

LESSON 8

PLANNING FOR AND RAISING CHILDREN

Introduction

Homes should have children—but not too many! The number of children a couple will have is a personal matter, but it should be influenced by health, economic resources, and the world situation. Without any children, civilization would become extinct. Over-population is also a threat to human existence. Scientists are concerned about the balance in nature—between plants and animals, which are interdependent—and the problem of future production of adequate food for a doubled world population. Millions of people are starving now or are experiencing malnutrition and subhuman existence because of insufficient diet. What will the situation be in twenty-five years if the world population doubles as predicted?

It is normal for couples to want and to have children. God planned for children to be born when He built into the bodies of both man and woman an elaborate reproduction system. God commanded man and woman to reproduce: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). He placed within the natures of man and woman the sexual desire which assures that they will mate. The most intimate and exquisite experience of true love is associated with the conception of children.

A primary purpose of marriage is to provide homes into which children can be born and nurtured. Homes without the blessings of boys and girls are empty. The father naturally longs for a son to love, train, and bear his name and a daughter to perpetuate the characteristics of his wife. The mother craves a child to cradle as her own and looks forward to the time when her daughter and son will be old enough to appreciate the wealth of her love. Parents share in their children's joys as well as in their disappointments. They sacrifice in providing for their children and, thus, demonstrate unselfish love. They share in the instruction of their children and feel a sense of accomplishment when they succeed. Parents experience guilt and despair when they conclude that their neglect has contributed to the failure of a child.

Parents' lives are extended through their children. Their influence, teachings, and name are perpetuated through their descendants.

List three factors that should influence how many children a couple has.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(1. health, 2. economic resources, 3. world situation)

The way God created man and woman determines that they will want to have children:

1. He made them with an elaborate _____ system.
2. He placed within them the sexual desire to _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Couples also desire to have children to _____, _____, and bear their _____.

(love, train, name)

How are parents' lives extended through their children? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Preparing for Parenthood

Number of children desired

The number of children desired by a couple will vary according to background, or traditions, and current circumstances. Couples in the past desired numerous children because of the high death rate and because children meant additional workers for the family farm or business. Society was not then facing crucial ecological problems, depletion of fuel supplies, and inadequate food.

Of the more than four billion people in the world today, it is estimated that up to half are starving and ten or fifteen per cent more are undernourished. Productive nations of the West consume eighty per cent of the resources of the world, but millions of people in the overcrowded countries of the East are starving.

One reason for the population crisis is that modern medicine has reduced infant deaths and prolonged the lives of adults. In past centuries, plagues swept across nations and took large numbers of people, preventing the rapid increase of population. Unless parents in underdeveloped countries, where population is increasing rapidly, learn about and practise birth control, the future will bring more widespread suffering through starvation and death by disease. Responsible parents should desire to have children, but they should not want to contribute to the serious problems of over-population, which confront most nations, by having too many.

Birthrates are proportionately higher among the low-income groups than among high-income groups. University-educated people have smaller families. Among religious groups, Catholics are more prolific than Protestants. Mixed marriages of Catholics and Protestants have fewer children.

The Catholic Church takes the position that the primary purpose of physical relationships is procreation. In 1930, Pope Pius XI stated that birth control is "unnatural and intrinsically evil and therefore not to be justified for any reason, however great." The only birth control allowed was refraining from intercourse during the fertile period. Protestants do not consider the use of contraceptives to be a moral issue. Rather, many are beginning to conclude that failure to use birth control devices is immoral.

Sensible family planning will allow most couples to have two or three children without endangering the survival of the human race or placing the home under undue strain. Some encouragement has come recently in a news release with the caption "Good News for the World—Population Growth on the Decline." The article did not say that population is declining, but rather that the rate of increase has slowed down. By the year 2000, population is now expected to increase from the present 4.1 billion to about 5.6 billion instead of the predicted 6.5 billion.

Three factors which are causing parents to desire smaller families are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Parents in underdeveloped countries, where population is increasing rapidly, must practise birth control if widespread suffering through s _____ and death by d _____ are to be controlled.

(starvation, disease)

Birthrates are high among _____ - _____ groups and _____.

(low-income, Catholics)

Planning the time for the first child

Married couples generally encounter less strain in their relationships when they postpone parenthood until they have had time to work out some of their basic adjustments. Research has revealed that the divorce rate is higher among couples where pregnancy occurs before or soon after marriage than among those couples who wait several months or years before beginning to have children.¹ A higher percentage of couples with unplanned pregnancies early in marriage make poorer marital adjustments than other couples. On the other hand, couples who desire children are the happiest in marriage. These situations support the biblical teaching that one of the basic reasons for establishing a home is procreation.

Couples who plan to have children should not delay the beginning of their family for too many years. Children make many demands on parents, and parents are in better condition to meet them in their younger years. Also, a couple may discover after postponing pregnancy a number of years that they cannot have children of their own. Fertility decreases with age.

The frequency of pregnancies

Too frequent pregnancies are to be avoided for the sake of both the mother and the child. The amount of time between children will depend on the health of the mother and the conditions within the home. Medical opinion advises spacing children at least two years apart. More frequent pregnancies may cause harm to the mother's body which has to assume support for two persons during pregnancy and early childhood.

Certain medical conditions make pregnancy unadvisable. Diseases of the heart and kidneys, tuberculosis, diabetes, previous Caesarean sections, and certain types of psychopathic disorders make childbearing dangerous. Childbearing is discouraged if a serious physical or mental disorder of the husband or wife might be transmitted to the offspring.

Psychological preparation

God has decreed that babies are to be born into homes where love, security, and opportunity for Christian instruction exist. Emotionally stable parents have an inner warmth of compassion and desire for a baby. These instinctual desires are seen in the animal world as well. Birds build nests of selected material in preparation for their eggs and the hatching of the young. The mother cat keeps watch over and protects her kittens. A mother joyfully anticipates, plans for, and prays for the safe deliverance of her baby.

¹Judson and Mary Landis, Building a Successful Marriage, rev. ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 439.

Why is it wise for couples to postpone parenthood for a year or two after marriage?

(To give themselves time to work out their basic adjustments)

A factor to consider in the length of time between pregnancies is the health of the

(mother)

List some medical conditions that make pregnancy unadvisable.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Planned conception guarantees a baby's being wanted by both parents. It is important that a baby experience love, warmth, protection, and adequate provision during its earliest stage. The first six years of a child's life determine almost completely his character throughout the rest of his life. An atmosphere of devotion to Christ, feelings of affection and respect between husband and wife, kindness, unselfishness, and stability are important spiritual attitudes which should form the environment of the new child. Development of these attitudes must begin long before the birth of the child; they must be nurtured by husband and wife from the time of their union in marriage.

Pregnancy

Conception

Once each month, ovulation takes place in the female reproductive system. If sperm is placed in the vagina at that time, they work their way up through the uterus into the fallopian tube and one fertilizes the egg. The union of the sperm cell and egg cell brings about conception. The fertilized egg begins to divide even during the three or four days' journey through the tube into the uterus. The lining of the uterus has thickened, and its blood supply has increased to provide a suitable place for the developing embryo. The egg sinks into the lining and becomes attached to it. It continues to grow by cell division, and the cells gradually rearrange and differentiate into various bodily structures and organs. At the end of four weeks, the embryo is about one-fourth of an inch in size and is still in an unformed state; however, the beginning of facial features can be discerned. It exists in a sac of fluid and possesses gills and a tail like aquatic embryos. By the end of the second month, it is about three-quarters of an inch long, and its human features becomes perceptible. At four months, it is about five inches long and possesses a definite human form. The fingers and toes begin to separate and the human form of the body becomes more distinctive. At the end of nine months, the foetus has reached the length of about twenty inches and weighs about seven pounds. During that period, the single cell has developed by division into about 200 billion cells, forming the numerous parts of the body such as hair, finger-nails, skin, bone, heart, and other organs of the body.

The foetus obtains nourishment from its mother's body through a special organ called the placenta. The blood of the mother brings food and oxygen to the foetus without actually mixing with its blood. The substances pass through the wall of the placenta into the blood system of the foetus. The waste returns into the mother's blood and is eliminated from the mother's body. The foetus is connected to the placenta by a cord-like structure known as the umbilical cord. It is almost two feet long and about a half inch in thickness. This cord must be cut and tied upon the birth of the

Some spiritual attitudes which are important in providing a good environment for a child are:

1. devotion to _____
2. affection and respect between _____ and _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The union of the _____ cell and the _____ cell brings about conception.

(sperm, egg)

How does the foetus obtain nourishment? _____

(from the mother's body through the placenta)

child. The placenta is discharged from the body and is called the afterbirth.

Changes during pregnancy

The first indication to a woman that she is pregnant is the cessation of her menstrual period; however, a temporary delay may be caused by many other physical or emotional factors. By the end of the first month after conception, nausea and vomiting (morning sickness) usually occur and the breasts undergo changes. The mother tends to be sleepy during the day and may become more emotionally sensitive. By the fifth month, she becomes conscious of the movement of the foetus within her.

The foetus develops over a period of about 266 days from conception. The date of birth is usually calculated as 280 days from the first day of the last menstrual period. It is not clearly understood what causes labour to begin, but under normal circumstances it begins when the foetus is sufficiently mature to cope with life apart from its mother's body. The period of labour may last up to sixteen hours for a first-born, but usually subsequent births require fewer hours.

The uterus and other reproductive organs increase in size during the development of the foetus and childbirth. These organs return to normal size over a period of six to eight weeks after the child is born.

The mother's mammary system first secretes colostrum, a fluid much thicker than and different from milk. It appears the first or second day after delivery. The milk secretion begins on the second to fourth day.

Caring for the Baby

The arrival of the first child requires significant adjustments within the home. Loss of sleep, exhaustion, guilt at not being better parents, continuous responsibility in caring for a baby, economic pressure from additional expenses, and interrupted social life force a young couple to take a giant step towards adult responsibility. After giving birth to a child, the mother undergoes a major shift in hormone function, which inevitably affects her emotionally. Most experience a sense of well-being, joy, and love for the new baby, but others have an opposite experience. Some have feelings of depression and disillusionment. The mother's body becomes exhausted in giving birth, and she is immediately faced with the continuous responsibility of caring for the new-born. The arrival of the child marks the final transition to maturity and adult responsibility.

At birth, the infant is the most helpless of all new-born creatures. When the infant's body is no longer protected by the warmth of his mother, he begins to cry. The crying establishes his breathing, and

<p><i>List some physical changes and conditions brought on by pregnancy.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. _____2. _____3. _____4. _____5. _____ <p><i>(Compare your answers with the text.)</i></p>
<p><i>List some changes in the home resulting from the birth of a child.</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(Compare your answers with the text.)</i></p>

his body is separated from that of his mother's by the severance of the umbilical cord. Birth is a critical moment for the infant since his own organs must be activated immediately to support his own body.

Many doctors recommend that babies be breast-fed. The baby learns to associate food with love and cuddling. Both mother and baby profit from the intimacy and warmth that comes through natural feeding. Until recent years, doctors suggested that babies be placed on a schedule, but now more are suggesting that the baby be fed on demand. Some mothers who are exhausted physically and emotionally may be unable to supply sufficient food for the infant.

It is important for the husband to help with household responsibilities upon the arrival of the baby. The mother needs additional rest in order to permit her body to return to its strength. The husband now has become a father which assigns to him a new role in providing and caring for his family. In addition, the husband needs to recognize that his wife has become a mother and has assumed additional responsibilities and a new relationship. No longer will she be able to devote her full attention to him.

Growth and Development of the Infant

The first few years of a child's life are filled with new learning experiences. First the infant must learn how to express his hunger and comfort needs. Crying may work so successfully that he learns to use this communication technique in gaining additional attention. Each child develops differently, but all experience continual growth and development and need adequate nourishment.

The new-born infant had experienced a stable environment before birth. Now he comes to depend on the people in his new environment to meet his basic needs. He cannot tell those around him what he needs; he can cry and his crying must be interpreted. At first, the infant does not have a hunger rhythm since pre-natal nourishment was continuous through the placenta. After two or three weeks, the hunger demands begin to form a more regular pattern. The infant sleeps or dozes approximately eighty per cent of the time after birth, but later drops to about sixty-eight per cent. He will awaken every two or three hours but eventually will have fewer and shorter waking periods during the night than during the day. Pain, discomfort, and hunger cause the infant to awake and express his need by crying.

During the first several months, infants are completely dependent on adults, but by their second birthday, they have developed a degree of independence which marks their entrance into childhood. They are able to sit, stand, walk, and manipulate objects at will. They have improved their ability to communicate needs and wishes to others. During these two years, the

Three adjustments which a husband must make are: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

An indication a child has developed a degree of independence which marks his entrance into childhood is his ability to _____, _____, _____, and manipulate _____.

foundations of many of their behaviour patterns and attitudes are developed.

With the passing of the second birthday, babies have often been described as "terrible twos." Previously they have been helpless and dependent and thus more easily managed. As they develop ability to do things for themselves, they are less easily managed and more resistant to adult help. They have a strong desire to explore but do not have knowledge of possible harm that may come because of certain actions. The mother must give constant supervision to the developing child, allowing him to develop independence while protecting him from injury.

The second year is very significant in the development of children. Usually their experiences are not as happy as those during the first year. They desire to exert independence and resent interference in their activities. They show their resentment by being balky or having temper outbursts. Usually more discipline is exercised during their second year. Since babies cannot understand words, parents resort to spankings and scoldings to communicate that wrong actions will not be tolerated.

Towards the end of the second year, another baby may be born into the home which means that the mother will have less time to spend with the first-born. The two-year-old may conclude that he is no longer loved and may experience insecurity and anxiety. His second year is marked by frustrations, but he also experiences happy times.

Since the baby's most constant association is with his mother, his happiness and emotional responses will be determined largely by how she treats him. Her anxieties, over-protection, excessive punishment, or feeling that the baby is a burden will bring unhappiness. Her affection, evaluation of his behaviour in a positive way, and fair treatment without favouritism will contribute to happiness.

Childhood

Development in early childhood

Childhood begins when the helplessness of babyhood has passed at about two years of age. Significant physical and psychological changes take place during the next ten or twelve years. During early childhood, his training is within the home. Later, he is exposed to a larger society and spends much of his time outside the home environment.

During pre-school years, the child is concerned with further coordination and control of his own body. He seeks to understand his environment and how it works; therefore, he is constantly exploring and getting into things from which he must be restrained. While his personality is developing, he is demanding independence and may demonstrate obstinacy, stubbornness,

Finish reading the topic Growth and Development of the Infant. Then describe briefly some characteristics of two-year-olds which cause them to be called "terrible twos."

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The school-age child is exposed to a larger s _____ and spends more time outside the h _____ environment.

(society, home)

What do obstinacy, stubbornness, and disobedience usually indicate in a growing child?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

and disobedience. His achievements in babyhood included learning to walk, to take solid foods, to talk, and to control elimination of body wastes. During early childhood, he must learn to achieve bodily stability, distinguish between right and wrong, develop the ability to communicate with others, and establish satisfactory emotional relations with parents and others. He must learn to depend on others to meet his emotional needs and to give as well as receive affection.

In relating to other children, he finds that taking a toy which belongs to another child is wrong. Through this experience, he begins to learn the fundamental principles of property rights. Much of his learning comes from imitating his parents and playmates.

His appetite is no longer as ravenous as it was in the early part of babyhood. Eating problems arise because his growth rate slows down and he has less appetite. He develops marked food likes and dislikes. It is important for the child to get a balanced diet with sufficient protein—milk, green vegetables, and meat. Starchy foods, such as potatoes, bread, and sweets, provide energy, but they do not have sufficient body-building nutrients.

A three-year-old sleeps about twelve hours out of twenty-four. Each successive year during childhood, his average daily need of sleep is approximately one-half hour less than in the previous year. Parents should strike a medium between excessive concern and unconcern regarding the amount of sleep the child gets.

During this stage, awkwardness begins to give way to developing skills and coordination in the achievement of simple tasks. He should improve in speed and accuracy with which he can attain a result. These skills are developed largely through play, through the manipulation of toys rather than the watching of television or being entertained by someone else. Self-feeding and dressing skills, which began in babyhood, show marked improvement in early childhood. The three-year-old should be able to feed himself with a fork and should be able to spread butter with a knife. He is not ready yet to use the knife for cutting foods. By the time he reaches kindergarten age, he should be able to bathe, dress, tie his shoes, and brush or comb his hair with no assistance. A three-year-old can drive nails into wood with a hammer, and a six-year-old should be able to make simple objects like boats. During early childhood, constant supervision is required by parents to prevent bodily injury to the inquiring and curious child.

Speech skills also are developed during early childhood. These patterns are influenced primarily by the parents since the child learns by imitation. His future speech will be influenced greatly by patterns developed at an early stage. Speech skills are very important since social relations require communication.

List some things that should be learned in childhood. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

List some skills which should be acquired in early childhood. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The primary influence on children's speech skills is the _____.

These skills are very important because _____ relations require _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

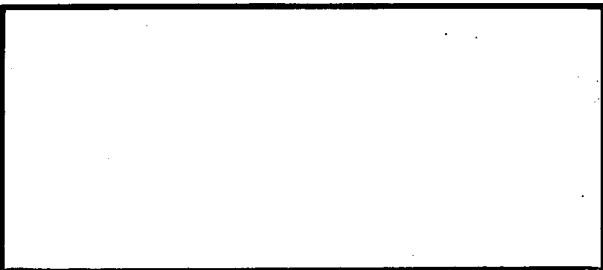
If a child's ability to communicate is limited, his social contacts and ready acceptance as a member of the group will be hindered. His speech skills include correct hearing and repeating of sounds and comprehension—the ability to understand what others say to him. Good hearing, vocabulary, and attention are essential to comprehension. Children's educational programmes on television may improve the vocabulary of the child.

The child's attitude towards people, things, and life are influenced greatly by his home life. He identifies with the thinking and attitudes of his parents and imitates their emotions and behavioural patterns. Although the child does not comprehend all that the parents say, their attitudes and emotions are communicated to him. Since the child spends so much time with the mother, he is greatly influenced by her and becomes dependent upon her. Loss of her by death or divorce usually leads to feelings of insecurity. The young child can try the patience of his mother since he is often rebellious, self-assertive, mischievous, demanding, and emotionally frustrated. His emotional variations result from his inability to achieve what he desires, the restrictions placed on him by his parents, and the interruptions of activities which he enjoys doing. The child's self-assertion and rebellion result from his attempts to relinquish absolute dependence on his parents.

Development during late childhood

Late childhood extends approximately from the age of six to puberty (when sexual maturing begins, usually between eleven and fourteen). When the child goes to school, he must learn to accept responsibility for his behaviour and activities. The change from the home to the school environment results in radical changes in the child's attitude and behaviour. During this stage, he learns the basic rudiments of knowledge for further education and vocation: reading, spelling, and basic number skills. The child is faced with new social expectations, and his childish behaviour is no longer acceptable and does not receive the tolerance that it did when he was younger. He is required to compete with members of his peer group. Competition leads either to new self-expectations and aspirations or to withdrawal if the child is repeatedly defeated. Failure to adjust to his social environment and peer expectations for acceptance will result in failure and immature patterns of behaviour. Failure may result also in lack of motivation to learn the developmental skills of his age level, which in turn may result in poor personal and social adjustments.

At the beginning of late childhood, boys and girls are made less attractive by missing teeth during the transition from temporary to permanent teeth, stringy and unmanageable hair which results from the change from fine-textured hair of the child to a coarser-textured hair of the adolescent and adult, and poor grooming resulting from lack of interest in appearance.



The child identifies with the thinking and attitudes of his _____ and imitates their _____ and _____ patterns.

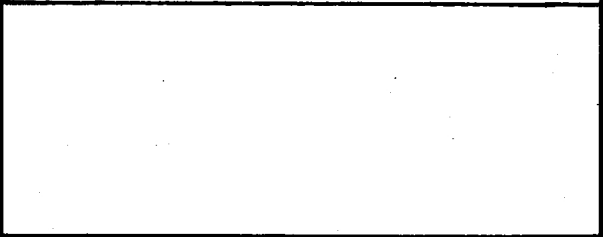
(parents, emotions, behavioural)



Some adjustments and changes in attitudes which a child must experience when he goes to school are:

- 1. He must learn to accept responsibility for his b _____ and a _____.*
- 2. He is faced with new s _____ expectations.*
- 3. His childish behaviour is no longer acceptable and is not tolerated as it was when he was y _____.*
- 4. He must compete with his p _____ group.*

(1. behaviour, activities; 2. social; 3. younger; 4. peer)



They insist on wearing clothes that are like those of their friends. It is very important for them to be accepted by peers, and thus they are easily influenced by them. They begin to compare themselves and their achievements to those of their peer group. For example, a boy may allow his agility or clumsiness to influence his self-image as to whether he is inferior or superior. Self-conception is influenced much by peer group reaction to each other's skills.

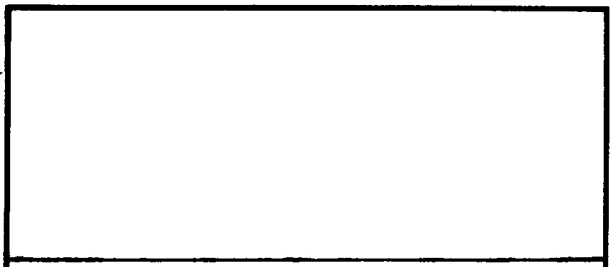
The older child learns that violent expressions of emotion are unacceptable socially. Temper outbursts are labelled as "babyish," fear as being a "fraidy cat," and jealousy as poor sportsmanship. These emotions, however, continue to be expressed at home where there is not the same motivation for controlling them. While girls frequently give vent to their frustrations with tears or temper outbursts, boys are more likely to express theirs by being sullen, or sulky.

During later childhood, a stronger desire for independence results in anger when that desire is frustrated. Also, the older child reacts to interruptions of his activities and to constant criticism. Since he tends to set levels of achievement beyond his capacity, he frequently becomes frustrated with his inability to reach those goals. His anger is expressed in various disagreeable moods.

In late childhood, more frequent and intense emotional variations may be experienced. These emotional changes come from physical and environmental causes. Irritability may be caused by illness or tiredness. Late childhood begins with the requirement to adjust to school which brings heightened emotionality. A period of emotional calm may follow as the child learns to play with others and improves his skills, but this stage ends with puberty in which the sex organs begin to function and bring heightened emotionality.

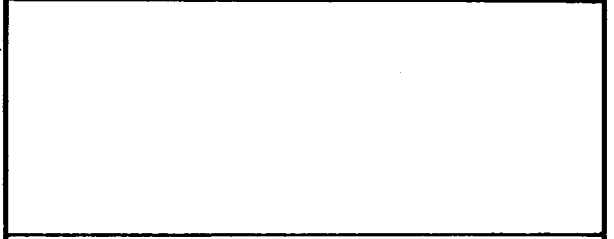
The life of the infant revolves around his self-centred interests, but the individual must make a transition to interests beyond himself in order to be accepted and to become a well-adjusted member of a social group. Those who continue to be self-centred are disagreeable and find it difficult to relate harmoniously in social contacts. The child's negativism must give way to more positive attitudes; otherwise, poor adjustments will be made.

Near the end of this stage, the child is no longer satisfied to play at home alone but desires to be associated with a group which is made up of a sufficient number of individuals to play games. The desire to be accepted is very strong and will influence the child's dress, opinions, and behaviour. Usually he will agree with his group rather than with his parents when conflicts arise. Ordinarily games are played by members of the same sex. During this stage, the child learns to compete with others and to cooperate with members of his own team. Boys' antipathy towards girls reaches a high point just before puberty. Since



An older child learns that violent emotional expressions are socially u_____.

(unacceptable)



Late childhood begins with the necessity to adjust to school which brings heightened e_____ and ends with puberty in which the sex organs begin to function and again bring heightened e_____.

(emotionality, emotionality)

To be accepted by and become a well-adjusted member of a social group requires a transition from _____ - _____ interests to interests _____ oneself.

(self-centred, beyond)

Peer influence is very strong because the older child desires to associate with and be accepted by a _____. Usually he will agree with the _____ rather than with his _____ when the two do not agree.

(group, group, parents)

girls mature earlier, they often regard boys of their own age as boisterous, noisy, and ill-mannered.

In order to maintain his status within the group, the child is pulled between the moral codes of his family and the group with which he associates. When he is not with the group, he will likely revert to the moral code of his parents. Therefore, parents should be concerned about their child's associates.

By later childhood, interests have expanded to include wider social contacts; however, home remains the place to which the child comes back with his experiences. He brings his joys and achievements as well as his hurts and disappointments. Concerned parents play a major role in helping the child adjust to his varied social environment. He will fail at times to be accepted by peers and will need to find an excuse to save face. If his parents are overly critical of him, he may withdraw in defeat. If they agree completely with him, he may become too negative in his attitude towards his peers. If his parents are overly protective in guarding his rights, they will encourage jealousy and selfishness instead of willingness to share. He needs their moral support and guidance while learning how to be accepted by others in a give-and-take relationship.

A child develops a concept of his own personality from what his parents think of him. If they apply constant pressure on him to achieve the impossible, he will develop emotional disturbances. If they accept him and his abilities and encourage him to live up to his possibilities, he will become well adjusted.

The Discipline of Children

The command to obey

Without obedience, the entire plan for the child's training is ineffective. Paul commanded children to obey their parents "in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Col. 3:20). In Ephesians 6:1, Paul connects the fifth commandment of honouring father and mother to the imperative of children obeying their parents. A child learns obedience in the home and extends that attitude to relationships outside the home. God gave parents divine authority to compel obedience from their children.

Children should be taught that God holds the parents responsible for their obedience. If parents fail to teach their children to respect and obey them, the children will likely have little respect for God and His authority. Children who are not taught to respect and obey parents at an early age usually will not honour parents in their later years.

Obedience must be taught. Instruction in obedience requires discipline. Discipline is related to the word disciple which means learner. It refers to controlling, educating, and correcting. Parents are

Some roles of parents and the home in the life of the older child include:

1. Home is where the child comes back with his e _____.
2. Parents help him adjust to his varied s _____ environment.
3. Parents give moral s _____ and g _____ while learning how to be accepted by others.

(1. experiences; 2. social; 3. support, guidance)

Read all of the topic The command to obey before doing the following exercise.

The parents' responsibility to teach their children obedience is very important because:

1. Obedience in the home extends to relationships _____ the home.
2. If children are not taught to respect and obey their parents, they will not likely respect _____ and His _____.
3. Failure to teach obedience leads to _____.

(1. beyond or outside; 2. God, authority; 3. delinquency)

responsible for directing the activities of children—not only telling them what to do but seeing to it that they carry out the instructions. Failure to discipline children leads to delinquency which starts with falsehood and disobedience and progresses to petty stealing or other more serious crimes. Parents who permit their children to get by with disobedience, falsehood, or disrespect without disciplining them are doing harm to their children. A parent who loves his child so much that he cannot discipline him actually does not love him enough. Parental discipline is necessary if the home is to be preserved and the nation is to be given stability. Juvenile crimes and disrespect of law enforcement officers result from a breakdown in parental discipline.

The child's training program

Every parent must face his child's stubborn determination to have his own way. Sometimes the child will defy the order of the parent; other times, he will pretend to carry it out but not do it. Some parents become frustrated and give up trying to teach their children to obey. Others fail to realize the importance of it. Eli, who was the priest of Israel, "restrained not his sons," and they were in turn a disgrace unto him and an abomination unto God. God's Word warns: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24). Also, the writer of Proverbs warns that corrections should not be withheld from the child, for punishing him will not cause his death but will "deliver his soul from hell" (Prov. 23:13-14). This proverb implies that the failure to correct will result in the loss of the son to hell.

Parents must set the boundaries of right conduct for their children. Every aspect of life must operate within limits. No one can do as he chooses. There must be rules and regulations. These give children a knowledge of what is expected of them and a certain security. Children who do not know what is expected of them are insecure. They know certain actions are wrong, but they are not mature enough to discipline themselves in resisting the wrong. When they commit wrong, they expect punishment. They would prefer to be made to do right than to be punished. They are confused when they do not know what the boundaries are but are disciplined when an adult decides they have done wrong.

In setting up rules, children should understand why they are necessary. No one likes to submit to a rule that is unreasonable, but children are much more willing to obey rules that are justifiable. It should be pointed out to them that when people have no limits they do not always do what is right. The Scripture clearly teaches that "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). Children should understand that adults as well

Three reasons parents should set boundaries of right conduct for their children are:

1. *Every aspect of life must operate within _____.*
2. *Children are more _____ if they know what is expected of them.*
3. *Children are not mature enough to do what they know is _____.*

(1. limits, 2. secure, 3. right)

as children are responsible to obey. Reasonable rules are essential.

Consistency is necessary in teaching obedience. Inconsistency occurs when a parent changes his mind or when correction of the child depends on his changing moods. If a child is allowed to break the rules and get by with it except on certain occasions, he is confused and does not learn discipline. Some parents only enforce the rules when they are emotionally disturbed, and they may at that time become extreme in the punishment.

Parents must agree concerning the orders and rules given. A countermand of one parent to an order given by the other damages both the relationship of the parents and the discipline of the child. When they disagree on matters of discipline, children learn quickly to pit one parent against the other in order to get what they desire. Parents must present a unified front to their children. If they give different commands to their children, it becomes impossible for either parent to control them.

Often the father's role is assumed to be that of supporting his family. He may become absorbed in his work and be unconscious of his family responsibilities to help discipline the children. The father and mother must work together in teaching children to obey.

Children must be guided and controlled by parents because children do not have the experience or maturity to know and do what is right. However, children also have wills and ideas of their own, and those ideas may conflict with their parents. Since the will of the parent must prevail in important issues, the parent should allow the child's will to prevail on incidental or non-essential issues. Some children are more strong-willed than others, and they are often potential leaders, but they experience conflict with parents because they do not like interference. Parents should attempt to channel their determination in the right direction by challenging them rather than threatening them.

What to Teach Children

To be thoughtful of others

The small child thinks only in terms of himself. He begins life completely dependent on others' doing things for him. His first words are "me", "my", and "mine". His thoughtfulness, or concern for others, does not develop naturally. It must be learned. Part of the instruction in this area comes through the example of parents. When parents are considerate of their children, usually their children respond with consideration. Frequently parents must correct their children when they demonstrate selfishness while playing with others. It may be called to a child's attention when he is treated with inconsideration by another that he does not like that treatment nor do others like his actions

An important quality in teaching and training children is _____.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

An imperative in teaching and training children is--

Parents must _____ or present a _____ front.

(agree, united)

An important principle in teaching and training children is--

The mother does not have sole responsibility; the _____ also must be involved.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

when they are similar. Teaching a child to be thoughtful and considerate is not easy and requires persistence.

To be responsible

Developing responsibility should come with maturity. As the child grows older, he is expected to take tasks and do them well. A child has to learn responsibility. He begins life without responsibility; his parents do everything for him. He must learn to do things for himself and must experience a feeling of satisfaction and acceptance when he has done a job well. Children can help with household and garden chores. They should be required to pick up their toys, help keep their rooms orderly, and help with the preparation of meals and the washing of dishes. Children are easily motivated to help if they are not expected to perform at a level beyond their abilities.

To respect property rights

Young children often want the toys of others. They do not know what belongs to them and what does not. The teaching of property rights should begin during the toy stage. Children must come to understand that they can play with others' toys with permission but not take them as their own. If a child is not taught to respect other people's property, likely he will begin later to steal small items from business places and eventually larger items.

Motivating Children

Children are taught to do right and avoid wrong through a system of rewards and punishment. A child who is denied a privilege because of disobedience will learn that there are consequences for his misdeeds.

Punishment is a negative form of guiding children and is essential. However, a parent should look for positive ways of motivating and guiding children. Positive motivation comes from complimenting them when they do well. To avoid punishment, some parents become too permissive. This practice is as dangerous as the other extreme of being overly strict and unreasonable. A certain amount of fear is necessary to motivate right actions, but all fear and no acceptance and self-esteem will leave the child unbalanced emotionally. Punishment that is unfair causes resentment and does not motivate a child to do right.

Often parents who have been criticized as children will in turn severely criticize their children. Criticism does not have much value in motivating a child to act because it does not offer a solution but destroys self-esteem. On the other hand, a child must understand when he has done wrong. Constructive criticism focuses on the child's careless performance rather than his character. Criticism before others embarrasses and may become injurious to self-respect. Without

Teaching responsibility involves--

1. A child's taking tasks and doing them _____;
2. His learning to do things for _____;
3. His experiencing _____ and _____ when the job has been done well.

(1. well; 2. himself; 3. satisfaction, acceptance)

List three important attitudes which parents should teach their children. (You have just read about them in the topic What to Teach Children.)

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Two methods of motivating children to do right are _____ and _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Although punishment is essential, it is a _____ form of guiding children. Compliments are _____ motivation.

(negative, positive)

self-confidence and self-esteem, a child will be afraid to participate and try to do better.

Leading Children to Christ

Most children who are exposed to positive religious influence make decisions for Christ before they are thirteen years old. Parents should be prepared to help them understand what they need to do. Some children receive Christ as Saviour as early as six years, but most are nine or ten. After they become old enough to know the difference between right and wrong, they begin to have an interest in being saved. Their concern likely will not focus on the great sins they have committed, but rather on what will happen to them if they die before receiving Christ. Usually children will ask questions to gain greater understanding of what they need to know. Parents should be prepared to guide them in understanding how to confess their sins and to invite Christ to save them. A child who has come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit will show disturbance during worship services, especially during invitations. Parents should pray for their children and be especially aware of opportunities to guide them.

The greatest contribution of a parent to a child is to teach him fear, respect, love, and submission to God who has revealed Himself in Christ. The Hebrew parents were instructed to teach their children the laws of God and to fear God: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established" (Is. 54:13-14a; see Deut. 4:10 and Prov. 22:6). The future of a nation is threatened when parents neglect their divine commission to teach their children about God, and the hearts of many neglectful parents are broken when their children go astray.

Give three evidences of a child's readiness to accept Christ.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(1. Is concerned about what will happen to him when he dies; 2. Asks questions; 3. Indicates disturbance during worship services, especially during invitations)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). Do the following exercise.

1. Give three reasons why it is normal for couples to want children. _____

2. List three problems that are causing some parents to desire smaller families. _____

3. Name three groups whose failure to practise birth control endangers the future. _____

4. Why should couples plan to postpone parenthood for a year or two after marriage? _____

5. Name four situations in which pregnancy is inadvisable. _____

6. Name five spiritual attitudes of parents that are important in providing the right atmosphere for the child. _____

7. How does the foetus obtain nourishment? _____

8. Name four physical changes and conditions caused by pregnancy. _____

9. Name six changes in the home that result from the birth of a child. _____

10. List three special adjustments the husband and father must make upon the arrival of the baby. _____

11. What marks the infant's entrance into childhood? _____

12. Why are infants described as "terrible twos" as they enter into childhood? _____

13. Why do children who develop normally demonstrate obstinacy, stubbornness, and disobedience? _____

14. What needs to be learned during early childhood? _____

15. How does the parents' speech influence the development of the child's speech skills? _____

16. In addition to speech, what does the child learn from parents? _____

17. Name some important changes in attitude and behaviour which the child must make when he begins his schooling. _____

18. State briefly the emotional changes of late childhood. _____

19. Why is peer influence strong during late childhood? _____

20. Why is the obedience of children important? _____

21. Why are boundaries of right conduct important for children? _____

22. List three essential principles in teaching obedience. _____

23. List three important attitudes that must be taught to children. _____

24. Give two methods of motivating children to do right and indicate which is preferred. _____

25. Give two evidences of a child's readiness to accept Christ. _____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3).

Read pages 121-126, 127-131, and 166-170 in The Marriage Affair, edited by J. Allan Petersen, and answer the following questions.

1. What three reasons does Petersen give for the development of unhealthy child-centred situations in the family today?
2. What does Petersen mean by "partnership before parenthood," and what four suggestions does he give for maintaining this order?
3. According to W. Robert Smith, what rule should guide parents in the discipline of the child?
4. Why does W.T. Thompson believe that it is not wrong to say "no" to a child?
5. When should parents use "no" sparingly?
6. What are six guidelines for saying "no"?

Advanced activity (Level 3).

Read pages 153-160, 161-165, 176-181, and 182-185 in The Marriage Affair, and do the following activities.

1. Based on the information in the study guide and "Understanding Age Growth" (pp. 153-160, The Marriage Affair), write a brief essay on the important stages in child development through age twelve.
2. According to Hazen G. Werner, how important is parental love to the developing child?
3. Distinguish between wiselove, over-indulgent love, and possessive love in parents' relation to children.
4. In analysing the increasing problems with juveniles, what does Arthur Gordon conclude is the basic problem?
5. According to Stanley Lindquist, when should a child be punished?

Seminar Discussion

1. Why is it important for a husband and wife to have children?
2. How many children should a family plan to have?
3. What special considerations should the husband give to the wife during pregnancy?
4. What are the important stages of development in the infant, and how should the response of the parents to the developing infant change?
5. How does understanding development during early childhood enable parents to train and discipline children effectively and consistently?
6. What are some important rules to remember in the discipline of children?
7. What are the important areas of instruction needed by children?
8. Invite students who have done the supplementary and advanced assignments to share what they have read.