

Shepherding a Child's Heart Session 4 - Shaping Influences

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[0 : 00] Amen. Okay, as we begin, let me lead us in prayer and ask for God's blessing on our time.! We come to you, Lord, and we acknowledge that we need your help.

We recognize that apart from illumination from the Spirit of God, we cannot understand your Word. And so we ask that you would be with us in this time we have together, that you would open your truth to us, and that you would open our hearts to receive your truth, and that our considerations would impact the ways that we raise our children.

Impacte la forma en que nosotros criamos nuestros niños. We ask this for Christ's glory. Amen. Lo pedimos para la gloria de Cristo. Amen. Well, we've looked at the importance of the heart as the wellspring of life.

Miramos que la importancia del corazón es de donde mana la vida. And this hour I want to start to think with you about the importance of shaping influences in our children's lives.

Y en esta hora quiero hablar con ustedes de la importancia de moldear las influencias en la vida de nuestros niños. I'm going to define that term in a moment. Voy a definir ese término en un momento.

[1 : 39] My wife Margie was raised in a very strict home. Mi esposa Margie fue educada en un hogar muy estricto. And they had a very formal meal together each night.

Y ellos tenían una cena formal cada año. And her father was a very serious-minded man. Y su padre era un hombre muy serio. And during the course of the meal he would go around the table to each of the children.

Y durante el curso de la cena, él chequeaba a cada uno de los niños. And he would ask them to report on their day. Y les preguntaba que les reportaran cómo les fue.

And what they had done and so forth. Y lo que habían hecho y cosas por ese... Now, in contrast to that, my mother was raised in a traveling circus. En contraste de eso, mi madre fue criada en un círculo que viajaba.

And there was nothing formal in their lives. Y no había nada formal en la vida de ellos. And so I was raised in a home where meal times were marginally controlled chaos.

[2 : 45] Así que fui criado en un hogar donde los tiempos de comida eran caóticos. And our dinner table was rather like listening to political commentators on a news show talking over each other.

And so everyone talked at once. And the solution to the problem was to talk louder than the other people. And so naturally our contrasting life experience gave us things to work through when we got together as a couple.

Naturalmente. Esa manera tan distinta en que nosotros crecimos alrededor de la cena, Margie y yo, fue algo que tuvimos que trabajar a la hora de criar a nuestra niña. Now, that's just one example of shaping influences.

Eso es solamente un ejemplo de cómo moldear las influencias. I think of shaping influences as those circumstances that in a child's development that shape who he becomes.

Que en el desarrollo de un niño mordea quienes son ellos. So it's the life experiences and the way those life experiences affect our children. Así que las experiencias de nuestras vidas afectan la vida de nuestros niños y sus vidas.

[4 : 09] And of course there are many of those shaping influences that we'll talk about in a moment. Y muchas de esas influencias moldeadoras las vamos a hablar desde luego en un momento.

Now, but I want to start by just establishing that it's biblical for us to think about these things. But I want to start by establishing that it's biblical for us to think about this way.

The scriptures recognize the lifelong implications of the ways that we are raised. La escritura reconoce las implicaciones para nuestras vidas en la manera en que somos criados.

In Genesis 18, 19, God speaks to Abraham. In Genesis 18, 19, Dios le habla a Abraham. And he says, I've chosen him. And he says, I've chosen him.

That he might direct his children and his household after him. Que él pueda moldear a sus niños y a su hogar de la forma mía. To keep the ways of the Lord.

[5 : 07] Para que mantenga el camino del Señor. By doing what is just and right. Haciendo lo que es justo y correcto. So that the Lord might bring to Abraham all that he has promised.

Para que el Señor traiga a Abraham todo lo que le ha prometido. So God uses the agency of Abraham directing his family. Así que Dios utiliza la agencia de Abraham dirigiendo su familia. Providing shaping influences for his family. Proveyendo una influencia que moldea su familia. In order to bring about the fulfillment of God's covenant promises for Abraham.

Para traer el cumplimiento del pacto que Dios le había prometido a Abraham. And of course Deuteronomy 6 also talks that we looked at in our first session talks about the importance of shaping influences.

And of course Deuteronomy 6 that we talked about at the beginning how the influences moldea a nuestros niños. In fact the passage tells us the entire day is to be filled with these shaping influences.

[6 : 08] De hecho el passage nos dice que todo el día debemos estar trabajando how to moldear las influencias delimitado. So that when we rise in the morning así que cuando nos levantamos en la mañana when we sit around the house cuando nos sentamos en la casa when we walk along the way cuando estamos hablando en el camino when we lie down at the end of the day cuando nos acostamos al final del día the entire day is framed by these shaping influences for our children.

El día completo está delimitado por la influencia moldeando las influencias de ellos. God's ways and God's truths are continually being taught to our kids. De forma que la palabra de Dios y los caminos de Dios son continuamente aplicados a nuestros hijos.

Proverbs 22.6 Proverbs 22.6 says train a child on the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it. Intruye al niño en su camino y de viejo no se apartará de él.

Now there is much debate about what this passage means. Hay mucho debate en cuanto a lo que significa este pasaje. Does it mean that if we train our children in God's ways they will never fall away?

Significa que si entrenamos a nuestros niños en el camino de Dios ellos nunca se apartarán? Or does it mean train him in the way that he wants to go and he won't fall away from that? O que entrenemos al niño en la forma que ellos quieren ir y que ellos no se apartarán de eso?

[7 : 31] And I'm going to speak more about this passage in a later session. Hablaré un poco más de este pasaje en una sección más tarde. But for now I want to just underscore the point that early childhood training has a significant impact on our kids.

Solamente quiero subrayar el punto de que entrenamiento temprano del niño tiene un impacto profundo en sus vidas. And of course Ephesians 6 calls parents to raise their children in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Why is that? Because shaping influences matter for our children. And in fact Paul says if you don't do that you may exasperate your children.

So we could think about this in this way. Podemos pensar en esto de esta forma. The person your child becomes is the product of two things.

La persona que tu niño se transforma es el producto de dos cosas. The first is his life experience. Lo primero es las experiencias de su vida those shaping influences that come to him.

[8 : 57] Esas influencias moldeadoras que vienen a sus vidas. And the second is the way that he interacts with that shaping influence. Y lo segundo es la manera en que el niño interactúa con esas influencias moldeadoras.

And we're going to look at both sides of this question. Y vamos a mirar a los dos lados de esta pregunta. Your child is not simply acted upon by the shaping influences of life.

Tu niño no solamente recibe las influencias moldeadoras en su vida. But he reacts. Sino que él también responde a esas influencias. And he responds out of the Godward orientation of his heart.

Y él responde conforme a la orientación en Dios que tenga en su corazón. Now what are some of those shaping influences? ¿Cuáles son algunas de esas influencias moldeadoras?

We could think of things like the structure of family life. Is this a traditional nuclear family? Is the child being raised by his natural parents?

[10:01] Is it a single parent family? Maybe grandparents are doing the job? How many children are in the family?

Where does this child fit in in that group of children in the family? Where are the relationships between the children?

How close or distant are they in terms of age? Or how distant are they in terms of abilities or interest?

Or how distant are they in terms of ability or interests? What kind of coalitions exist within a family? What type of coalition exist in a family?

For example, Tommy was always closer to dad because they both like the same sports. For example, Tommy siempre was very close to his dad because the two liked the sport.

[11:06] And mother always protected Alice from Jane's sharp tongue. I was counseling a couple that a young couple and the wife was very upset because her husband did not organize his life around her.

And the wife was very molested because the wife didn't organize his life around her. Now she was an only child. So she had grown up in a home where life was organized around her.

Her parents never had to choose whether they would go to her recital or to her brother's soccer game. And she brought those kind of expectations to marriage.

Or we could think about family values. what's important to mom and dad. What will people get upset about and what will pass by without even being noticed.

Will mom and dad get more upset because you got a hole in your new school pants or over the fight in the playground that was the reason why you got the hole in the pants.

[12:48] Or what kind of ideas are captured by the saints around the family.

what type of ideas are captured about those things in the family. Like don't start a fight but if someone else starts it you finish it.

or you don't count the cost if your heart is involved. Or no good deed will ever go unpunished.

People are more important than things. What are the spoken rules of the house?

Where does God fit into family life? Is he the sun at the center of the solar system of life?

[13:59] What kind of things will get praise from mom and dad? What would get you praise from mom and dad? I asked a young boy one time what would get you in more trouble if you broke a prized collectible that your mother has or if you disobeyed your parents or if you don't you do you do your parents and without question he said breaking the prize collectible and he said sin ningún tipo de duda rompiendo la colección valiosa de mi mamá there there or think about the boundaries of family life where are secrets kept and where are things told what's private what do you share some kids grow up never knowing how much money their father earns in other families they know the checking account balance at any given moment some parents keep secrets from the kids kids keep secrets from their parents dads might say to the kids don't ever tell your mother about this or mother might say don't worry about dad

I'll take care of him see every family has its boundaries or the roles in a family you know the children observe their parents and they learn how to be married people they learn how to be married a boy learns to be a man by watching his dad he sees his father's care and concern for the family he sees how mindful he is to share mother unnecessary steps and how thoughtful he is about her needs and he learns how to be a man or if a dad is a tyrant and capricious his son might think those are manly ways young girls watch how their father treats a woman and even in broken families what children are accustomed to seems normal

I was counseling a couple one time in the first session the wife told me her husband was the head of the house he said aren't you she said aren't you and he very dutifully said yes ma'am and later I said to her you know you told me that the first time we met and I think you're right he is the head of the house but you're the neck and the neck controls the head and of course children have roles in family as well some children are care providers some children have chores and responsibilities or we can think of how conflicts are resolved in a family if we think of how some conflict are resolved does the family know how to talk through problems can they speak freely and hear each other out

do they resolve issues or do they just walk away do they have non verbal signals that I'm ready to move on so!

the day after the ugly fight! he never says forgive me but those flowers are a symbol that he's ready to move on never he never mention!

[19 : 19] he never mention! he never mention! but he never mention! he never mention that he is ready to solve! he resolved the situation one couple I counseled would go for weeks without speaking to each other! and they would use the children as intermediaries!

tell your mother that I'm ready to go you tell your father that when I'm ready I'll be ready Margie and I counsel a disciple a couple early on in our marriage and they told us one day we fight a lot at our house we didn't know what they meant by that but we went to visit them and everything in their house was broken and repaired they had fights where they would break up furniture and throw the dishes across the room or we could think of many other examples!

or we could think about response to failure because childhood is filled with awkward attempts! because the children are full of! of poor attempts! and also a lot of failed efforts and of failed efforts! and children without maturity make mistakes and sometimes those mistakes can be very costly or very inconvenient and how parents respond is very important our children made to feel foolish are they mocked for their failures are their failures told and retold by their parents for amusement or we could think of things like family history because family history shapes our children births deaths marriages divorces migration illness health prosperity or poverty roots in the community family reputation all these things impact our children

[22 : 25] I was counseling a lady one time and she said we moved around a lot when I was a child so I said well what do you mean you moved a lot five times ten times twenty times thirty times she said oh no much more than that she came back the next week and she and her sister had conversed and they had counted forty six times that they moved before she was eighteen years old many years ago in the early days of grace fellowship there was a couple that had a home that they had bought in

McAdoo and they were rebuilding their they were repairing their home and so the man had taken the staircase out of the house because he was replacing it and they were going up and down the ladder to the second floor of the house and one night in the middle of the night he realized the house is on fire and he said to his wife you get the baby and I'll get our son we have to get out of the house it's on fire so they got out of the house and he turned to her and he said where's the baby she said

I thought you were getting the baby and the fireman restrained her she tried to get back into this house that was falling down and the bomb that's one of those dynamic events in a family life all of life is divided between before the fire and after the fire or we could think of things like education the quality of the schools available to you or whether you do homeschooling or the educational ability of children we have met many adults who were homeschooled and I remember one time this lady saying I've put my parents on time out

I can't see them because of the broken relationships that had been produced by the education seen in their house now that's not a general statement about homeschooling for many many people it's a wonderful experience but in this case it had been an experience that left this woman scarred or we could think about cyber influence gaming phones internet all those sorts of things and they're powerful shaping influences you have the exposure to dangerous content whether it's violence or things that are sexually explicit ya sea violencia o escenas sexualmente explícitas or the whole range or the whole range of political and lifestyle ideas or the whole range of political and lifestyle ideas such as lesbianism or the gay lifestyle or trans lesbianism the children gain their first experience of those things often through cyber influence!

or addiction to screens the short reels that exist on all social media are very compelling and a child can develop an addiction to just watching those things again and again and there are many other problems to track with that such as trouble with sleeping or eye strain or the inability to interact with real people or we could think of the social influence if children find their social interaction online they're likely to lack empathy for others social awkwardness or lack of social skills and all that contributes to feelings of inadequacy or depression or questions about body image as they compare themselves to others online

[28 : 57] I had a conversation about with a woman in Brussels one time about this issue I felt like I was coming off very strongly against children having open access to internet and she said you were

not nearly strong enough about it and she said you were not nearly strong enough about it she said we have a 14 year old daughter we got her a smartphone she got on these body image sites on her phone and she started losing weight because she thought she was too fat and she said she's 16 years old and she's skin and bone she only weighs 70 pounds and she's dying but the entire into that whole world was the phone and we can only wonder how much all the internet access impacts academic standards for children or physical fitness or su conformación física su preparación física el estar bien físicamente and of course many of the popular video games are extremely violent and the players get desensitized to violence and remember one of the reasons why

God flooded the world was because of violence and remember one of the things that God sent the diluvial was violence now I read recently that only 40% of parents make any attempt to monitor or to manage their children's access to online content and many parents will even acknowledge that it can be dangerous but they trust their children and of the parents who try to monitor it only 40% think that their attempts are successful or effective 40% think that their attempts are successful or we can think about just the culture in general the lack of stability in the culture or the influences of extended family or the community or the church that you're part of or the influence of the extended family and the culture and the church that you're part and this is only really a suggestive list of the kind of shaping influences that impact our children and this is only a list suggestive of the type of influence that can impact our children and as parents we want to provide the best possible shaping influences for our kids but many things are not under your control for example sickness may not be under your control or the sudden death of a family member or the sudden financial losses or the sudden financial losses so we want to provide the best possible shaping influences for our children but we recognize that there are many of those things that we cannot control but we and I think there are mistakes that we can make in how we respond to these shaping influences

I'm sorry I don't think I have a slide for this but we can make the mistake of seeing shaping influences deterministically but we can make the mistake of seeing the influences molding as determinants it's assuming that the child is simply the product of those shaping influences so we see the child as passive and being acted upon by the shaping influences or we can make the mistake of denial where we deny how powerfully the child is affected by his early childhood experience and we need to bring biblical thought to the way we think about these shaping influences many parents make this great mistake they adopt a kind of Christian determinism they think if we can get it right if we can shelter him enough if we can be positive in our interactions if we can send him to a Christian school or homeschool him if we can keep him away from harmful media if we can be part of a good church with him if we can be sure that he is obedient then we'll be able to keep our child from danger and it's as though this child is passive and whatever we do will make the difference and that's really a very deterministic view because the fact is our children are not passive they interact with the shaping influences we provide they are active responders to your shaping influences they will respond according to the god word orientation of their hearts and that's really is a connection between even what we looked at in the last few weeks about the heart directing behavior because your child responds to the shaping influences you provide

I had a friend who was a potter who made beautiful things out of clay I had I had a friend who was a alfarero who did things precious of barro he said to me I can only make the kind of objects that the clay will allow me to make I can only make I can make I can only make the clay you see the clay is not just passive in the potter's hands the clay responds and some clay is soft and elastic and some clay is crumbly and dry it's difficult to shape the clay responds to the potter and our children are like that they respond to the shape and influences we provide and if your child knows and loves [38 : 34] God if your child has embraced the truth that knowing God can give him peace in all circumstances he will be able to respond correctly to the shaping influences that you provide but if he doesn't know God if he doesn't love God if he is rebellious against God if he serves the idols of his heart then he may rebel even against your best efforts he can even he can even against your best efforts and that's why I would encourage you not to look at these classes and think I need to learn all the things I have to do to produce excellent children because this teaching is not about just how you can get it right and produce excellent children when

I give this dose of reality to people they often respond saying well why bother if you can't guarantee that if I do all the things you're suggesting our kids will turn out well why bother and here's the answer to that question providing these shaping influences for your children is what God calls you

to do it's what God calls us to do in Deuteronomy 6 in Ephesians 6 so it's what it means to live a life of faith so I do the things God has called me to do because I love God and I want to be faithful to God and I want to be faithful to my children and I also know that God works through means God one of the means that God uses in our lives of our children is our parents but ultimately your children are responsible for the ways that they respond to your parenting and determinism makes parents conclude that if they get it right they will produce excellent children and that idea often produces bitter fruit later because the parents of troublesome teenagers conclude it's all their fault because the parents of teenagers that are problem and so they conclude we failed as parents if only we had homeschooled or if we had not homeschooled or if we had sent them to Christian school if only we had been more consistent it's not hard to blame yourself and they're forgetting Proverbs 4 23 above all else guard your heart for it is the well spring of life your heart determines how your child's heart will determine how he responds to your parenting and of course that determinism leads to hopelessness after the child has grown and we have made all these mistakes what hope do we have Proverbs 9 is an excellent illustration of this truth and I'll have to I'll have to I don't have time to do this next we'll have to do it next time but let me end with this three reasons for us to have hope God's purpose is to work through families we see that throughout the scriptures God works through families and the gospel your children hear every day from you is suited to their needs as people and the gospel is powerful one of the most humbling aspects of being a parent is the realization that I cannot save my children God has to do something that I cannot do

[44 : 27] I need to do all the things God's called me to do but ultimately God must do something in this trial that I don't have the ability to do that will humble us that will humble us and it will keep us in prayer for our kids and now I have just given you half of the teaching I want to give you now I have just given you half of the teaching I want to give you half of the story are the shaping influences of life because the other half is the Godward orientation of our children's hearts and that's what I want to look at with you the next time I speak but it won't be until the end of the month because next week we have the Lord's

Supper bilingual Lord's Supper and the following week I'll be on vacation so we'll pick that up on the 27th and I'm sorry I don't have time for questions you have some you want to go ahead with that okay good okay okay okay okay I'll read it and then you'll read shepherding question avoiding behavioral incentives for heart change makes good sense what about using behavioral incentives for non-moral non-heart issues such as trying to encourage growth in tidiness good study habits time management would there be a legitimate use for behavioral incentives in cases like like that the question is!

avoid incentives stimulating the behavior of the child's heart can make sense! but what is about using incentives in behavior of the child's behavior for things that are not of moral or heart like for example that the child is clean that have good habits of study and manage your time efficiently would there be a use legitimate of incentivizing your conduct in cases of that type of we hang on to that truth that it's out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks that all behaviors heart driven that all type of conduct!

then I don't think some of these illustrations are necessarily non-moral good study habits good time management even having my life organized which is where tidiness would fit in all those things really have moral implications I do think that there is a great place for commendation of children and for encouraging them!

think there is place to stimulate the children and to stimulate them and to encourage them to encourage them to!!

[48 : 41] ! Most of the 16th chapter of Romans is commendation that Paul gives to people who have served well in the body of Christ Lord Romans 16th is the alabanzas that people are doing things correctly but we will have more opportunities to address that question as we go forward thank you thank you let the flood gates open and all the people come in