

Christian Parenting: Newborn – 3 Years
Week 3

1. **Introduction**

The day you become parents, you must take the obligation of raising your child seriously for which God will hold you accountable. Your child must receive training beginning at birth. Tender love is shown with warmth and affection. Strict love is shown with firmness and chastening when needed. Keeping a consistent routine is necessary for a child to learn trust, enhance his health and develop a sense of security.

2. **Principles to Establish When Raising Children**

Each child is a unique individual and every family will confront different sets of circumstances. The basic rules of discipline and training, however, must be applied to each child. You will learn a set of principles, but all parents will implement them in their own manner.

- **Obedience** -- Obedience builds trust and responsibility. True obedience is immediate, unquestioning, and doing exactly what one is told. It is important to start teaching obedience early (**Eph. 6:1-2, Prov. 6:20**). You learn to distinguish between your child's cries and when they are angry and express their tempers by stiffening, turning red in the face and screaming.
- **Love** -- Love is to discipline. Love is seeking the ultimate good for your child and discipline is the ingredient that teaches a child how to behave properly in order to survive in society (**Prov. 13:24, Eph. 6:4, Heb. 12:6-7**).
- **Punishment** -- Pain is infliction on others. If pain or discomfort is imposed upon a child for their welfare and with the purpose to make them better and a more pleasant person, it is discipline. To impose discipline you will need a "rod". In the Bible the rod is described as a straight slender stick growing on or cut from a tree or bush (**Prov. 13:24; 23:13-14; 29:15-17**). The "rod" is the first response and not the last resort. Your child will need close supervision and very limited freedom.
- **Sound Judgment** -- A child's judgment takes years to develop. It is built upon years of living and various experiences in order for them to develop sound judgment (**Prov. 22:6**).
- **Respect for Authority** -- Your child must learn a respect for authority (**Matt. 28:18**). Learning to respect authority is the basis by which all other lessons will fall into place. You are your child's first authority (**Eph. 6:1-2**). Three steps in becoming "an authoritarian" are to:
 - Know the subject better than the person you are addressing
 - Verbally give facts
 - Follow facts with proof

Be consistent with knowledge, word and proof. Conquer your child's "will" early (**Prov. 29:15**). Your child must learn that the will of his parent takes precedence over his own will. A child will test his parent. A temper tantrum is the ultimate extension of the child's demanding behavior.

- **Independence** -- Freedom from the control, influence, support or help of another. A child must develop physical and mental independence. Too much too fast is harmful—too little too slow won't work. Independence is the status that all parents must seek for their children. One day you must tell your children good-bye. While they are with you, you must redeem each moment and prepare them for their day of departure (**Gen. 2:24**). You should thoroughly train and educate your child. In your heart of hearts you need to know that you have done your best to prepare them for a life of independence.
- **Good Habits** -- Habit is an act repeated so often by an individual that it has become automatic with him/her. Habits are passive, positive, or negative. Everyone forms habits. Parents must show and practice them daily in their own lives (**Matt. 23:3**). Properly raising a child takes work. Train a child (**Prov. 22:6**) to have good habits concerning their:

- **Person** – Take proper care of their body
- **Possessions**—Take care of the things that belong to them; be thankful and appreciative
- **Pastime** – Supervise your child’s spare time
- **Politeness** – Good manners; control temper and anger
- **Peacefulness** – Exercise self-control and practice ruling their spirit, tell the truth, ask permission to use someone’s property, saying “I’m sorry”
- **Public approval** – Be prompt for appointments, good phone manners, let older adults have their seat, don’t stare at people in public
- **Work** -- Children must be instructed to work. Parents “show and tell” and their children follow the example. Take advantage of the times that your child would like to help. A child always has a greater appreciation for work they have completed when they earn an allowance. Earning an allowance also helps lay the foundation for other lessons. This is a good time to teach them about giving to the Lord. Dividing allowance into three groups – “God is first”, “Savings is second”, “Mine is third” is an important principle to establish early. The best inheritance a parent can leave a child is a will to work (**I Tim. 5:8, Matt. 25:14-30**).
- **Communication** -- Giving or exchanging information, signals, or messages as by talk, gestures or writing. Establish a strong bond of communication. A child must have a confidant with whom he can talk freely and openly. Good communication requires good listening, good eye contact, and simple word responses. It takes time and by giving your child time to talk, they will tell you everything they have to say. Good communication limits the amount of talking in regards to being an “authority”; it uses words that are true and uses words that are timely. It is important to answer all your child’s questions—they are entitled to a prompt and honest answer. Good communication uses words that are soft but firm from a mother who is positive and loving. The mother is the “thermometer” for the family home.
- **Together** -- A family must be united. As parents, we must present a united stand. Here are some ways that we can do this:
 - Worship together
 - Work together
 - Talk together
 - Travel together
 - Play together
 - Pray together
 - Share together
 - Sacrifice together
 - Choose companions together
- **Prayer and Worship** -- God is the “watchman” in our lives and we must consult Him for direction (**Psa 127:1**). Any autocratic family, which prays and worships God, will build within its children a living faith. They will have a chance to live eternally with Him in heaven. Through daily prayer, make sure your worship is acceptable to Him. To worship God exactly in harmony with His divine specifications means: praying, singing, studying God’s word, giving, partaking of the Lord’s Supper (**Jn. 4:23; 17:17**). It is so important to take your children to worship and teach them reverence for God.

3. Principles for Parent-Child Relationships

There are four principles for parent-child relationships in the scripture:

- **Leadership** – (**Eph. 6:1-2**) Leadership begins in the home when a child is very small. The parent takes the leadership role for the growing child until he is ready to accept full responsibility for himself. When

the child is very young, close supervision is absolutely essential. As the child matures, the supervision can more and more take the form of “rules” that he uses as guidelines for his behavior.

- **Instruction** – Parents are responsible for teaching their child about the world, about relationships, about right and wrong, and about all the important aspects of daily living (**Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:6-7**).
- **Transferring responsibility** – One of the great goals of every Christian parent is to train up a responsible human being. We want our children, when they are grown, to have a deep sense of responsibility, duty, and discipline. Responsibility begins at an early age. A good rule of thumb: never do for a child what he can do for himself. Examples are dressing, picking up toys, putting away clothes, making the bed, cleaning room, etc. The full transfer of responsibility should be a gradual thing and be started very early.
- **Love for the child** – Your love for your child should permeate and govern every contact with your child. Love means being aware of the importance of your child, constantly aware of your child’s needs as an individual, establishing limits for parental authority and suggests guidelines for parental instruction (**Eph. 6:4**), the basis for transfer of responsibility to the growing child, the greatest need of every human being.

4. **Conclusion**

God made the newborn to need love so desperately that he can’t live the 1st year of his life without it. God made our newborns to need tender love and care. God put us together in families to insure we would be loved. Father and mother need to love each in ways that the children can see. Parents can extend their love to their child in ways the child can perceive by time, attention, listening, training, doing things with the child that the child enjoys and encouraging focus on the assets and strengths of the child.

Thought Questions:

1. Name the principles that form the basis of discipline and training of a child.
2. What does Prov. 22:6 mean to you as a parent raising your child?
3. Why is it important to start training children when they are infants?