

PASTORAL CARE WITH CHILDREN
A CASE STUDY OF IBADAN WELFARE HOME

BY:

OJEWUNMI, EMMANUEL ADELEKAN

June 2002

362.732
Oj 2p
NBTS
MDV

PASTORAL CARE WITH CHILDREN
A CASE STUDY OF IBADAN WELFARE HOME.

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE
FACULTY OF THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
MASTER OF DIVINITY

By

OJEWUNMI, E.A.

03-318

JUNE, 2002.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Children as gifts from the Lord are considered to be a source of happiness and a means toward success for homes. The childlessness is looked upon with reproach in many cultures because of the various reasons enumerated in the third chapter of this work. Jesus likewise "made special efforts in His outreach toward children, much to the consternation of His disciples (Luke 18:15, 16). His teaching emulated the child's simple, trusting approach. He also encouraged the "Hosanna" welcome accorded Him by children in the Temple (Matt 21:15). Huffman adds that "training up a child while is in the kingdom, is the ideal set up, for which every parent, guardian and teacher of the child should pray and strive"¹ Infact, lack of training is certainly to produce a weakness in individuals and generations, which can never be redeemed. "Trace the history of criminals and moral weaklings, and it will be seen that they did not receive proper training. If we critically examine the source of success of men and women who have made impression upon the world of good, it will be discovered in almost every instance, that the background of that life stood a wise and directing parenthood, whose impact has come down to succeeding generations, through the proper training of its own offspring"²

Therefore, parents are hereby encouraged to adequately train ~~their~~ children to enable them be what God originally wants them to be. Every parent ~~should~~ be eager to show his or her children the way of the Lord. It is very true that parents have wonderful ambition for their children. (They ~~desire~~ that they should be splendid in physique; have cultivated intellects, marry ~~well~~ be successful in their business and their profession. All these are legitimate and to be desire, but ~~the~~ highest ambition any parents can have for a child is that,

First of all, he is a true Christian, and everything else ~~secondary~~ to that."³
Based on this fact, difficult in children can be avoided if parents ~~prepared~~ to ¹⁷

¹ Huffman, J.A.;A.B.;B.D.;D.D.WM.B, Building the Home Christian Michigan: Berdman's (1935). P. 57.

² Ibid. P.58

³ Ibid P.62

commit their children to the Lord after birth and if they did not neglect their responsibilities in terms of training and provision for their daily keeping.

Meanwhile, the following are the suggested recommendations for the parents and guardian that can help them to avoid difficult children in their lives. The recommendations are as follows: First, couples are advised to bring into the world the numbers of children they can adequately cater for every parents should aspire to practice family planning in order to reduce the number of unwanted children and to permit them to adequately nurture the few ones they have with their little resources. Too many children with little resources and time can lead any child to become difficult when their parents do not adequately attend to the child. Second Parents should possess a vital faith in God. Gordon once said there are four ways in which God has revealed Himself to man and names the baby as one of these four ways. "Each baby rightly brings with it to the parents a strange new consciousness of a power beyond, alive and at work, a power that knows their individual home as the place receiving this new gift of life".⁴

Similarly, parents should try to avoid threatening their children because "threats are invitations to repeat a forbidden act. When a child is told "If you do it once more ..." he does not hear the words "If you". He hears only "do it once more". Sometimes he interprets it as "mother expects me to do it once more, or she'll be disappointed."⁵ Threat leads the children in order words "to repeat an obnoxious act, serves as a challenge to the child's autonomy. If he has any self respect he must transgress again to show to himself and to others that he is not a sissy".⁶

In addition, parents should avoid giving bribes to their children. They should avoid advancing reward to their children before asking them to do something. "Rewards are most helpful and more enjoyable when they are unannounced in advance, when they come as a surprise, when they represent recognition and appreciation"⁷ Some parents are always being greeted by their children with

⁴ Leavell, M.B. Building A Christian Home. Nashville, Tennessee: The Sunday school Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (1993). P.39

⁵ Gnoth, H.G. Between parent and child. New solutions to Old Problems. N/Y; Macmillan. (1973). P.53.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. p.56

what-did-you-bring-for-me?" instead of "welcome" or "hello" because their parents are fond of coming home from a shopping trip with a present. Advancing present to the children may soon lead to bargaining and blackmail, and to over increasing demands for prizes and fringe benefits in exchange for "goods" behavior. Similarly, parents should avoid unrealistic expectations and practices from the children. "Promises should neither be made to, nor demanded of children. Relationship with our children should be built on trust. When a parent must make promises to emphasize that he means what he says, and then he is as much as admitting that his "unpromised" word is not trustworthy. Promises build up unrealistic expectations in children."⁸

Furthermore, parents should avoid sarcasm/speaking or writing which tries to hurt children's feelings, especially by expressions, which clearly mean the opposite to what they felt. Bitter sarcasm and cutting clothes have no place in child upbringing. It is best to avoid statements such as "You have grown too big for your breeches". "Wittingly or unwittingly, we should not deflate the child's status in his own eyes and in the eyes of his peers"⁹ Meanwhile, parents should be encourage a child to lie, instead, the children should be encouraged to be faithful always. Children sometimes lie when they are not allowed to tell the truth. "To teach honesty, be prepared to listen to bitter truths as well as to pleasant truths. If a child is to grow up honest he must not be encouraged to lie about his feelings, be they positive, negative, or ambivalent. It is from our reactions to his expressed feelings that the child learns whether or not honesty is the best policy."¹⁰ Parents are advised to for go asking questions that are likely to cause defensive lying. Children can also feel bitter when a parent is interrogating them, especially when they suspect that the answers are already known. "They hate questions that are traps, questions that force them to choose between an awkward lie or an embarrassing confessions."¹¹ know a child as he really is and then accept him for what he is. Parent is encouraged to accept his child in the he is. "It requires no courage to accept a child, especially if the child is bright. But to accept a child, as he really is when he is crippled, when he is spastic, when he is subnormal

8. Ibid

9. Ibid P. 57

10. Ibid P. 58

11. Ibid P.59

in any way this is a different matter. And different again- terribly

Different when a child is almost two people--- Yet parents live with such children, accept them for what they are, and gradually make their peace with the sad reality.”¹²

By doing so, such children can be redeemed when the parent has courage to accept and deal with them as they are. “One way to lay the foundation for children to develop into kind loving, thoughtful adults is to help them to experience positive reinforcement about himself or herself”¹³ Because each child is a unique gift from God, he should be valued and celebrated by his family, teachers and the church.

Parents should also love and care for their children. “Personal attentions are more valuable to the child than are a musing toys. The baby should be aware of the giver, not only of the gift.”¹⁴ “A child’s greatest fear is of being involved and abandoned by his parents.”¹⁵ The greatest terror a child can have is that he is not loved and rejection is the hell he fears and this can lead to anger, and with anger some kind of crime in revenge. Therefore, parent should not avoid threatening any child with abandonment nor be warned that he will be deserted. “Young children surrounded by unconditional love have a more complete and accurate understanding of themselves. They are able to take into account those areas in their development needing attention as well as celebrating their progress in specific aspects of their daily lives.”¹⁶

Parents are also encouraged to be honest with their children. They should avoid telling lies to them about themselves and likewise they should not ask them to do what they themselves are unable to do. Also, they should only try to assist them in improving themselves. Parents should let them know the true situation of things rather than giving them a false report of their situation. They must always tell them the plain truth- that we all are born with widely varying capacities and abilities and interests. And again, that what a person lacks in quick comprehension he often can makeup by hard work, dedication, and concentration. Similarly parents are expected to always guide their children. With some few exceptions like going to school and doing homework, parents are advised not to impose their will on their children. The important

12. Binstock, L. The power of maturity. New York Hawthorn (1965). P. 119 –120

13. Ibid

14. Ibid p. 122

15. Gnoth. Ibid p. 135

16. Crass, D. R. Today’s preschoolers. A profile for teachers leaders and parents. Nashville, Tennessee convention press (1993). p. 6.

