

How to Raise Godly Children

by Zac Poonen

Fathers have a crucial responsibility to train up their children in the way they should go, teaching them the Bible and God's ways, and disciplining them when necessary.

Duration: 1:34:23

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Ephesians 6:4, Hebrews 12:7, James 1:5

Topics: "Christian Parenting", "Family Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of parents taking an active role in raising godly children, highlighting the need for both fathers and mothers to be involved in teaching, disciplining, and instructing their children in the ways of the Lord. It addresses various aspects of parenting, including avoiding partiality, teaching simplicity, guiding children in church conduct, and instilling values of obedience, truthfulness, and faith from a young age.

Transcript

So, in this session, we are going to talk about how to raise, how to bring up godly children. And then, we will be answering some questions. First of all, I want to show you a verse in the last book of the Old Testament.

In the book of Malachi, in chapter 2, it speaks about why God made a husband and wife one. That's a very interesting answer that the Holy Spirit gives here. In the middle of verse 15, chapter 2, verse 15, Now, this verse is translated slightly differently in some versions.

But here, in the NASB, in the margin, it says like this. Why did God make, train up a child in the way he should go when he is old, he will not depart from it? That is positive and negative. If you bring them up in a godly way from childhood, then when they are old, they won't depart from it.

If you are careless and allow them to grow up worldly when they are young, when they are old, they will not depart from those worldly ways. We must never leave the bringing up of our children to the Sunday school in the church. That is not God's will.

It says in Hebrews, in chapter 12, Hebrews, chapter 12, and it speaks here about fathers, that just like God disciplines us, just like fathers discipline their children, just like fathers discipline their children, God also disciplines us. It says in verse 7, It is for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with sons.

For which son is there whom his father does not discipline? That's a question that's asked. Is there a father who does not discipline his children? Today the answer is yes. Unfortunately, there are many fathers like that.

Ephesians, chapter 6, tells us what fathers must do. Verse 4, Bring your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Instruction means teaching them God's word and God's ways.

God's word and God's ways. God's word is, you must teach them the Bible, the stories in the Bible, the teaching in the Bible. And God's ways means how we apply the word of God to our daily life.

That is the responsibility of fathers. If fathers fail to do it, then the mothers must do it. We see an example of that in the Bible, in Timothy's mother.

Timothy's father was a Greek businessman, we read. So, he was not a Jew. So, he didn't have the background of the Old Testament.

And he probably had no interest in spiritual things. I don't know how Timothy's mother went and married him. Because her mother was also a God-fearing woman.

And that grandmother had put faith in the mother. And she gave it to Timothy. Paul says that in 2 Timothy.

So, it's not Timothy's father who put faith into Timothy's heart. That's because he was an unbeliever. But otherwise it is God's will that fathers should bring up children, not Sunday school.

All of you parents, you fathers must teach your children the Bible. Don't just take them to church and say they will hear it there. I know of many fathers in our CFC churches who are not teaching their children the Bible.

You don't have to be a Bible scholar. Tell them the stories in the Bible. Tell them about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

And about David and Elijah. And about John the Baptist. And about Jesus and the apostles.

And what all the New Testament teaches. Most of us have our children at home for 18 to 20 years at least. I had four sons and they were in my home for 18 years each of them.

At the age of 18, they all went to study in college away from home. So, I knew that I had 18 years to teach my children. And they must really know the scriptures by that time.

And so, I did my very best to teach them the scriptures. And it was not always by my sitting and teaching them. There are many good Bible story books.

And I got one of those books for them to read. And I had children's level books. Stories in the Bible.

And they would read it. And I would only ask them questions. To try and find out whether they have read it.

And like that, I encouraged them to read the scriptures. All of them. And by the time they were 18 years old and they left home, they really knew the scriptures.

Not only they knew the scriptures, they knew God's ways that we taught in the church. Why we don't cheat in examinations. Why we don't take money from other people without returning it.

Why we must forgive everybody. Why we must not sit at home and speak evil of other people. So, these are God's ways.

Why we must not hit back at other people who hit us. Why we must walk in humility. Why we must keep our thought life pure.

Why we must control our tongue. Where are our children going to learn all this? In our home. Not in the Sunday meeting.

The Sunday meeting is for those who are irresponsible at home. I always say Sunday school is for unbelievers children. Believers children are taught at home.

They can go to Sunday school. But there is nothing they will learn there. They have already learnt everything at home.

My children went to Sunday school in CFC Bangalore every Sunday. That was good. To fellowship with other children.

But what they learnt in the Bible, they learnt at home. So, I want to encourage all of you parents to teach the scriptures to your children. Nowadays they have got school and so much homework and so much to study.

You may not have so much time every day to teach them. But at least on the holidays, on Sunday evening perhaps, or on Saturday evening, at least two days a week, we must sit down a little bit with them and share the scripture. And then another good time to share the word of God is when we sit around the table and eat our food.

In our home we could never do it in the morning because they are always getting ready to go to school. In our home we could never do it in the morning because they are always getting ready to go to school. They come home and eat their lunch and then go to school.

Or they eat their lunch in the school. For many of us, it is like that. And that is the time that is a very good time to speak about the Bible when we are eating our food.

I used to talk with my children many times at the dinner table about spiritual things. Why we do certain things in certain ways. Why we don't do this.

Why we do the other thing. And like that they begin to understand God's ways. And also the Bible says we have to give them the discipline of the Lord.

So that teaches us instruction and discipline. Both mentioned in Ephesians 6.4. It is the responsibility of the father. If the father fails to do it, then the mother.

Just like in most of our homes, it is the father who goes first. He goes to work and earns the money. That has been the normal practice in the history of humanity for 6,000 years.

The man goes and earns the living and the mother keeps the home. But if the father is sick or dead, then the mother has to do that. So if the father does not teach and discipline the children, then the mother has to do it.

But if you are a father in a CFC church, and you say you are a born again believer, and you don't instruct your child, and you don't discipline your child, you must hang your head in shame. Say, Lord, I am ashamed of myself. I am behaving like a woman.

I want to say that. Any father who is born again in CFC, and you don't instruct your child, and you don't discipline your child, and you leave it to your wife to teach the scriptures and discipline the child, you should be ashamed of yourself. I want to say to you, you are behaving like a woman.

You are not behaving like a man. You are behaving like a woman. You should put a veil on your head in the meeting.

And if people ask you, why are you a man, veiling your head in the meeting, you say, because I don't discipline my children. Because I don't teach my children. It is that bad.

So at least from now on, I hope you will take it seriously. I say this strongly because I see so many fathers who just leave that responsibility to the mother. Thank God for mothers who do that faithfully.

But the Bible says, fathers, you must give instruction to your children about the Lord to your children. And it's when fathers fail that children don't take it seriously and they grow up ungodly. The father must be a very strong person in a home.

He must be the head and the leader. So those are some simple principles. The wife is, God created the wife to be a helper to Adam.

Not the head of Adam, the helper. So your wife is meant to be a helper to you to bring up children. So I hope we will do that more and more in our homes where fathers will take that responsibility very seriously.

In the Old Testament, the law was that you must have once a year the Passover feast. And you read about that in Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy. And God's law was when you celebrate this Passover feast about your deliverance from Egypt, the son must ask the father, Father, what is the meaning of this? And the father has to say, explain the meaning of that Passover feast.

He shouldn't say, I don't know, ask mummy. There was no such thing in the Old Testament. The father had to explain it.

Son, this is because our ancestors were slaves in Egypt and God in a mighty way delivered them. And the angel of death passed over our house that's why this is called the Passover feast. And then if the son asked another thing, he should be able to explain it.

So that was around a meal that is God's way. When you sit around a meal, the children ask the father and the father teaches the scriptures. And that practice is practiced among the Jewish religious families even today after 3,500 years.

Why is it we Christians are failing? Why is it Christian fathers are not teaching their children around the dining table? You know the Jewish people are so proud of their Jewish ancestry to Abraham. Generation after generation there are religious Jews. Even after 3,500 years there are people who keep all those rituals.

Because of this principle fathers were teaching their children. So this is the very important principle in raising children. Now we go to these questions.

The first question is how can we handle our older son who hesitates to obey us parents? Well I don't want to say that you should have thought of that when he was a baby. But very often grown up children are not listening to their parents because the parents did not teach them from childhood. We have to teach our children to obey the parents.

And if they don't obey the parents we must punish them. The Bible says one of the commandments is honor your father and mother. And in the Old Testament the law was very strict.

The law was very strict that if you do not honor your father and mother that if a child was continuously rebellious when he is grown up then the law was you take him to the elders and stone him to death. It was the same as for committing adultery. The very severe punishment that God instituted in the Old Testament for rebelling against parents.

So we don't do that in the New Testament. But we have to teach our children to obey and honor their parents. And if they speak rudely you must not take that lightly you must rebuke them correct them right then.

I have seen some small 5 year old children speak rudely to their father and mother. Believers. And the parents just laugh at it.

I have called the father and said you must not laugh at that. You must correct him and rebuke him. He is only 5 years old.

He treats you like this. What will he do when he grows up? Just like I said when they grow up they rebel against their parents. So start at the beginning.

But now if you maybe you came to the church late and you did not know about these things and the children were small. And now the child is teenager or more than that doesn't listen to you. Then you must show your love to him.

You must put your arm around him. Kneel down with him and pray. And teach him the fear of God even if he is 20 years old.

But at the same time we must not make such strict rules that they think you are interfering too much in their life. You can't treat a 20 year old like a 5 year old child. For a 5 year old you can say even if you don't feel like coming to the church meeting you are coming with me.

You are under law you better obey me. But when they are 20 years old you can't force them to come to the church meeting. He is a grown up boy.

You have to only pray for him. Love him. But teach him God's word that it will go well with children who obey their parents.

Warn him that it will go badly if he continues to disobey. And more than anything else husband and wife must join to pray for that child. And if you keep on praying for that grown up child God can still save him.

So husband and wife must kneel down and pray everyday for such a child. Ok another question is in which area should we use the rod when punishing children? Is there any age limit? There are different degrees of disobedience. Some disobedience is very serious.

Some disobedience is not so serious. So we have to decide on the punishment according to the seriousness of the disobedience. You don't have to use the rod every time.

In fact the rod or the belt should be the last resort when everything else has failed. There are many other ways of punishing. Like you can't go and play today.

Or go and lie down on your bed for half an hour. While your other brothers and sisters are playing outside you got to lie down on your bed. That can be a punishment.

Because the disobedience was not so serious. But if the disobedience was really serious that means many times they are playing in the same area then we can use the rod or the belt. The next question is what is the age beyond which we should not use the rod? I feel that once a child crosses the age of 12 we should not use the rod on the child.

Because it's growing up to be a young man and we should not treat them like a little baby. So that is my rule. There is no rule in scripture on that.

Another question is is it ok to discipline our children in the front of other people? Wrong. If my children disobey in the presence of some visitors in the house and I punish them in front of them it becomes a double punishment. First the punishment they get from me and the second it is a humiliation for them before the visitors.

That is sometimes a bigger punishment for them. So I must not give them double punishment. So I have to say go to your room or something and then after the visitors have gone away then we call him and we say now you have to settle some accounts here and we have to discipline you for what you did earlier.

So that is important. Another question is how do we maintain godliness in the way we allow our children to dress in these modern times? I think this is more a problem with girls than with boys. Because in 1 Timothy 2 it does not tell us how men should dress but it tells us how women should dress.

And even in 1 Peter 3 it speaks about women's dress not men's dress. And we know that what is a sinful way of dressing for men I have never heard of anything. It is women who can dress in such a way that they can provoke other men to be tempted sexually.

And the two things that are most common nowadays with women's dress is to one to make the dress very tight so that the whole shape of the body of the woman is there and that is only to tempt men. It is not for comfort. It is more comfortable to have a loose dress always.

So it is not for comfort. It is only for to tempt men. Now women may say well that is the style nowadays.

But the style is determined by the devil. All the tailors and all the fashion designers they are all controlled by the devil. So naturally the devil will give them designs to provoke men to sin.

All these things that are shown in movies and advertisements it is all from the devil. And our children are seeing all that. We have to tell them that is the god of this world that is tempting people with these dresses.

So we have to teach them because our children little girls grow up they don't know. Do you think a little girl knows that the way she dresses can tempt some young man? Because she doesn't know how a man thinks. So you can't blame that girl.

She just sees other girls dressing like that and says mummy I want to dress like that. Then you have to explain to them that way you will be attracting boys towards you and they will sin and god will punish you if they sin. Because god will punish you if you tempt other people by the way you dress.

So we have to explain all this. So it is primarily immodesty in dress that we have to be careful about. And should we start when they are young? See if you teach a five year old to be very careless about her dress with very very short skirts when she grows up she may not want to wear any longer skirt.

In the western countries nowadays it is so bad that women go around dressed in shorts which are like underwears. And the mothers make the little girls dress with that type of shorts. When they are twenty years old they will be wearing the same thing.

So we have to be very careful. So one girl asked me about dress and this is what I told her in Mangalore. I said supposing Jesus were living in the next street and one day Jesus calls you on the telephone and says come I want to take you out for a walk in the market place today.

And you are going to walk with Jesus in the market place. How will you dress when you go to meet Jesus that day? I told this young sister you dress like that everyday. I am not going to tell you the length of your skirt or the length the height of your blouse or how much you should expose below your neck.

I am not going to tell you all that. You just imagine that you are going to go for a walk with Jesus. And that Jesus looks at your dress and he is proud to say this is my sister.

That's all I said. And I know they will know when you dress in a certain way and they look in the mirror and say Jesus won't be happy with this. And then I said is it like that you must dress like that only when you come to church? No.

Don't you want Jesus to be with you when you go to college or when you go to work? Sure you need Jesus there also. In fact you need Jesus more in your work place than in the church. Not only when you go to church.

Another question. Can we allow our children to watch cartoon programs and play mobile games as an entertainment? See there are some games that they play on computers and their mobile phones which are very bad. You know people who look like demons I would not allow children to play with such games.

But there are other games which are not so bad. There are cartoon programs that are clean and cartoon programs that are not clean. So you must see it yourself as a parent and then decide whether your children should see it.

And also you must limit the amount of time that they can do these things. I was very strict when my children were small about what type of computer games they could play. There were no mobile phones those days.

But even computer games I would say only half an hour. That's all. Then you got to do your homework and other things.

So you must limit the time. We must also encourage our children if they have free time to play some musical instrument or something which is better than just playing these computer games. That will be more useful for them later on.

Another question is can we allow our children to wear ornaments or not? Always the question we must teach our children is why are you doing it? I remember once when I was telling one sister about wearing ornaments. I said my wife and I don't wear ornaments at all. But she said Brother Zach is the only man who looks on the outward appearance.

God looks at the heart. I said that's right. God is looking at your heart to see why you are wearing these ornaments.

You need to glorify God or to show people. That is what God is seeing. He is not looking at the ornaments.

He doesn't care about the ornaments. He looks at the heart. Why are you doing it? So we must teach our children that.

I say the best thing is not to let them wear ornaments. Don't let them wear it when they are small. Once they are 18 years old and they become adults, then I'll leave it to them.

So I'll tell them see you are young and you don't understand everything now. And you need to understand whether it is good or not in God's eyes. My advice is don't let them wear it till they are grown up and if they choose it themselves then they have to answer to God.

Okay another question is the importance of reading God's word, memorizing family prayer, cultivating godliness in the home. I already spoke a little bit about it. But let me emphasize that the important thing we must teach our children is obedience to God's word and not just reading God's word.

Supposing they read the Bible 10 minutes in the morning and they disobey the parents throughout the day and are rebellious. I say what's the use of reading 10 minutes in the morning? Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from God's word. That doesn't mean reading God's word it means obeying God's word.

The best is to read God's word and obey it. But if you forgot to read God's word in the morning because you were busy don't worry about that. Obey God's word throughout the day.

Then you won't live by God's word throughout the day. When it says man shall live by every word of God it is not talking about reading the Bible. It is talking about living according to the Bible.

Man shall live according to the word of God. So many people ease their conscience by saying I read the Bible 10-15 minutes in the morning. What's the use of that if you are shouting at your wife and telling lies in the office? Don't read the Bible just control your temper and speak the truth.

So that's why we emphasize obedience more than just the ritual of family prayer. If you are emphasizing obedience, obedience, obedience to God's word then prayer at home is good. But if it is just to ease your conscience everyday we pray as a family In our home we emphasize obedience.

It did not disturb us if one day we were so busy we did not have time to pray together. Many days we did not get time, it's not serious. But everyday obedience that is the way I brought up my children.

Obedience to God's word is the most important thing. Another question is when children choose their life partner on their own before it is time what should we parents do about it? You see by the time children are going to college when they are 19 years old or so it's very easy for them to make friendships with others of the opposite sex. And they can fall in love with somebody.

So that's a natural thing. And so we have to protect our children from their falling in love with the wrong person. So when they have come to that age 18 years or so we must teach them that we have to be very careful about our emotions.

You have to tell your young son listen you are not going to get married till you are 25 or 26 years old. You have to earn your living you have to be able to look after a family then only you can get married. And you have to complete your education.

And if a girl is going to college you have to tell her you have to take your education seriously before you get married. What will happen if your husband dies? You have to have some means of earning your living and taking care of your children. So don't get falling in love with anybody now concentrate on your studies.

And don't always speak to one boy or one girl speak to everybody equally. Then people will know that you are not interested in one person. When you have grown to the age where you can consider marriage you got a job and you can set up a home the godly way to go about marriage is this first discuss with your parents.

If your parents are not godly discuss with the elders in your church.

And if you are interested in a particular girl or a particular boy for marriage don't approach that person directly go to your elder brother in the church or through your parents if the parents are godly then that's fine otherwise go to the elder and let them approach that girl the girl's father not the girl directly that is an ungodly way that you have in the world if you read 1 Corinthians 7 it speaks about a man giving his daughter in marriage it's the father who gives the daughter away in marriage and you see how god honored Isaac for allowing Abraham to find a wife for him so if you are interested in a particular girl first of all you find out whether she is born again and that the elder brother of that church will know and even then you must approach through your elder brother or

your father and ask him to write to that girl's father or elder brother you should not try to contact that person on your own and create emotional problems for that person I know they do it like that in the world but I'm telling you the godly way to do it you must control your passions because you can ruin people's lives if you do it in any other way if you can't trust your father go to your elder brother and do it in a godly way because there is a lot of confusion that can happen nowadays with the way it's being done in the world there is nothing wrong in a desire coming in your heart to be interested in a girl or a boy because they are spiritual that is normal go about it in a godly way there is a book of mine called sex, love and marriage you can read it there are a lot more

instructions there ok then next question is can we allow our children to participate in cultural events in schools and colleges we have to find out what type of event it is and whether it is proper for our children to take part in it and nowadays in schools they are having yoga classes see yoga is basically something that has come from hinduism now the physical exercises are ok but there is another element to it so if you want to stretch your legs and hands to keep yourself fit that is ok but there is there is a something in yoga called surya namaskara that is one of the things in yoga you take a particular stance and that is supposed to be worshipping the sun so we don't do that we say I don't mind stretching my hand like that or my legs but I am not going to worship the sun to keep our

body flexible is ok so we have to tell our children sometimes when they are small they don't have the ability to take a stand but we have to explain to our children that we don't worship the sun we are only

exercising the body fine but if your teacher tells you to meditate and mention some om or some hindu name like that don't do it say sorry I am a christian I am not supposed to do it will that cause some difficulty to our children yes but throughout all these 2000 years many christians have suffered for standing up for Jesus Christ I suffered many things when I was in the navy because I said I will not do it I am a christian so we want our children to stand up for the truth but not unnecessarily foolish another question is what about sibling rivalry that means among children competing

with one another you see that how Cain and Abel had a rivalry as to who is going to be accepted by God Cain and Abel it's the first story in the bible he got so angry he killed his brother so the sibling rivalry is there from the beginning as parents we have to prevent it but one advice I will give you never never compare one of your children with another child don't ever don't ever tell your child why can't you be like your brother or why can't you be like that sister because then you will make them hate one another and remember children are different not all our children have the same level of intelligence and not all children have the same level of diligence so you can't make one child like another one child may be more interested in games another child may be more interested in

studies so we must make our children study but not by comparing themselves with the other child you must never say see how he studies why can't you study like him don't ever say that you will destroy your children that way so sometimes parents compare like that and increase the rivalry how can we prevent how can parents prevent them from telling lies to each other see that is in human nature to tell lies even grown up people tell lies but we have to tell them that is a very serious thing before god to tell a lie so we must teach them like I used to tell my children whatever wrong thing you did however serious it may be you tell me the truth I will not punish you but if you tell me a lie you are really going to get it very hard from me I used to teach that to my children when they were two

years old don't tell me a lie I don't care what wrong you did I will forgive everything you broke something expensive doesn't matter I don't care for earthly things but don't tell me a lie so your children must see that you don't value material things so much but you value speaking the truth and then very often they have to grow out of it in terms of telling lies to each other but we must ensure that they don't tell lies to us as parents ok how do we handle the disobedience of teenage children sorry oh sorry how can we keep our children spotless in the midst of unconverted relatives that's very difficult because we don't want to criticize the uncle and auntie so we have to be very wise in what we tell our children don't say they are evil and we are good don't ever teach like that no say

we have got certain standards every home has got their own standards they always watch movies but we don't allow that in our house we don't criticize them we don't judge them but that is not the standard for our house so that's why we don't allow you to join with them when they are watching some dirty movie but don't go and tell them that we are better than you that's why we don't watch that we have to protect our children from becoming proud and arrogant in their Christianity and protect our children from you know speaking words which hurt others we must pray that's how we can protect them from unconverted relatives I would never send my children to go and spend a few days in an unconverted relatives home I won't do that because I don't know what all bad habits they will pick up so how

shall we handle the disobedience of teenage children I answered this a little bit in the as I said we must be friendly with them and pray with them and encourage them and slowly win their heart show them that we love them and don't be unnecessarily strict about things which are not so important be strict about sinful things but other things don't be so strict how can we help our children realise the value of the church first

of all by our realising as parents the value ourselves by not criticising other people in the church see every church has got good people and people who are not so serious there may be some who are dressed in an immodest way it's better to say we disagree with them than to say they are evil no we must be wise to say our standards are a little different so we don't do

it like them and tell them no church is perfect we go to a particular church because it is obeying God's word more than other churches but it's not full of perfect people but we are glad to be able to go there we must all belong to some church see that's how we teach them to value the church what does it mean for parents to be role models to our children primarily primarily by husband and wife not fighting with each other in front of your children now that may be very difficult if you have a disagreement with your husband or wife wait till you are in some place where your children are not there in the bedroom or go for a walk and talk about your disagreement away from your children see in every marriage there will be disagreements between husband and wife there are many difficult things

we have to discuss together where we disagree do that privately that's what I say never disagree and yell at each other in the presence of your children so at least they see that you are not publicly you know fighting and yelling with each other show them by your life that you don't cheat you are upright you don't try to get money in a wrong way show them how you are trying to follow Jesus in different areas ok another question is is it ok for both parents to take up jobs what should we do when both of us cannot spend enough time with our children no there is no verse in the bible which says a woman cannot work because if the husband is dead or an invalid the woman has to work but if you can afford to live on the husband's income alone that is the best that is what my wife and I decided

when we got married we were very very poor we couldn't even afford house rent my wife was a doctor but after our first son was born we decided that both of us decided she will not work all these 47 years after that she never worked she just helped poor people but never earned any money not because we had a lot of money but because we wanted to bring up our children in godly ways and a mother must be there available at home all the time because the father is going out here and there and now our children are 40 years and more so I see all of them are following the lord so now I can evaluate put it in a balance and evaluate here are 4 children following the lord and here is all 40 lakhs or 100 lakhs we could have earned in 50 years which is heavier children following the lord or 50-60 lakhs

money definitely children following the lord are more important for me we don't feel sorry about that decision we made then so if you don't have money to survive then of course the woman must work you have enough money to pay the rent for the house but if you want to make the wife work just to raise your standard of living later on you may regret that your children were neglected so you won't be able to spend time with your children there is one teenage daughter to a teenage girl who told her mother she was about 19 years old and the mother wanted to spend time with her and you know what she said mommy when i was 5 years old i wanted to spend time with you but you had no time for me you were always busy going to work and so many things now i am 19 years old i have no time for you just

like you had no time for me when i was small so you see that can happen ok another question is how can we teach our children simplicity when we all have a very high standard of living you can teach your children simplicity even if you got a very high income you don't have to become poor first by not buying for them everything they want you can teach them self denial and say son my daughter i am not going to buy that dress for you you already have enough i am not going to buy that toy for you you already have enough toys at home that way you teach them self denial and that is what we need to teach our children

even if we are earning a lot you don't have to buy them the most expensive sneaker shoes you can buy them cheaper models and if they cry they will cry but you will teach them some

values we can't just buy everything even if we have the money and that will be a good lesson for them to learn when they get married next question is it alright to share our responsibility of raising children with our parents that is their grandparents i don't find any verse in the bible which says that grandparents must bring up their grandchildren i know it is a very common habit in india but it is not a very healthy thing unless you know the parents are sick or some hospital emergency things like that then of course grandparents can be used to take care of their children or to help in a time of delivery of babies or something like that but if it is just to make more money it is very unwise so i am going to go there to make money please tell the grandparents to look after the children

they may make a lot of money but 25 years later see what will happen to their children they will weep that they spent their life making money so i want to save people from that calamity ok next question what is your advice to parents who sometimes show partiality with their children that is evil and devilish god is not partial sometimes parents can be partial supposing you have many girls and one boy you are partial to that boy evil when you share your inheritance at the time of your death you must write a will that your boys your sons and your daughters get equal amount no nobody must get more than the other that is partiality as far as possible we must treat all our children equally nobody must be my special favourite that i will buy special clothes or special food for that person that

is demonic you know jacob did that to one of his children joseph bought him a special dress that brought so much jealousy there that they almost killed him that's a lesson for us don't be foolish like jacob was over there we must show no partiality we must try our best to treat all our children equally in every way food clothing education everything i want to say one thing about discipline i told you you can tell your child you go and lie down in the bed discipline like that but never discipline your child by saying i won't give you some food that means not all food but all the others will get ice cream you will get no ice cream that type of punishment is evil you must not discipline your children with food by withholding some food okay another question is can we allow our children to

participate in college tours excursions friends birthday parties etc when they are in school they are young usually i would not send them to go out of town if it was something going on inside the same city okay and outside when they are in college they are little older if it's a girl usually i would not i don't have daughters but i would not send a girl you have to be careful what type of friends they are with if it's a mixed boys and girls thing i will never send a girl and birthday parties we have to be careful what type of friend that is are they going to watch some dirty movies there have to be very very careful so be careful who's house you send them to if a child is adamant about buying one toy and one parent agrees the other does not yeah they they must tell the child okay we will

think about it tomorrow and let you know and then you must go home and both husband and wife must talk about it at home don't have a fight inside the shop no no no go home and discuss it and say listen we must not give our child the impression that we are divided and if you can't come to an agreement on a small thing like buying a toy what type of unity is there between husband and wife if it is essential then you must say okay this child needs it because he's got no other toys to play but if he's already got twenty five toys there may be no need for that extra one next question what part should parents play in leading their children to salvation very important from the earliest age tell them to receive Jesus as their Savior that's what we taught our children and that's what I find our

children are telling their grandchildren at three four years old to receive Jesus it's never too early always as early as possible tell them Jesus died for you and children can receive things teach them to hold their hands and pray at the dining table and teach them to pray at night they can understand things more clearly even as children and I don't mind teaching my child to tell one hundred times to receive Jesus as their Savior over a period of ten years I don't know which is the right time but one of those times may have been the real time when he accepted Christ so as early as possible we must tell them that Jesus died for them they must receive him how do you know when your child is going to die how do you know when your child will die we must tell our children about salvation as

early as possible how much should be parents strive to educate our children that depends on two things how much money you have to educate them how much intelligence they have to how far they can study don't force them into a profession they don't like sometimes parents have an ambition my child must be this my child must be that but they don't have an interest in that don't force them but explain to them that in the world you have to study to earn your living otherwise you will be living in the slum so you must work hard and get a degree or something to get a job so we must emphasize education to our children but remember depending on your income and depending on their intelligence don't compare your children with other people's children they may have more money more intelligence let them

do that we are not in competition with anybody how should our children conduct themselves in the church meeting we must teach our children to sit quietly and when they are small the only way to do it is give them a book or some coloring thing when their meeting is going on they can sit you know in our meeting I used to always be up in front to lead the meeting my wife had to take care of the four small children herself so she had to take care of all of them by herself she would get them some book or some little thing to eat or something to color and keep them occupied and keep them quiet and we must teach them this is the house of God and we must respect not make a noise over here we must not run around here and there my wife would never allow the children to run around after the meeting

is over they can run as much as they like but during the meeting they must sit quietly it is possible we have practiced it not only with our children but with many children in Bangalore CFC if you don't believe it you come and see how quietly our children sit there but it has come through many years of teaching ok can we allow our children to watch movies that are called Walt Disney pictures see all Walt Disney pictures are not good some of them may be good some of them are not so your parents must watch it carefully and then see whether it is good for our children to see and in one spot if there is some bad thing not evil but something which is not very Christian then we have to explain to our children that is not what we Christians will do so we have to be careful otherwise it is

alright for children to watch children's movies some of them have got good moral stories in it moral lessons because sometimes when we are busy doing something it is good for them to be occupied in a holiday time or something watching but make sure you watch it to yourself first and in the matter of entertainment verse 24 how can we make sure we don't put too many restrictions on our children so we have to allow our children to do things that are not sinful like I said a limited period of playing computer games or watching clean movies at home I never took my children to a cinema theater because you don't know what all you watch over there because first of all it is a bad testimony for a Christian and secondly before they show the movie they show ten other serials of other movies trailers

which are very bad so that's why we don't go to the movies theaters we can encourage them to play games and encourage them to play indoor games teach them to play carrom or chess or so many games

inside the house and the parents must play with them or teach them some musical instruments there are so many other alternatives that we can find so that we don't feel that other people are going watching movies and dirty things on television we can provide these alternatives for them should we give our girl children much education I think nowadays yes because before they get married it is good for them to work and earn something and as I said when they get married life is so difficult nowadays to live that sometimes they may have to work so I personally believe that we should give our children

college education again according to your income level and according to their intelligence now if your level of life is only school education ok then do it according to your level but don't feel that your child should only study as much as you studied let your child study beyond what you studied because the world is progressing and you want them to get a better job ok how to avoid depression that arises out of raising children now there is a depression that comes to mothers sometimes when they have given birth to a child some months weeks after that some mothers may be one in twelve mothers or something like that not everybody but then we must pray and ask god for grace to overcome it go and see a doctor and see if you can find some help and your husband must be able to support the wife

very much at such a time and you must believe that it can be overcome but here the question is the depression that arises out of raising children that means you are depressed and discouraged because it is so difficult to raise children in these days their husband and wife must pray together however bad your children are say lord you can bring them back to you and believe that god is on your side to help you against the world and the devil discouragement can come to anyone of us but we must help one another in Ecclesiastes 4 verses 8 to 12 it says two are better than one because if one falls the other can hold him up so that is what husband and wife are for if one person is getting discouraged the other person should hold the person up by prayer and encouragement not by criticizing saying

why in the world are you discouraged don't criticize a discouraged person because that is never the way to get out of it and sometimes men don't realize the pressures that a woman faces because she is a weaker vessel so women get discouraged very easily so a husband must understand that and don't criticize your wife but pray with her and pray for her if she is bed ridden do some work for her encourage her that is the best way what is the specific responsibility of a mother in raising children I already spoke about that it should be the father first but if the father doesn't do it the mother must do we have been married for three years and we have no children how can we avoid getting depressed there are many people I know who have been married 7-8 years and then have a child so don't give

up you pray and say Lord give us a child give us a child and if after you cross the child bearing age and God has not given you a child then bow down and accept the will of God and say Lord we don't know why you didn't give us children but we accept it as your will give us spiritual children make us a blessing to others in the church and help us to encourage the little children in the church we don't have our own but we can encourage these other children in the church because the church is like a family like your own and as I said don't give up just because you did not have children for 4 or 5 years there are people who have children after 10 years pray and never give up because our children mingle with others in the school they talk about cinema boyfriend, girlfriend there are so many

bad things they speak about even in school when they are 10 years old nowadays 10 year old boys bring filthy pictures to the school so we have to protect our children at home everyday when your child comes back from school we have to protect my wife used to do this with our children the mother must talk to the child and ask him how did your day go in school find out how was it with the teacher and how was it with

the other students did you learn some new words maybe they learned some bad words in school then they don't know it's a bad word they tell you that you must say never use that word if they ask you mummy what does that word mean so you don't need to know the meaning just don't use it and look into their bags see if they brought some book which somebody gave them which is a bad

book if you watch your children everyday when they come to school you can really protect your children if other people make fun of your children because they don't know everything about the latest movie actors and actresses tell them we are Christians so we don't know all these things we are different so if they make fun of you don't worry about it when Jesus went to school as a boy they made fun of him also for many things and we must teach our children to behave in the school just like Jesus would behave I used to tell my children when they go to school when Jesus was 10 years old and went to a school at 12 years old what type of friends do you think he made he would not have made friends with all the rich well dressed children I think Jesus would have made friends with some of the poor

children who could not speak properly or could not walk properly you be like that you go to school and don't just become friends with all the rich children be friends with the poor ones those who are not doing well in their studies or those who can't speak properly those who are not good at sports those who are not popular make friends with them that is what I have taught my children from childhood and I say if you do well in a class don't be proud of it don't show your class report to anybody don't show your prizes and all to anybody don't put your prizes in the front room no no no keep it all hidden and be good in your class help those who are in need and I used to tell them when you stand before Jesus one day he is not going to ask you how much you got in mathematics and science he is

going to ask you whether you helped the other children whether you were good so I used to keep on telling them that for years every year so we have to keep on instructing our children and I already told you how you must teach them to be careful in dealing with opposite sex the last question is how to maintain the balance between being strict and giving freedom to our children this is a very difficult balance to maintain but God can give us grace we must be strict because that is the only way we can protect them from all the dangers they can go into we must explain to them I am being strict with you not because I am trying to limit you but to protect you from evil we must love them we must embrace them I find that children when they grow up the father and mother have stopped embracing them

when they are 1 year old you are hugging them tight what about when they are 18 years old why don't you hug them and love them and pray with them then we must never stop embracing our children they must know that we really love them and embrace them they must know that we love them then they realize that our strictness comes out of love and finally I would say James chapter 1 it says in verse 5 if anyone lacks wisdom let him ask God that's one of the best verses for parents it says in James chapter 1 and verse 5 if anyone lacks wisdom let him ask God say Lord I don't have wisdom to bring up my children I don't have wisdom to deal with this teenage child of mine give me wisdom you know what it says there ask in faith he will give you as much as you want but if you ask oh I'm not sure

whether God will give me then you will get nothing so if you ask with doubt it says there you will get nothing read there James 1 verse 5 and 6 ask in faith and it says God will never scold you he will not say why are you so stupid he will never say that he will give you as much wisdom as you need and believe that God will help you to bring up your children in a Godly way we want many children growing up in our churches who are God fearing and we want to believe that it will happen let's pray Heavenly Father we pray that you will help us all we are needy parents and this is such a big area we can never stop speaking

about it please help all our parents to bring up their children in a Godly way thank you for hearing us in Jesus name Amen Amen

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