

Child Rearing - Preparing Young People for Marriage

Howard Hendricks

Introduction.

A. Today we want to do two things.

1. We want to talk about preparing young people for marriage.
2. We want to take questions.

I. Preparing young people for marriage.

A. Preparation for marriage is like walking a tight rope, except that if you fall in marriage and or rearing children you don't get a second chance.

1. Marriage preparation is developed in infancy.
2. Two primary divisions to a young person's life.
 - a. Youth to puberty.
 - b. Adolescence.
3. The first twelve years of life we communicate to children by feelings, not by words.
 - a. We can communicate negative attitudes.
 - b. My great concern with evangelicals is that most parents are working too hard at childrearing and are uptight about the process.
 1. My older two children tend to be more insecure and the younger two more secure.
 2. With our third child we began to relax.
 3. More important than furniture and clean floors is relationships.

B. We communicate primarily in terms of relationships.

1. Your relationship with your children is more important than your reputation.
2. You have basically 12 years to build a relationship with your child as these are the most formative.

C. We communicate the rough example more than through words.

1. Couples that are hung up with personal problems communicate negatively.

2. Postponing marriage to work out personal problems is good.
3. What we do in the first 12 years is crucial for developing a child from dependence to independence.
 - a. We make decisions for them and then push them out on their own.
 - b. This is disastrous.
4. If a child does not learn to live independently of parents they will go through adulthood trying to work out their independence.
 - a. The example you set in the early years will determine how your child will come to you latter on.
 - b. In the latter years your ministry to your children is mostly supportive.
 - c. If your child doesn't come to know Christ early in life all is not lost.
 - d. When he discovers who Jesus is he will see how Christ changes lives.
 - e. The more serious problem is the child who comes to Christ early but does not experience life change, concluding that Christ is not that important.
 - f. Children will overlook your imperfections but not your hypocrisy.

II. Some principles.

A. Develop a warm but not a smothering relationship with both parents.

1. If God gives a boy and a girl to a couple it is important that the boy establish a strong relationship with his father because here he understands what a man is like.
 - a. The modeling is essential in communicating manhood.
 - b. It is also for the boy to relate to his mother, but not over relate, because from the mother he gets the idea of what a wife is like.
 - c. It is common for a boy to look for a wife like his mother, and if she is aggressive and dominant he will become weak and dependent.
2. A girl gets her idea of femininity from her mother.
 - a. If mom wigs out every time she has a period the girl might learn to resent being a woman.
 - b. The girl also gets her idea of manhood from her father and will look for a man like her dad.
3. This is why parents need to spend quality time with their kids each week, about one hour per week is a good ideal.

- a. I would take my girls out on a date.
- b. During this time my girls determined what it means to be with a man.
- c. My boys would take my wife out and they learn to relate to women in this way.

4. Homosexuality is the greatest perversion in America today.

- a. We are now up to 6 out of 100 in the nation, and 24 out of 100 in California.
- b. It is the fastest growing perversion in our society.
- c. As study concluded that homosexuality is the result of one of two things.
 - i. A hostile, passive, detached father.
 - ii. A dominant, smothering, aggressive mother.
 - iii. The combination of the two is usually lethal.
 - iv. I have not yet found an exception to this study.
 - v. These are the opposite roles of the biblical model.
 - vi. Homosexuality develops in Christian homes as well as non-Christian homes.
 - vii. We are facing this even in the seminary and sometimes need to clean it out.
- d. Over relating to parents is the key issue in forming homosexuality.

B. Dr. Hendricks takes questions.

- 1. How do kids over relate to parents?
 - a. By spending too much time with the parent.
 - b. Developing an inordinate affection for a parent.
 - 1. This happens even in Christian families.
 - 2. We need balanced relations between parents and children.
- 2. What danger is there in single children families?
 - a. The child becomes a self centered person.
 - b. The child needs to learn to share.

3. If a husband does not relate to his wife the woman needs to be careful not to over relate to her children.

- a. It would concern me if my children avoid the home.
- b. It does not concern me if my home is crowded.
- c. The damage to the furniture is not important.

4. What about a father who travels?

- a. The quality of time is more important than quantity of time.
- b. Some traveling salesmen are great parents while parents who do not travel may be poor parents.
- c. Children adapt to absence in the first 12 years than do teenagers.

C. Help your child develop an appreciation for his own sex and an appreciation for the opposite sex.

1. Be careful not to communicate negatively here.

- a. Saying, "All men are like that," is a poor thing to say.
- b. When preachers say unkind things about women it is unhealthy.
- c. We need to magnify our mates.

2. I spoke at Wheaton College when my son told me why he doesn't have negative feelings even though I travel so much because mom never complains about your travel.

- a. Mom would drop you off at the airport and praise God for the privilege of sharing you with the world.
- b. I also protect my wife and uphold the sanctity of womanhood.

D. House clean your attitude.

1. By living we develop negative attitudes and need to watch ourselves here.

2. We need constant upkeep in this regard.

3. The average woman spends so much time in the home she can become negative about the home.

4. Men spend so much time outside they can become negative about the outside.

5. I developed a point of no return, where I think about problems up to a time and then drop it completely.

6. We need to rejoice in the Lord always.
 7. My wife taught me much about this area of cleaning my attitude.
- E. Don't be afraid to express your love to your partner before your children.
1. Loving your son's mother is the greatest thing you can do for your son.
 - a. My boy saw me embracing my wife and complained.
 - b. His friend told him it must be wonderful to have loving partners since he didn't even know who his father is.
 2. Loving parents communicate security to their children.
- F. Encourage your children to make their own decisions.
1. This is difficult because they will make mistakes.
 2. Worse than making mistakes is not making decisions.
 - a. We were given expensive china and decided to use it with our kids.
 - b. We lost pieces but gave our kids the practice of using good dinner ware.
- G. Spend time with your children doing the things they enjoy.
1. The average father spends 7 and a half minutes with his child each week.
 2. If you can't spend more time spend better quality time.
 3. A salesman who lost his girls told me he doesn't spend much time with them.
 - a. He learned to sell by eating with clients.
 - b. He neglected to take his most important clients to lunch.
 - c. We spend much time with significant but we're often too busy for the most significant people in our lives.
 4. We need to communicate our convictions through our interpersonal communications.

III. Questions and Answers

- A. The motivation of being with children because I'm interested in them as people.
- B. Kids remember most our family vacations because they were fun.