

Rearing Godly Children

Class Schedule

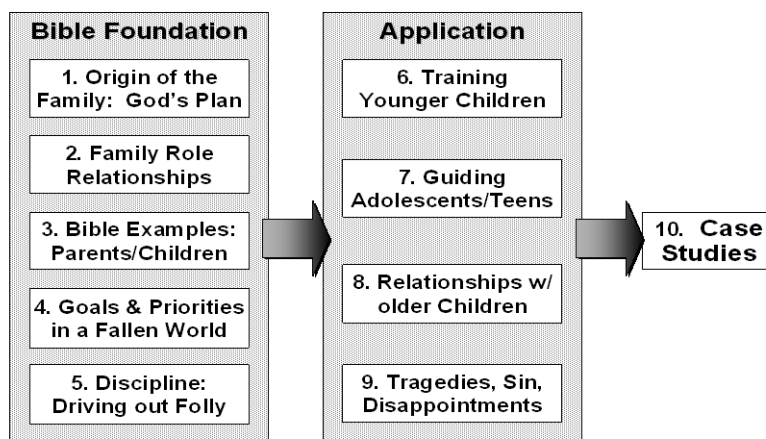
Period	Teacher	Lesson
1	Marty	Lesson 1 – Origin of the Family: God’s Plan
2	David	Lesson 2 – Family Role relationships
3	David	Lesson 3 – Bible examples of parent-children relationships
4	David	Lesson 3 – Bible examples of parent-children relationships
5	Marty	Lesson 4 –Goals & Priorities in a Fallen World
6	Marty	Lesson 5 – Discipline: Driving out Folly
7	Marty	Lesson 6 – Training of Younger Children
8	Marty	Lesson 6 – Training of Younger Children
9	Marty	Lesson 7– Guiding Adolescence & Teens
10	Marty	Lesson 7– Guiding Adolescence & Teens
11	David	Lesson 9 – Tragedies, Sin, Disappointments
12	Marty	Lesson 10 – Case Studies
13	Marty	Lesson 10 – Case Studies

Lesson 1: Origin of the Family

A. Course Introduction

1. Course Roadmap

Parenting Class Roadmap



2. **Questionnaire.** Fill out the questionnaire.

3. Foundation Principles (Postulates)

1. *Trust God's plan.* As creator of the family, God has the authority and wisdom to make laws and give guidance for the best possible relationships. God's commands are best for man, whether he agrees or understands why or not. The Bible is inspired and inerrant, and its teaching take precedence over any other source.
2. *Strive for the ideal.* We should strive to make our families as close to the ideal as possible, rather than search for loopholes or exceptions to excuse our shortcomings.
3. *We are responsible for our behavior.* We can do right, no matter the circumstances. We can change our behavior & nature. We are accountable to God for our decisions.
4. *Look first to the things of others.* The key to successful and fulfilling relationships is putting away self and serving others.
5. *Faith must be your foundation.* Trusting God's plan, living free from sin's bondage, & having personal strength to sacrifice for others is the only basis for ideal families.

4. Course Themes

- Parents must develop their own character first. Faith, selfless service, self-control, godly relationships (subjection/love), & integrity, must be lived before children.
- The World's influence (a tool of Satan) is pervasive and subtle: it must be countered with a mind set on things above, fully aware of the wiles of the devil.
- Pro-active, deliberately planned, diligent effort is required (constant watchfulness, continual strategizing, untiring consistency) for successful child rearing.
- Spiritual values are the only valid basis for decision-making & problem solving.
- Parenting is primarily a spiritual endeavor.

B. Genesis Account of the Creation of the Family ... and Implications

- What is said about the nature of mankind, as distinct from animals (Gen 1:26, 27)? In what ways are we similar to animals? What are the implications for the nature of children and their development? Contrast the development times of human children to that of animals. Contrast their potential for good and evil.
- What physical consequences came into the world as the result of Adam & Eve's sin (3:16-18)? What spiritual consequences resulted (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12)? Which are the most significant? What daily struggle results for men (see Rom 7:22, 23)?
- How much of the World is involved in Satan's efforts to capture men (I Jno 2:16; 5:19)?
- Does Satan only intend to influence adults (I Pet 5:8; Matt 18:6-10)?
- What is the result of the above for those who intend to live godly lives?
 - [II Tim 3:12](#)
 - [I Pet 2:11-12](#)
 - [Phil 2:15](#)
- What are the implications of the above for the rearing of children? (see Prov 29:15)

C. The Modern World View, and its implications

1. The modern humanistic world view is based on the following philosophical tenets:
 - There is no supernatural intervention. Everything has (only) a natural cause.
 - Humans have evolved from animals, and, like animals, have no eternal spirit.
 - Religion is a product of human desire & imagination, not intervention from God.
 - The best humans have to hope for is a "fulfilling" life before they die.
2. Some of the practical consequences of these tenets are:
 - Behavior is caused by heredity & environment. Therefore man is perfectible (programmable), in this life, by science and logic (just as animals are trained).
 - Mankind is inherently good (or natural), and with the proper encouragement can be made productive & good.
 - Right and wrong have no, or no fixed, definition for all people, cultures, or times.
 - There are no spiritual consequences for sin.
 - Christianity (& the Bible) is one of many man-made religions—all equally valid
 - Each person is free to make his own decisions and establish his own beliefs based on what is best for him.
3. What are the implications of these beliefs for these aspects of the rearing of children?
 - Setting fixed standards of required ("good") behavior
 - Punishment (especially corporal) as a consequence of morally wrong choices
 - Teaching unchanging (for all times), uncompromising (no special cases), exclusive (all others wrong), universal (applies to everyone) "truth" to children
 - Requiring subjection to authority, especially moral authority (even "arbitrary" rules)
 - Insisting on behavior which demonstrates: respect for others, humility, selflessness, service to others, self-control & patience, and righteousness in all circumstances
 - Setting examples and expectations of deferred fulfillment of self-centered desires
 - Making religious belief & moral behavior conditions of approval & support

Lesson 2: Family Role Relationships

A. Family Authority Structures

1. What is the precursor relationship to the parent-child relationship (Gen 1:27-29; 2:15-17)? Are children a beneficial addition to a marriage relationship (Prov 30:16b, Ps 127:3-5)? Are alternative family structures equally good (Dt 23:2; Heb 12:8; Jas 1:27)?
2. What family authority role began at the creation (Gen 2:20; I Tim 2:12,13; I Cor 11:3,8,9)? What additional authority relationship is also begun (I Tim 2:15; I Tim 5:14)? Are these interrelated (see, for example, I Tim 3:4)? How do the husband-wife and parent-child relationships affect one another?
3. What headship responsibilities flow from the authority structures described above? (see, for example, Eph 5:24,25,33); Does this kind of leadership apply to parental responsibilities (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21)
4. What does the Bible say about a reversal or corruption of that order (Is 3:3-12)?

B. Responsibilities of Children to Parents

1. Based on I Cor 11:3, to whom was Jesus (God, the son) subject? How was this subjection expressed (Heb 10:7 (from Ps 40:8); Jno 5:19,30; Jno 14:21)?
2. What commands are given to children in both the Old & New Testaments?
 - Prov 23:22; 30:17; 20:20
 - Matt 15:4 (and Ex 20:12, Lev 20:9)
 - Eph 6:1-3; Col 3:20
3. What assumption lies behind these commands to children to listen to, obey, and respect their parents? Is it typical that children will take on the character and beliefs of their parents? (II Tim 1:5; and see Jno 8:39b, 42, 44)

C. The Bible Pattern of Fatherhood

1. Jesus said God, the Father guided His works (Jno 5:19,30), and that His children should be like Him (Jno 8:42). Should men follow God's pattern of Fatherhood (see Mt 23:9)?
2. Note these characteristics of God. Consider how earthly father should imitate each one.
 - Matt 5:48 – perfect, as your heavenly Father
 - I Pet 1:16; Jas 1:13 – holy, does not tempt
 - Rom 9:14 – no unrighteousness
 - Jas 1:17b – no shadow, or variation
 - Num 23:19; Titus 1:2 – no lies or vacillation
 - Rom 3:3,4 – True, when every man a liar
 - Rom 11:22 – goodness & severity
 - I Pet 1:17 – judges each man without partiality
 - Heb 12:7 – chastens us for our profit
 - Matt 10:29,30 – sees & knows all
 - Rom 11:33 – deep wisdom & knowledge
 - Matt 6:8,32 – knows our needs
 - Jas 1:17a; Matt 7:11 – good gifts when asked
 - Jer 31:8,9 – leads, protects from stumbling
 - Deut 1:31 – bears his son through trouble
 - Matt 5:45 – generous to all: blesses just & unjust
 - Ps 103:13; Lk 6:36; Ps 145:8,9 – pities; merciful; gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, kind
 - Hos 11:1-4 – draws unfaithful back with love
 - Jas 3:17 – pure, peaceable, easy to entreat...
 - II Cor 1:3, 4; II Thes 2:16 – “God of all mercies & comfort;” gives us comfort & hope
 - I Jno 3:1; 4:9-10 – Loved enough to adopt, call us children, sent Son
 - Rom 5:8 – Loved enough to have Christ die for us
 - Rom 8:15, 16 – not a bondage/fear relationship, but “abba-father” closeness
 - Mark 14:36 – can do all things [strong, able]
 - Eph 4:6 – above all, through all, in all
 - Rom 8:31 – If He is for us, who is against us?

3. How does Paul describe his “fatherly” behavior among the Thessalonians (I Thes 2:11)? Does this match the typical “tough-guy” Dad image? Note the meaning of each word.
4. What specific commands are given to godly fathers?
 - Eph 6:4
 - Col 3:21
 - Heb 12:7,10; Prov 13:24
 - Deut 6:6-9; 20ff
 - Prov 1:8 (and see 22:6)

D. The Pattern of Motherhood

1. How is the role and character of mothers used to teach Bible principles?
 - Is 66:13
 - Ps 131:2
 - Is 49:14-16
 - Jer 31:15
 - Rom 16:13
 - Mat 23:37
 - Gal 4:26, 27
 - I Thess 2:7-9
2. What are the Bible’s instructions and examples for godly mothers.
 - Prov 31:15, 21,27,28
 - I Tim 2:15
 - Tit 2:4,5
 - I Tim 5:14-16
3. Are mothers also to teach God’s truth to their children?
 - Prov 1:8; 6:20; 30:17; 31:1
 - II Tim 1:5

My Character as a Parent: Self-Assessment Worksheet

Rate yourself and your spouse using the tables below:

The True Pattern of Fatherhood	not at all	only a little	some of the time	most of the time	always
Holy, righteous, no influence toward evil, perfect					
Truthful, honest, not hypocritical or inconsistent					
Fair, impartial, sound & accurate judgment of character					
Intolerant of evil, punishes for good of the child					
Smart, observant, wise, aware of the needs of others					
Provides for all needs, gives gifts (incl. time) when asked					
Leads, protects, provides strength through troubles					
Pities (sympathizes), shows mercy & kindness, patient					
Slow to anger					
Draws children with love when in conflict & stubbornness					
Easy to entreat; "abba – father" closeness					
Comforts in pain, gives hope, exhorts, encourages					
Loves sacrificially—even when undeserved					
Powerful: competent, energetic, effective, respected, successful					
Does not provoke to anger, frustration, or discouragement					
Teaches god's word, explain meanings in the world					
Provides practical wisdom & knowledge (about this world)					

The True Pattern of Motherhood	not at all	only a little	some of the time	most of the time	always
Comforts, provides security, calms, quiets					
Loves deeply, shows you never forget ("graven on hand")					
Shows service & concern					
Protects, ready to defend					
Ready to sacrifice own welfare					
Always industrious for the family's welfare					
Concerned & working for children's faithfulness					
Loves husband (& shows it), loves children					
Rules (manages, keeps in order & control) the household					
Teaches Truth: imparts own faith to children					

Compare your answers to those of your spouse. Mark (right column) at least three areas in which you could improve. List at least two actions you can take immediately to begin.

Areas to Improve	Actions I can take this week
	1
	2
	1
	2
	1
	2

Lesson 3: Bible Examples of Parents & Children

A. Positive Examples

1. Abraham & Sarah (Gen 11:27-12:5; 18:1-15; 21:1-21; 22:1-19; 24:1-9)
 - Was Abraham's faith in God evident in his life's decisions? Did it (usually) transcend other relationships and desires?
How was this lesson in priorities demonstrated with Abraham & Isaac?
 - Does our faithfulness, or lack of it, influence our children?
 - What role should parents play to ensure proper companionship for their children?
Do parents have a role in the selection of potential mates? How?
 - Did Abraham & Sarah's faithfulness influence Israel's faithfulness for generations?
Can we accomplish the same thing in our families?
2. Hannah (I Sam 1:2-11)
 - What was Hannah's attitude toward God before she had a son?
 - What was her attitude about having children (what purpose)?
 - How might his mother's attitude and example have influenced Samuel during his childhood and his adulthood?
3. Lois & Eunice (Acts 16:1; II Tim 1:5; I Tim 5:23, & see Prov 23:29-31)
 - What advantages do Christian parents have over non-Christian parents?
 - What does I Tim 5:23 imply about the knowledge & teaching of Lois & Eunice?
4. List other examples of good parenting found in the Bible.

B. Negative Examples

1. Abraham & Ishmael (Gen 16:11,12)
 - What was to be Ishmael's character?
 - How was this character later demonstrated (Gen 21:9)?
 - Was this the fault of Abraham? Were there things in Ishmael's childhood that might have led to further difficulties for his character development (Gen 21:14-21)?
2. Isaac & Rebekah, & Jacob & Esau (Gen 25:19-27:16)
 - How was the marriage relationship between Isaac & Rebekah? (Gen 24:67)
 - Were Jacob & Esau different from birth?

- What mistake do Isaac & Rebekah make in the relationships with their sons? What might have led to this picking of favorites?
 - What kind of personalities did Jacob & Esau have (Gen 25:25-34; 26:33,34; 27:41; see also Heb 12:16,17)? How does this compare to Isaac (Gen 24:63)?
 - How might these flaws be related to the actions & attitudes of Isaac & Rebekah?
3. Jacob and his sons.
- What does “Jacob” mean? How was this meaning illustrated in Jacob as a young man? Was Jacob a strong leader as a husband & father (for example, Gen 30:1-4)?
 - How was Jacob an unwise father? (e.g. Gen 37:3,4)? What led to this favoritism?
 - How do his sons (& daughter) turn out? (Gen 34; Gen 35:22; Gen 37; Gen 38)
4. Eli (I Sam 2:12-36)
- In what sins were Eli’s sons engaged (I Sam 2:12-17; 22-32)? How did he respond (2:24,25)? Did God hold him responsible (2:29-30; 3:13)?
 - What phrase in 2:29 shows very concisely what Eli’s problem was as a father?
5. Samuel (I Sam 8:1-5)
- What kind of judges were Samuel’s sons? What might have led to their corruption? (I Sam 7:16)
 - Does it appear that God held Samuel responsible for their character (as He did Eli)?
6. David (II Sam 13, 14)
- How would you describe Amnon and Absalom as sons? How did David discipline them? What mistakes in his own life might have led to this weakness as a father?
 - What mistakes did David make as a father? (see also II Sam 12:9-14; 13:30-39; 14:28,29; 16:7-14; I Kings 1:5,6)
7. The Prodigal Son and his brother (Luke 15:11-32)
- Is there evidence that the character differences in these two boys result from the character of their father?
 - What character does the younger brother initially exhibit? How does the father deal with his (unwise) demands? Later during his suffering? When he repents?
 - Would you describe the older brother as rebellious or a trouble-maker?
 - What crisis does he have to deal with? Does this happen in families today?
8. What other Bible examples of bad parenting, or difficult children can you think of?

Lesson 4: Goals and Priorities in a Fallen World

A. Envisioning the future. What do we want for our children? Imaging your child is 35 years old, married, with children of his/her own. Picture what you want for them to be, to do, to have. Fill out the questionnaire on the back by circling the appropriate number in each row.

B. Example of Christ's work for the Church

1. Was there a predetermined plan for Christ's work? Was there a predetermined goal? What was the goal? (I Pet 1:20; Matt 25:34)
2. Note the pattern of Christ's leadership in achieving this goal (Eph 5:22-33):
 - What he does for the body (23); the extent of His investment (25); who is made better (what change is effected) by His work (26); the goal of His work (27); the extent of His love (29)

C. Two Opposing World Views Set the Values that are the Basis for all Decisions.

1. What two opposing value systems exist in men (Col 3:2; Phil 3:14-20; Lk 16:9-13)?
2. Paul's decisions as an example:
 - a. What was his primary aim in life (II Cor 5:9)?
 - b. How was that expressed in his decisions about what to do, where to go, whom to be with, etc. (Rom 15:20; 1:11, 12, 13, 15)?
 - c. If Paul had made a plan, and it became obvious that it did not support his life goals, would he change his plans (see, for example, Rom 15:20-22, & 1:13)?
 - d. Did his plans always work out as he intended (see, for example, I Thes 2:17, 18)?
 - e. What was his source of encouragement, even when imprisoned (Phil 1:12)?
3. What should be the most basic purpose of our lives as Christians? (Matt 6:33)
4. What important decisions in life are built on these purposes? Do decisions about where to live, what job to take, even what major purchases to make, depend upon these basic life values? (see Matt 19:12; Mark 10:29,30; Luke 5:10,11; Mat 5:29,30)
5. Do "small" decisions (those made quickly, without much thought, or those with only trivial consequences) related to our purpose in life? Explain.

D. Setting Goals for our Children.

1. Should we be setting goals for our children? (I Sam 1:11; III Jno 1:4; Prov 19:18)
2. What is the penalty for those who lead children astray from God? (Matt 18:6)
3. Should our goals for our children be expressed in daily decisions for them when they are small (that is, within our control more than ever)? (Prov 22:6)
4. Give examples of "ordinary" decisions we make for our children, or that they observe in us, that are expressions of our goals (expressed in priority-setting).
5. Look at your answers to part A above. For those that rank the highest (Top 5), describe plans and actions that would support these goals related to:
 - a. choice of friends (set by neighborhood, family activities, parental guidance)
 - b. course of study in school (perhaps choice of school)
 - c. number and type of extra-curricular activities
 - d. location and type of family vacations
 - e. priorities placed on worship & Bible study attendance (in relation to a-d above)

Goals for my child (by age 35)	doesn't matter	slightly important	highly important	essential	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Top 5 Priorities
Lives in nice house in a good neighborhood	1	2	3	4								
Has a college degree	1	2	3	4								
Is fit & attractive	1	2	3	4								
Is always offering hospitality, entertaining others	1	2	3	4								
Teaches Bible classes regularly	1	2	3	4								
Has good income: is in medium to high income bracket	1	2	3	4								
Has children with talent/training in music, art, etc.	1	2	3	4								
Has traveled widely, & seen much of the world	1	2	3	4								
Is happily married to first spouse	1	2	3	4								
Has children that do well in school	1	2	3	4								
Is active, with no handicap or chronic disease	1	2	3	4								
Has good medical insurance & other benefits	1	2	3	4								
Has good relationships with extended family (including me)	1	2	3	4								
Is a very active worker in a local church	1	2	3	4								
Is involved in good hobbies (e.g. hunting, antiques, crafts)	1	2	3	4								
Is outgoing, personable, and well-liked by others	1	2	3	4								
Has well behaved & respectful children	1	2	3	4								
Has a spouse who is a Christian	1	2	3	4								
Has an advanced, or specialty degree	1	2	3	4								
Is known & respected in the community	1	2	3	4								
Lives healthy: low fat, hi fiber diet, exercise, seat-belts	1	2	3	4								
Is not in deep debt	1	2	3	4								
Is known as very intelligent and well-read	1	2	3	4								
Can afford nice vacations & entertainment	1	2	3	4								
Spouse is fit & attractive	1	2	3	4								
Is known for Bible knowledge & strong convictions	1	2	3	4								
Saves well, has good investments & retirement plan	1	2	3	4								
Is athletic, and continues to excel in sports	1	2	3	4								
Spends time on family activities: close relationships	1	2	3	4								
Has several really close, life-long friends/confidants	1	2	3	4								
Is a member of a sound church	1	2	3	4								
Has a very secure job, with a good career path	1	2	3	4								
Dresses well	1	2	3	4								
Is very involved with children's activities	1	2	3	4								
Has many friends within peer-group	1	2	3	4								

Lesson 5: Discipline: Driving Out Folly

A. Concept of Discipline in the New Testament

1. Note the context & meaning of these words that describe the role of parents in Eph 6:4
 - Bring them up [KJV, NKJV], Nurture [ASV], Rear (gently) [Ampl]
 - *Ek-trepho* – to bring up, promote health & strength, educate
 - Related to *trophos* - I Thess 2:7 – “nursing”
 - Nurture [KJV], Training [NKJV], Chastening [ASV], Discipline [RSV]
 - “To train a child... the discipline that regulates character” – Vine’s
 - Also used in: II Tim 2:25 & 3:16 – “Correction”
 - Heb 12:5ff – “A father [punishing] for son’s good (see also II Cor 6:9)
 - Admonition [KJV, ASV, NKJV], Counsel [Ampl], Instruction [RSV]
 - From the greek *nous*, mind, and *tithemi*, to put – “a putting in mind”
 - Also used in: I Cor 10:11 (purpose of scripture), I Cor 4:14 & Titus 3:10 (warning), I Thes 5:12 (what elders do), Rom 15:14 (what we do for each other).
2. Discipline (e.g. II Tim 1:7-ASV) means soundness of mind, self-control. It, along with power and love are the opposite of timidity. Does discipline have both a positive and a negative side? Explain.

B. The concept of “Folly” in the Proverbs (to understand Prov 22:15)

1. The proverbs contrasts the nature (and fates) of fool and the wise man. These are essentially two ways of interacting with the events in God’s world.
2. Describe:
 - The fool’s attitude toward law (Prov 10:8)
 - The fool’s reaction to instruction and reproof (Prov 15:5)
 - What value the fool places in knowledge & understanding (Prov 1:22; 18:2)
 - How the fool feels about wisdom & wise men (Prov 1:7)
 - The fool’s assessment of his own opinion (Prov 12:15)
 - What the fool trusts in (Prov 28:26)
 - How likely the fool is to express himself (Prov 18:2)
 - How far ahead the fool thinks (Prov 10:5)
 - The fool’s attitude toward hard work (Prov 24:30-34)
 - The fool’s association with sin (Prov 13:19)
 - The fool’s acceptance of spiritual realities (Ps 14:1)
3. Are children wise and/or foolish? (see Prov 10:1; 13:1, 17:25) Note that none of the above has to do primarily with how much (or little) one knows, or how much experience one has gained. How do children exhibit the characteristics listed in B.2. above?
4. Does this concept of folly help interpret Prov 22:15, and provide guidance about when to punish?

C. Driving out Folly

1. What are the motivations for correction (Prov 22:6; 3:11,12; 13:24; 23:13,14)?
2. What criteria for (related to folly) should be considered?
3. Must discipline be (seem to be) painful to the child (Heb 12:11)? For how long?
4. What are possible wrong motives for punishment?

5. What are possible implicit or unintentional punishments?
6. Do these implicit punishments occur for the wrong reasons?
7. How may a direct tie to the “folly being driven out” be evident when we discipline?

D. Corporal Punishment Checklist

1. *Setting rules beforehand*
 - Is the rule (desired behavior) clear (observable)?
 - Is the rule known & understood in advance by the child (could be repeated by him)?
 - Is the punishment (consequence) known and understood in advance by the child (could be repeated by him)?
2. *Evaluating the infraction*
 - Is the disobedience (undesired behavior) obvious and known by the child (perhaps even admitted)?
 - Is the disobedience willful, & evidence of rebellion, laziness, disrespect, stubbornness, or other “Foolishness”?
3. *Interlude – Set an example of self-control*
 - Am I calm (discuss with spouse)? Do I appear calm?
4. *Prelude to Punishment*
 - Have I reviewed (calmly) the rule, the disobedience, & the previously determined & stated consequence with the child?
 - Have I expressed my love, & explained that it is the motive of the punishment?
 - Have I expressed the hurt & regret I feel at having to punish my child (and that it is one of God’s rules for me)?
 - Have I expressed confidence that my child is capable of better behavior?
5. *Conclusion & Resolution*
 - Have I expressed & demonstrated my willingness to forgive quickly (including with physical touch)?

E. Preventing Punishment Incidents – Suggestions

1. Be very clear about expectations: Review often.
 - Conduct “practice sessions” for difficult behaviors (especially when young)
2. Look for Patterns – Keep visible records
 - Time of day, day of week
 - Circumstances (events, associates, health, fatigue, inactivity)
3. Look for broader explanations – then address
 - Insecurity, disappointments, emotional injury, jealousy ☐
 - All create a need for attention
4. Fill up dangerous times with positives – & praise
 - Attention, activities, discussions, diversions
 - (but not a reward for the undesirable behavior)
 - “Overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:21)
5. Burn off energy in positive ways
 - “The sleep of a laboring man is sweet” (Eccl 5:12)
6. Have explicit discussions about the “danger zones”.
 - Look for explanations together
 - Solicit suggestions

Lesson 6: Training Younger Children

For each of the age groups below, think about the requirements to ‘Train up a child,’ and “Drive out Folly”. Note the characteristics and needs of children in these age groups and discuss: a) the skills and knowledge they can obtain, b) the attitudes and beliefs that can be developed, and c) the discipline issues likely to arise (see the attached charts).

- A. Birth to 7 months -
 - Skills & Knowledge
 - Attitudes & Beliefs
 - Discipline Issues & Approaches
- B. 7 months to 1 Year
- C. 1 Year to 2 Years
- D. 2 Years to 3 ½ Years
- E. 3 Years to 5 Years
- F. 5 Years to 8 Years

Example 1: Personal Grooming & Housekeeping. For one age group above, determine:

- a) Reasonable expectations for personal grooming, dress, cleanliness, care of possessions...
- b) What difficulties or challenges (folly) are likely to be exhibited by the child?
- c) What strategies and tactics can be used to overcome the challenges?

Example 2: Behavior in the Public Worship. For one age group above, determine:

- a) Appropriate behavior standards for the public worship (How still & quiet? For how long—without going out? Requiring what equipment/entertainment/provisions?) What level of participation in the worship to be expected?
- b) What challenges or difficulties are likely to be experienced in this training?
- c) What techniques you might use to encourage compliance with these standards?

Example 3: Social skills. For one age group above, determine:

- a) Appropriate behavior standards for interaction with peers (greeting, communicating, sharing, courtesy, kindness, sacrifice),
- b) Challenges or difficulties likely to be experienced, and
- c) Strategies for encouraging compliance with these standards.

Lesson 7: Guiding Adolescence & Teens

- A. Preteens. The Preteens are a time of physical and emotional change. While there must be sympathy and understanding of the discomfort and insecurities of this age, it also a time when the security of firm boundary and the satisfaction of meeting expectations is even more important.
1. Based on the handout material, list some basic life skills that need to be “trained” into the child during the pre-teen (9-12) period. List some opportunities (to be taken or made) for doing this training.
 2. What specific behavior standards should be set for each of these areas (as examples):
 - Personal grooming and housekeeping
 - Personal devotion
 - Participation in the work of church
 - Interaction with authority (parent, teacher, other adults)
 3. Based on the handout material, list some basic life skills that need to be “trained” into the child during the pre-teen (9-12) period. List some opportunities (to be taken or made) to do this training.
 4. What family activities should be regular (and high priority) that will help to emphasize the spiritual basis of decision making and behavior?
- B. Teens.
1. The teenage period of childhood is characterized by a growing desire to be independent of parental control (becoming an adult), despite insecurities and lack of experience.
 - a. How is this desire for independence a good thing?
 - b. How may it become a great temptation and source of conflict?
 - c. How may it be used as an opportunity for training and growth?
 2. Earning autonomy. Below are the characteristics of the fool, and the contrasting characteristics of a “mature” person. For each, list opportunities for a teen to “earn” his autonomy by demonstrating his “wisdom”. Try to think of measurable accomplishments that demonstrate achievement of maturity.

<u>Folly</u>	<u>Wisdom-Maturity</u>
• Not bound by authority	• Sets own boundaries
• Hates instruction & reproof	• Welcomes correction
• Will not listen, learn	• Seeks advice before acting
• Trusts in own opinion	• Defers to wisdom, willing to submit
• Likes to hear himself	• Sympathetic Listener
• Shortsighted (carnal)	• Self control, defers gratification
• Hates hard work	• Diligent, dedicated, determined
• Attracted to sin	• Pure, repulsed by sin
• Denies spiritual realities	• Spiritual center in thinking & priorities
 3. Conflicts and Communication. List several elements for keeping the channels of communication open (to listen for danger signals, or provide a door for offering help), despite conflicts that may arise.

Lesson 9: Tragedies, Sin, Disappointments

A. Tragedies

1. From your experience, think of examples of difficulties & tragedies that occur to children: from birth, from accident, from illness, from victimization. Do these seem more tragic because they harm children? Why? What does this say about the world in which we live?
2. Is there anything in a Christian's understanding about the nature of man and our relationship to God that should help dealing with these tragedies? (see, for example, Rom 8:19-23, 35-39; II Cor 4:16-5:4; I Cor 15:50-55; I Thess 4:13-18; Ps 116:15)
3. Are there blessings that come from these adversities? (see Rom 5:3-5)
4. What can be done before tragedies occur to prepare the family to handle them?

B. Sin & Rebellion (see Jude 11 – Cain, Balaam, Korah)

1. *Types of Sin & Rebellion*
 - Criminal behavior. What principles has God established in the world to deal with lawless behavior in society? (Rom 13:1-5; I Pet 2:14) When children are in trouble at school or with the law, what should be our attitude toward the consequences? Are these consequences from God? Should we try to help our children escape them? (see I Pet 4:15 and 2:20a) Would these principles apply toward a church's discipline?
 - Immorality. What Bible principles apply toward those whose behavior may not be illegal, but is blatantly immoral? (see I Pet 2:11-12; Eph 5:3-5; II Thess 3:6; I Cor 5:1, 9-13) Is it possible that concerned parents may appear (to the child or to others) to accept or approve of the immoral behavior? What harm is there in apparent acceptance of this behavior to the world? (see, for example Titus 2:5) To other Christians? To the erring child? What steps should parents take to ensure that there is no confusion about their acceptance of sinful behavior? How can this be balanced with a desire to offer love and forgiveness?
 - Religious Error & Misbehavior. What are ways in which religious error or problems might arise within a family? (for examples, see II Jno 9-10; Rom 16:17; Titus 3:10,11) Are these more or less serious than criminality or immorality?
2. Below are listed some Bible principles & examples guide the responsibilities of parents who must deal with these problems with their children.
 - Luke 15:11-32 – What characterized the father's attitude toward the prodigal son: a) at the point of rebellion, b) during his unfaithfulness, c) at the point of his return? What eventually drew the wayward boy to return? (What did the father do?) What inappropriate attitude is exhibited by the older brother (that is, whose "hurt" was he most concerned with)?
 - Hos 11:1-4 (and see Is 65:2) – What does the image of Jehovah and the wandering child, Israel, teach about the power to draw back to faithfulness? What attitude toward their carelessness & ignorance did Jehovah have?
 - Ps 145:8,9; Ps 103:13 – What attitude does God continue to have toward His wayward children? Are there conditions on this compassion (see Ps 103:13)?
 - Matt 6:12; 18:21-22 – Under what conditions should parents forgive & accept a wayward child back? Should the amount of hurt or damage to parents be a factor in forgiveness? Can ground-work be laid earlier in the child's life for this process?

Lesson 10: Case Studies

Case 1 – Sweetpea

Sweetpea is nine months old and getting pretty mobile: crawling and beginning to pull up on low furniture. He’s pretty good natured, but occasionally will cry to be “let down” or go back to mom, or protest when a toy gets (or is taken) out of reach. The family room is carpeted, and opens to the kitchen, where mom can watch him while she works, so it’s Sweetpea’s main play area. There’s a coffee table in the center of the room, decorated with a basket filled with colorful thick glass balls. He has just learned to pull up on the edge of the table and can just reach the edge of the basket, which has lately caught his attention. The glass balls probably won’t break, but mom feels that he would be better off not getting into them. Below are four options on how to handle this situation. List the advantages and disadvantages of each:

- a. Whenever he goes for the basket, go over and distract him with some other interesting activity or object.
advantages disadvantages

- b. When he reaches for the basket, calmly say “No,” then swat his hand when he reaches for it. Repeat consistently until the lesson is learned.
advantages disadvantages

- c. Remove the basket (and any other “undesirable” objects) from within his reach.
advantages disadvantages

- d. Go and make (or buy) Sweetpea his own basket with safe, colorful (lead-free) plastic balls.
advantages disadvantages

- e. Whenever he reaches for the basket, say “No!” very suddenly and loudly, so that he will understand from mom’s tone of voice that he should not touch the basket.
advantages disadvantages

Case 2 - Buster

Buster is two and a half years old and is very noticeable everywhere he goes. He has a stay-at-home mom and a six-month old baby sister, Daisy. His outbursts are doubly troublesome because his disruptions wake his sister from her naps and his loud noises startle her, not to mention leave his mom in an unsettled state after each incident. Buster's day begins at 7 am with loud, violent play in the family room, whether anyone is up or not. Buster generally ignores breakfast, refusing to stay at his seat for even a minute without someone directly supervising. Television will occupy him for short intervals (15-30 min), but when a show is over, or gets slow, he roams the house with his toy trucks and monsters, and invariably must be tracked down to avoid damage or danger to himself or Daisy. Lunch & Supper are much like breakfast, with at least one major incident (hitting sister, breaking something, etc.) each afternoon. His mom earns extra income with an on-line editing job, for which she is paid by the page. Lately she has been falling behind on her work because she cannot concentrate for long enough periods at a time—adding to the stress. Buster's dad works long hours and gets home just in time to join in the battle to keep Buster in his room until he gets quiet enough to fall asleep. Buster's parents are considering day-care for at least 2 or 3 days a week to give his mom a break to get her work done. What would you advise?

Case 3 – Prodigy

Prodigy is just good at everything. Walking at 9 months, reading at 4 years, the star player at tee-ball, and making rapid progress on the violin, he is now tearing into soccer in the U-8 league—and he’s only six! His parents are justifiably proud of Prodigy, and they use their influence to be sure he gets the best teachers in the “gifted” track and the best coaches on the best teams. Prodigy’s Dad has a business degree from a nearby small college, and has a job that provides a comfortable living, but not great career potential. Prodigy’s mom was a good student, but dropped out of college as a sophomore when they married, so she could work to help Prodigy’s dad finish college. They have already started to save so Prodigy can go to a major university (Prodigy’s dad hopes he can get a sports scholarship), to make sure he can do better than they have done.

Prodigy’s parents are members at the small congregation where Prodigy’s grandparents were among the founding members. Last Sunday, Prodigy’s Bible class teacher mentioned politely that Prodigy was a little disruptive and disrespectful of the other children that day. She implied that it is an ongoing problem. One problem, she said, is that he is not following the material very well, and has nothing to do when the other kids are reciting their memory work, since he is not prepared with his. She suggested that if he were in class more often, she was sure he would do better.

Prodigy’s parents were civil to her, but felt insulted. On the way home, after asking Prodigy about what happened in class, they complained to each other that the teacher, who is a young single—and no Einstein herself—didn’t understand how to handle kids, and on top of that, the class had too wide a range of ages to be orderly, from pre-K (who were non-readers!) to 2nd Graders. They agreed that the teacher, not having kids of her own, didn’t understand how busy they were, and how Prodigy needed a good night’s sleep on every school night. Saturday night, too, was a big night to have the soccer team over after the afternoon games (often far away), and Prodigy was sometimes really too tired Sunday morning to get up early enough for class (he even said so). And besides, they reasoned, what was the big deal in missing a 45 minute class every once in a while? How much were the children really learning in there anyway?