

DISCIPLING OUR CHILDREN!

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What are the *planned functions* of the family in God's will and mind? What is it that God desires of the family?

To understand the functions of a family is to be able to enter into His *divine will* and to build the family as He desires. God has a perfect will for your family!

One of the areas of *greatest neglect* is the discipling of our own children. We ought to read and study Matthew 28:18-20 often as we see clearly in the great commission that we are to "*teach all things*" and this demands discipling. We ought to be concerned about discipling our own youth and children. Their very future depends upon our consistency in molding their lives for Christ. The great commission does not only state the need of winning them for Christ -- but that they would be baptized, and also *taught to observe all things*.

I. WHAT ARE SOME FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY?

A. The home is a place to teach and saturate with Biblical principles!

(Prov. 2:1-11; 3:1-4, 11-23 4:1-7, 10-13; 6:20-23)

1. That they might understand the doctrines. (II Tim. 1:13, 2:15, I Tim. 4:6)
2. The Roman Catholic church gives up to seven years to mold the child in their doctrines. Then they say that having indoctrinated a child they will have the child for life. The Communists say that a child is teachable from 1-7, can be bent from 7-12 years old, must be broken between 12-16, after that only death can change them.
3. Consider Isaiah 28:9-10. To disciple is to teach doctrine, to help the child KNOW God's word and will. (II Tim. 3:16-17)

B. Home is a place to secure the child's spiritual good, and future for God.

1. Read and study the following: (Deut. 4:9-11; 5:28-29; 31:12-13; Psa. 78:5-8)
2. Parents must have a dedicated heart to instruct the child. We can't expect the right things to *rub off on them*. ***We must teach them to:***
 - To fear and to love the Lord, (Deut. 6:6-20; 11:13-28)
 - to continually, progressively learn to walk with the Lord. (Prov. 4:1-5)

C. Home is a place to establish a heritage;

D. Home is the place for molding the child's life for the future.

E. Home is the place for molding a godly life-style.

II. WHY IS THE DISCIPLING OF OUR CHILDREN SO IMPORTANT?

Young people today lack stability! Christian youth need something solid and stable to build their lives up. Many things contribute to the instability of their lives, such as:

A. A lack of trust:

1. We have taught our youth not to trust anyone or anything.
2. They basically do not trust the establishment, the government, adults, or institutions about them. Governments has made grandiose promises that cannot be fulfilled and parents make pledges they do not keep.
3. Youth are constantly disappointed and brought to distrust everything.

B. We see in our youth a lack of commitment!

1. All around them our youth see parents and people quitting in every walk of life when the going gets tough.
2. Instead of weathering the storm, finding answers and doing right out of commitment our young people see adults take the path of least resistance and least demand upon themselves.

C. We see in our youth a lack of submission to authority.

1. Students rebel against teachers, parents and law enforcement.
2. Men do not want to submit to authority.
3. Women do not wish to submit to their husbands. Liberty without restraints has become the goal of many.

III. WHY SHOULD DISCIPLING BEGIN AT HOME?

Discipling is designed by God with our best interest in mind. We don't give God a favor by committing ourselves to Him. It is He who does us the favor by offering us the privilege of discipleship.

It is the only way to have the blessed, overflowing life that He wants us to have. (Jh. 10:10; 8:31; Jh. 17:17) Discipleship is a commitment to the person of Christ.

A. The parent has a tremendous obligation --

1. The parent discipling his own child is confronted with the task of fulfilling his obligation as a parent. Eph. 6:4
2. The parent has a commitment to the person of Christ in such a task.
3. Discipleship deal first with the
 - inner quality of life and
 - then the outward performance (Jh. 13:34,35; 14:15, 21, 23; 15:9)

B. The parent has a tremendous privilege.

The word, **disciple**, is used about 250 times in the gospels and the Book of Acts. It usually means someone who is attached to the person of Christ as Master of his life. ***The word never means something someone does to another person.*** As parents we do not convert our child to Christ, all of it is the work of the Holy Spirit. I can only influence the child for Christ, and urge that one, but only God can do the work in the heart and life.

1. So to disciple them is to work in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, using the Word of God to help mold their lives and bring surrender to the Savior as Lord of their lives.
2. What a privilege to mold our own child for Christ! What a joy, to fulfill the command of the Word of God and build a life for Christ.

We must make them accountable for we can only expect what we inspect. It is our privilege to study materials with them, holding them accountable to study, to apply and to memorize the Word of God.

IV. WHAT IS THE BASIC COMMAND TO THE CHURCH?

A. The command is to disciple! (Matt. 28:18-20)

B. The example of discipling! (Acts 5:42; Col. 2:28-29; Gal 4:19)
All the epistles of the New Testament were discipling letters to meet the needs of the new converts. (I Thess. 2:3-13)

C. Paul's heart was in discipling! (Gal. 4:19; I Thess. 2:7-11)

D. Our failure to disciple! (Col. 4:12; Eph. 5:17; 6:6)

1. Would we want babies born and not care for them?
2. Would we desire babies to be unloved, unwanted, undesired, etc.
3. We decry abortion, and then fail as churches to care for those entrusted to our care!
4. We can only know if we have truly led someone to Christ by their new born desire to know the Lord, to grow, etc.,

Those who are truly saved have a new nature, new love, new life, new perspective, new value system, new Father, new family, new open book, new interests, and a new purpose in life. This should be manifested in their lives. If someone is truly saved it naturally follows that they will desire to be trained in the Word of God, to be disciplined so they know how to walk with this One who they have come to love.

What will we do for our children? Will we obey? Do we truly want them to live for Christ? Study Proverbs chapters two, three, four, and six.