

## **The Godly Man As A Father** *Responsibilities To Our Children*

God has placed in our hands the tremendous responsibility and great privilege - of teaching and training our children for His glory! What a fantastic trust! This requires nothing short of Godly parents totally committed to Him and totally relying on Him!

There are many excellent audios and books on this subject, Teacher. Some are mentioned at the end of each section. I would recommend that you avail yourself of some of these in preparation for teaching this lesson. You will find I use some quotes from Shirley Rice's book, *The Christian Home*. I would highly recommend it to you and to your class. She has several very excellent chapters on children. Another good book for parents of teenagers is *Shut Your Generation Gap* by Bill McKee.

Teacher, you may have fathers who feel they have made every possible mistake with their children. Some may be discouraged thinking it's too late for them to find out God's principles for raising children now. So it would be well to remind them that our God is a Redeemer God and He can even use our mistakes for good in the lives of our children. And they can still have a profound influence even on their grown children by the sweet fragrance of a Godly life - "The unmistakable 'scent' of Christ, discernable alike to those who are being saved and to those who are heading for death . . ." II Corinthians 2:14 (Phillips). The Christian and the non-Christian should be able to smell the sweet fragrance, the unmistakable scent of Christ in our lives. Perhaps you will want to use the following poems at some point in the lesson.

### *Children Learn What They Live*

*If a child lives with criticism  
He learns to condemn,*

*If a child lives with hostility  
He learns to fight,*

*If a child lives with ridicule  
He learns to be shy,*

*If a child lives with shame  
He learns to feel guilty,*

*If a child lives with tolerance  
He learns to be patient,*

*If a child lives with encouragement  
He learns confidence,*

*If a child lives with praise  
He learns to appreciate,*

*If a child lives with fairness  
He learns justice,*

*If a child lives with security  
He learns to have faith,*

*If a child lives with approval  
He learns to like himself,*

*If a child lives with acceptance and friendship  
He learns to find love in the world.*

*Dorothy Law Nolte*

### **A. Object Of The Lesson**

1. To teach the Biblical principles regarding our responsibility to our children.
2. To desire to be Godly parents.
3. To begin or continue operating on Biblical principles in raising our children.

## B. Discussion Questions

1. Share some ways your children have been a spiritual blessing to you.
2. What was the most outstanding principle or insight that you got from the lesson?
3. What has happened in your life that would point out the truth that God gave children because of what they would do for you?
4. In questions 2 and 3 what are some of the parents' responsibilities to their children? Did you find any new insights here?
5. Turn to Luke 2:40 and 52. What four areas of growth in Jesus' life are mentioned here? (Physical, mental or emotional, spiritual, and social). Do you feel your child is growing in all four areas? What attention do you give to training him and aiding him in his growth in each of these areas? Are you giving as much time, thought, and training to the spiritual growth as to the other three areas? (Teacher, allow time for discussion between each of these questions).
6. What are the basic things you feel a child needs to grow up into a mature, God-fearing, law-abiding individual? (Love and discipline - both are essential because "Love without discipline is sentiment. Discipline without love is tyranny" - Shirley Rice.)
7. Looking at the ways we love our children, how would you describe a healthy, balanced love? (Love that fosters independence and maturity; love that holds the child to the highest, demanding the best of him but not expecting more than he is capable of producing; love that encourages, lets him know you are proud of him, expresses confidence - this is mature love.)
8. Looking at the other side, what characterizes a possessive love?
  - a. Love that is selfish
  - b. A self-love rather than a love for the child.
  - c. Makes the child dependent and fosters immaturity
  - d. This is immature love.
9. What advice would you men give to a father who has already spoiled his child, but longs to correct the situation? (Teacher, be sure the men bring out the need for consistent discipline in their comments. The book, *Parents on the Run*, has some excellent thoughts on this.)
10. How do you teach your child to make right choices?
11. Discuss definitions of teach, train, discipline, etc. Did this help you better understand what your responsibility is? What are some ways we teach our children?
12. How do you think we teach our children to honor us as parents? (We must be

worthy of their honor. G. Campbell Morgan says, "The surest way to insure that children shall honor parents is for the parents to live the life before them that reflects the glory and the grace of God.")

13. What ways of making your child secure impressed you the most, or was your area of greatest need?

14. What are some practical ways to build security in the lives of our children?

15. What are some guidelines for discipline you follow with your children?

16. What principle of discipline or verse impressed you the most? Which one do you have the most difficulty following? Why?

17. What are some reasons we don't discipline? What can we do about it with God's help?

18. How do you feel about your child - whom you are seeking to raise according to Christian principles playing with a neighbor's child whose language and conduct is not in accord with these principles . . . especially if it is a neighbor you are seeking to witness to, or if this is the only playmate your child has?

(Shirley Rice in *The Christian Home* gives this advice: "The only way we can solve this problem is to lay a good foundation to relate the child rightly to God and to Christ, to know the source of power they have in Him, and to be happy about this power and about His attitude and interest in children. Teach them to turn to God for help at home, or at play, or at school. Encourage them to look to the One who can help them. We don't want to rear houseplants - our children will meet evil. I think we should arrange it so that situations are not too bad. Strengthen them in their relationship to God, and they will have the help they need when they must go apart from their purely Christian environment.")

19. Share what you consider one strength and one weakness you have as a parent.

20. In what way do you fail most to encourage your children?

### **C. Suggestions For Conclusion**

1. Look over the ways of encouragement and pick one to work on this week. Write it down now. Determine a specific way you could improve in that area. Write it down, share it with the class. Commit it to God in prayer as we close and tell God your purpose to cooperate with Him to be consistent in encouragement and in discipline this week.

2. Go over the list of practical helps. Ask each man to choose one thing from each section. (a) the life of the parent (b) encouragement (c) discipline or training - to pray for everyday this week and work on. Encourage them to select another one from each section next week and the next week, etc., to pray over and work on.

## **D. Additional Scriptures**

Psalm 128 (LB); John 10:28; Lam. 3:27; Colossians 3:21; Proverbs 6:20; Hosea 6:1; Deuteronomy 5:29; Hebrews 10:24,25; Psalm 32:8-9; Genesis 18:19; I Sam. 1:11,27; Titus 1:8; Proverbs 17:27,28; Proverbs 22:15; Proverbs 20:30.

## **E. Possible Projects**

1. Give each man one or two chapters from a book to read, or a audio to listen to; then give a 5-10 minute report on it. For instance you could assign:
  - a. Parents on the Run - Chapters 6 and 7
  - b. The Christian Family - Pages 63-74.
  - c. Dare to Discipline - pages 15-49 to one person, pages 63-90 to another person
  - d. Heaven Help the Home - Chapter 4
  - e. Howard Hendrick's audios - Childrearing I and II and III (audio 1150AB, 1151 AB, & 1152AB)
2. Set aside a regular time weekly to do something that each child likes to do.
3. Underline verses with your children each week that will build character and have them start a notebook of these verses.
4. From the list of weaknesses and strengths, work this week on building up weaknesses and continue working on strengths.
5. Ask children what discipline means to them. Go through Proverbs with them and point out principles of discipline in Proverbs.
6. Begin to have a time of family prayer together before putting the children to bed each night.

## **F. Extra Helps**

Hide or Seek by James Dobson, Tyndale House

Reconstruction of Family Life by *E. Trueblood*

The Marriage Affair by J. A. Peterson (Chapter 6)

Audio 1067 - "Training Children Ages 7-12"

Audio 969, 970 - "God's plan for Your Child; The Place of Prayer in Child Training"