. One of the blessings of children is that we sometimes see faults in them that we overlooked in ourselves, which gives us a second chance to correct them in ourselves
  - iii. trained
  - iv. tested
  - v. Rom. 5:3-4
- f. Character traits
  - i. Good habits
    - 1. Attention
    - 2. Prayer
    - 3. Manners
    - 4. Cleanliness
    - 5. Respect

- ii. Honesty
  - 1. Teach the importance of honesty
  - 2. Don't allow lying to go unaddressed
  - 3. Don't make excuses for your children
- iii. Diligence
  - 1. Make sure the child has age-appropriate household chores to do
  - 2. Work with your child
  - 3. Teach good work habits
  - 4. Don't complain about your work
  - 5. Teach working "as to the Lord"
- iv. Stewardship
  - 1. Avoid unnecessary waste
  - 2. Teach the value of money
  - 3. Responsibility
  - 4. Teach the difference between luxuries and necessities
  - 5. Quality and value
  - 6. Taking care of what one has
  - 7. The proper use of time
- v. Humility
  - 1. Teach children how God feels about pride
  - 2. Special care must be taken with children who are often complimented for being cute or bright to avoid pridefulness
  - 3. The value of service to others
  - 4. Not thinking less of others
- vi. Gratitude
  - 1. Expressing thanks to others
  - 2. thank-you notes/cards
  - 3. Expressing thanks to God
- vii. Good Companions
  - 1. Avoid worldly, disrespectful, daredevil or dishonest friends
  - 2. Let your home be a center of activity for companions
  - 3. Know your children's friends and their families
  - 4. Provide godly companionship for your children
- viii. Self-Control
  - 1. Recognize natural desires and their limitations
  - 2. Learn moderation
  - 3. Confining behavior
  - 4. Following rules
  - 5. Not reacting improperly to others bad behavior
- ix. Purity
  - 1. Modesty
  - 2. Proper behavior between boys and girls
  - 3. Chastity
  - 4. Pure minds and hearts
- x. Love

1. Love for family
  2. Love for God
  3. Love for neighbors
  4. Love for enemies
- g. Brought to the cross of Jesus for the redemption of his/her soul
- i. As the child grows and morally develops they will come to recognize what sin is
  - ii. Their maturing conscience will grow to convict them of unrighteousness
  - iii. They will attempt to live uprightly and fail
  - iv. They will be in a position to recognize their personal need for the salvation of Jesus Christ
  - v. They have reached the age of accountability
  - vi. By God's grace and their parents prayers, they will turn their whole lives over to Christ
- h. Released into the world to accomplish whatever purpose God has for him or her
- i. This releasing is something that happens year by year as the child grows and is able to accept more and more responsibility
  - ii. The goal is not to keep the child always dependent, but ever-more independent from the parents
  - iii. Hannah and Samuel
  - iv. 3 John 1:4
- V. What the goal is – Adults prepared to live in, succeed in, and overcome the world through Jesus Christ

Genesis 1:26-27 NKJV Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Ezekiel 18:20 NKJV The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.