

TEACH THE YOUNGER WOMEN

...TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN

Titus 2:1-5

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Older women *likewise*, are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, **teaching what is good**, that they may encourage the young women to **love their husbands**, to **love their children**, to be **sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands**, so that the *word of God may not be dishonored*.

I began this series on raising Godly children, NOT because I have all the answers! I think I can tell you more what NOT to do, than what to do. I made my fair share of mistakes. I began this class because I looked in the mirror, and saw an older woman! I therefore, as an older woman, feel I need to obey the call in Titus 2, and do my best to teach the younger women.

If you are one of my blog readers, if you are interested in material about loving your husbands, I would point you towards, *Enhancing your Marriage*, by Judy Rossi. Most of it was very good material. The young women in my home congregation seemed to get a lot of 'aha' moments out of it. But it should be led by an older Christian woman, one who is grounded in the truth, and in her marriage.

We then began this series on loving our children, and we used several books, which we gleaned through. The one used the most was Ted Tripp's, *Shepherding a Child's heart*. As with all books, written by men, one must always test the principles with the standard of God's word. *

I started the class on loving our children with this material below, and was encouraged to put it online to make available. This short study is best done with several moms around a table with Bible's and heart's open. If you have any questions, please contact me through my blog, www.seekingthingsabove

Loving your children

Who doesn't love their children, right? But why does Titus 2:4, tell the older women to teach the younger women to love their children? Well, there are those times...

- When the two year old throws the lovely temper tantrum in the middle of aisle 5
- When they have made a path of chocolate syrup from the refrigerator through the dining room, on the carpet, over the couch and chairs in the living room and back to the fridge. (Really happened to me- don't read Hansel and Gretel before nap time!)
- Or when the teenager tests every fiber of your patience

Yes there are those times when love is *not* the first word of choice when dealing with our progeny! So we do need to learn how to love them, the way God intends for us to. A love that does not give them everything they want, or coddle them. A love that knows how to say NO, but also knows when to say YES. ***A love that nurtures their soul.***

The word love as used in the Titus 2 passage, “ to **love** their children”, is the Greek word ***philoteknos***, which translates to be fond of, hold dear or cherish.

So perhaps we should analyze the word cherish. From dictionary.com

Cherish:

1. to hold or treat as dear; feel love for: *to cherish one's native land.*
2. to care for tenderly; nurture: *to cherish a child*

Obviously, when talking about children, the second definition, “ To care for tenderly or nurture”, is what older women are to teach the younger women. So what is involved in nurture? What is your definition of nurture? How does one nurture their children. Discuss these questions with your group.

Again, from dictionary.com the definition of nurture is:

Nurture verb always used with an object

1. to feed and protect: *to nurture one's offspring.*
2. to support and encourage, as during the period of training or development
3. to bring up; train; educate.

Now we are getting somewhere.....the feeding and protecting is easy, but it is the support, encouragement, bring up, training, and educate that gets to the heart of "loving" your children. And that will be our focus.

First you as young mothers(parents) must decide or have a vision of what your goal is for the training of this child.

To raise up to do what?????
To educate for what purpose????
To encourage to do or be what???????

A great ball player....a concert pianist.....a Harvard grad....a singer....
NO! Not what they will DO, but the person they will become....the inner man, the character traits of honesty, integrity, responsibility, etc. But, more importantly raising them up to know, love and serve God. So in that sense, we are more like shepherds....leading our children to Christ~ the living water, the bread of life.

Let's go to God's word to see what He has to say about loving our children, about shepherding them to Him. Here are some principles from God's word....some directives for us as parents right from God to us.

PRINCIPLE # 1 CHERISH

Psalms 127: 1-5

Discuss 5 things you observe about that passage as it relates to our children.

How do you relate verse 1 to raising children?

Children are a gift! We are blessed through our children. Treat them as a treasured gift from God to you.

You will launch those children, like arrows into the world one day. Read my blog post from June 19th, 2013, titled Letting go and launching arrows, for perspective. www.seekingthingsabove.com

PRINCIPLE # 2 DISCIPLINE

Proverbs 29: 15-18, Proverbs 19:18, Proverbs 13:24, Hebrews 12:5-11

We are to discipline our children. To not do so shows lack of obedience to God, and a lack of love for our children. It is the how, where, when that gets confusing. This is where you might want to glean from the Ted Tripp's book. It goes into specifics. Or perhaps invite older women who have parented to give you their viewpoints.

But know this:

1. Discipline is NOT negotiable. You must discipline your child! If you don't *you* are disobeying God, and your child will suffer the consequences of a lack of discipline.
2. Godly discipline is not too popular with this present culture. Be prepared to go against the current of this world.

PRINCIPLE # 3 TEACH

Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6: 1-4, Deut 6:6-7

We are to teach or train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We are to do this DAILY, in everyday situations. This is 24/7. Not 1/7 By that I mean it is not the church's responsibility to teach your child at Sunday school. It is your responsibility and you must do it daily.

Discuss examples of this.

After your discussion, write down 5 things you can do to daily teach.

And by the way, keep it simple and real! Encourage each other with ideas. Ask other older women what they did. Read books, blogs etc to get ideas.

~A Closer Look at God's first directive to families~

Deut 6: 6-7

It is interesting to note that up to this point God had not yet directed the families in the raising of the children. As a result, many of the children and parents had questionable character:

- Cain-killed his brother
- Jacob-stole his brothers birthright, deceived his brother, shrewd dealings with this father in law
- Jacob son's-plundered and killed their neighbors after their sister was taken by force(after an peaceable agreement had been agreed upon by Issac)
- Judah daughter in law used trickery (played the harlot) to get what was due her
- Joseph's brothers –sold their brother into slavery and lied about it
- Parents showed favoritism- Rebecca to Jacob, Jacob to Joseph

Finally after the Law had been given, God gave very clear and direct instructions to parents.

Read these verse and they discuss what they were to do

Lev 10:11

Deut 4: 9-10

Deuteronomy 6: 1-13

Proverbs 6:20-23

A closer look at Deut 6:4-13

Circle these words in your Bible:

Hear v 4, Love v 5, Teach v 7, and Fear v 13

The Four Pillars of Godly Parenting

1. **HEAR** the truth continually

~the Israelites were to hear the truth continually

Romans 10:17 Where will faith come from?

2Tim 1:13 How is the 'standard' learned and retained?

Matt 11:15, Mark 4:23-24 (10 times) He that hath ears to hear..

(What about us??? -When, where, how do we hear??)

2. **LOVE** the Lord with all our heart, soul and might!

How many times does "all" appear??

Our love for the Lord must be complete! We cannot transfer to others what is lacking in ourselves. If you want your child to love the Lord, you must Love the Lord. HOW? Fervently with our ALL!!

Discuss~What does that look like??

The dangers of ROTE...doing what we do without the accompanying love. Example: Eli and his sons....1 Sam 2: 12-17, 22-25

3. **TEACH** the Young Diligently

Whose job was the teaching? (The priest, the group????....no the parents!)

When was the teaching to be done? (Once a week, at special family "devo" time??...No all day, everyday, using everyday happenings of life!)

How was it to be done? Diligently!

In Hebrew diligent means to sharpen, pierce, inoculate.

Dictionary.com describes diligent as

- 1.constant in effort to accomplish something; attentive and persistent in doing anything
- 2.done or pursued with persevering attention; painstaking

How does that change the concept of teach your children?

Some truths

- ~ It is God's desire that we actively, daily with constant effort teach our children about Him.
- ~It is the responsibility of the parent.
- ~It is also evident in the New Testament that God desires a consistent transfer of His truth from older to younger as in Titus 2:1-6

Questions to discuss:

How can we accomplish this?

Can you teach effectively what you don't know, don't obey or don't love?

Discuss examples of how we can accomplish this...

~ Read and study Bible together, Pray together, Pray at meals, Pray at bedtime, examples in nature. We must "fall more in love with God", read the word on a regular basis, pray, asking for God's help....talking in our families of spiritual things

4. FEAR (Revere) the Lord Greatly

What does reverence or honor of the Lord look like in a person's life?

Look through these verses and discuss

1 Peter 5: 5-6

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Hebrews 13:18

Proverbs 15:33

Read Deut 6: 24-25 For what purpose are we to fear the Lord?

FINAL Thoughts

- ~ Each child has it's own unique personality and spirit and has what God has given all of us : *free will*.
- ~ Teaching your child is your responsibility; to *not do so* means you are in disobedience to God. However, you must remember, you may water, you may plant, but GOD gives the increase. 1 Cor 3:6
- ~ Your child will have his or her own unique journey of faith. They are not carbon copies of you. Some will easily accept faith, and others will struggle. Some will lose their faith, and then find it again and strengthen others, like the Apostle Peter did.

So what do you do?

You LOVE your children by diligently teaching them, and then you add one more ingredient...PRAYER!

You need to be able to whole heartedly say, like Hannah did in 1 Sam 1:27...

For this child, I have prayed!

This is just a start for you, young mother. Stay connected with other Christian moms and study together on a regular basis. Your children will be blessed because of it, and will someday rise up and call you blessed!

*I do not agree with the author, Ted Tripp, that children are born sinners. I believe from Genesis 8: 21, that the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth. I believe that one has to have an understanding of his sin before he is accountable before God. We used the book because it has good practical advice for discipline that leads the child to make heart changes, not just behavior changes.

