

**“Living the Passion”
Raising Children
in a Christian Home
25/10/15**

(PHIL) Introduce ourselves

Our background.

I am the middle one of 3 boys and was brought up by Christian parents who were heavily involved in our local Christian Brethren assembly.

For us Sunday was “a day of rest”, but we went to “The Gospel Hall” for Sunday School in the morning, then the “breaking of bread” service, and the gospel service in the evening, which left Sunday afternoon free.

Sunday was also a day to be kept “holy”, which really meant “do nothing” in the afternoon and don’t make a noise whilst mum & dad had a rest.

On a Sunday I wasn’t allowed to watch TV, or kick a ball, and on holiday I wasn’t allowed on the beach.

They were strict disciplinarians!

They both held the same values – so if I asked dad for something, and he said “no”, it was no good going to mum. She would either say “no” as well, or she would ask “what did dad say?”

I never heard my parents argue.

(JAN) I have an older sister and a younger brother.

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Dad died suddenly when I was 7½, which obviously had an impact on our lives and childhood was difficult.

My mum took us to Sunday School at the local C of E church.

So although, I did have a connection with church and learned Bible stories, I would say that I was not brought up in a Christian home.

Mum was more of a church-goer than a Christian.

I was not really disciplined, and used to stamp my feet and get my own way.

My upbringing influenced how I wanted to raise my children.

How true is this for you?

I wanted them to be disciplined, have boundaries, and have confidence.

Phil & I have been married for 41 years and have 2 sons – Tim 39, Jamie 36.

Both married to Christians, and each have 3 children.

So we have 6 grandchildren ranging from 14 years to 11 months.

That’s briefly about us.

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Our subject today is:

“Raising children in a Christian Home”

It is important to say that there is **no guarantee** that children of Christian parents will become Christians themselves.

More about that later.

Obviously there are people here from a variety of backgrounds, and with children of various ages. There may well be single parents here, or those who don't yet have children.

Hopefully we will have something for everybody.

If there is time, we'll have questions at the end

1. What is a Christian home?

Is it a home where both parents are Christians – or is there more to it?

How does a Christian home differ from a non-Christian home?

Ideally, a Christian home has 2 loving, God-honouring parents modelling Christian values in every aspect of their lives.

A Christian home is defined not just by what the parents are **doing**, but by how the parents are **behaving**.

Peace should be a characteristic of a Christian home

Col3¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...

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We will not always be happy.

We all face problems, & heartaches.

There may well be disagreements.

It probably won't be quiet!

But - is my home a place of peace? – over-arched with the peace of Christ?

Unselfishness should be another characteristic of a Christian home.

Phil 2³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves....

How is this displayed in your home?

As parents do we treat each other with kindness, respect, humility and love?

Do children learn the importance of helping out with household duties rather than just being waited on all the time?

Clearing the dishes, helping with chores etc.

By doing this you are teaching them responsibilities as well as unselfishness.

(PHIL)

2. How can I be a good Christian role-model for my children?

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I was speaking to my eldest son about this seminar, and said that if I had my time again, I would do things differently.

I would spend more time with them etc.

He was surprised and said that he felt his upbringing was fine!

So don't give yourselves too much of a hard time unnecessarily!

As parents we should live out our faith and be a good role-model to our children.

From a young age, teach them to pray about all things

Pray **for** your children and **with** your children

Don't just teach them – show them

Make prayer a natural occurrence in your home.

How important is scripture to you?

How well do **YOU** teach your children?

How well do **YOU** teach them to trust God?

Here's what Moses told C of I, after he had given them the commandments:

Deut 6⁷ **Impress** them on your children. Talk about them (all the time).

⁹Write them on the door-frames of your houses and on your gates.

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²⁰In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of these laws ²¹tell him: all about slavery in Egypt, dramatic escape, and into Promised Land. So that's why we need to be careful to obey His commands"

It was just part of their everyday life!

Families discussed scripture together.

Parents explained why they worshipped God.

It was because He had rescued them from slavery!

(JAN) EXERCISE: On a piece of paper, write down the names of your children – and also your husband/wife.

PAUSE 10secs

Imagine it's your 80th birthday party, and they are going to give a speech about you.

Write down what you would like them to say.

PAUSE 1min

What are you going to do now, to make sure that they can say that about you?

PAUSE 20secs

It makes you think "Where do your children fit into your priorities?"

We are not perfect

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We are “learning on the job”, so if you get it wrong say sorry!

Be aware that we are always teaching our children!

Because they observe what we do and say!

We often hear young children mimicking their parents when playing!

What values are you displaying to your children?

- When watching TV, we are teaching them something (such as what we consider funny or appropriate or interesting).
- Are we teaching them to use their time wisely?
- Teach them the importance of managing money well. To save, as well as being generous.

1 Tim 6¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

What about the fruit of the Spirit?

Eph 5²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control.

How well do I display those qualities to my children?

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Not only in my dealings with **them**, but also with others (esp my spouse).

How do I talk to (and about others) in front of my children?

(PHIL) Eph 5v21 is headed:

Instructions for Christian Households

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Not a marriage seminar but:

Husbands love your wife – as Christ loved the church - SACRIFICIAL

Wives – submit to your husband in the same way that the church submits to Christ – willingly & out of deep love and gratitude!

Parents love each other well!

Your children are noticing how you treat each other. You are teaching your sons and daughters how they should treat others, and what they should expect from a relationship.

Children **need** parents who love each other

1 Cor 13⁴ Love is patient, love is kind.

Do my children see this in my behaviour towards my wife as well as towards them?

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Eph 6¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right

So we need to discipline our children and teach them the importance of obedience.

Prov13²⁴Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who **loves** their children is careful to **discipline** them.

Parents, be on the same page. Don't disagree about issues in front of them!

Carry out what you say!

Be consistent.

Your children will be upset when they don't get their own way, but **discipline is good!**

(JAN) I wasn't disciplined well as a child.

My mum struggled on her own.

I often got my own way as mum gave in to me very easily.

I grew up to realise that this was not good for me.

Therefore I wanted my children to be disciplined, and to know what the boundaries were, and that it was no good to keep expecting me to change my mind.

If I said “No”, I meant “No”.

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Children **need** discipline and clear boundaries, but show them love and respect.

So whilst we should discipline our children, Eph 6 also says:

⁴.... do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

So be fair and take care how you speak!

PAUSE

Prov 18²¹The tongue has the power of life and death

We know from our own experience how damaging words can be.

Bringing up children is **HARD WORK!**

It can be absolutely exhausting – especially with broken night's sleep.

We can easily get frustrated and angry.

We can say some harsh things in the heat of the moment.

Eph 4 ²⁶ 'In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

So sort out any disagreements with them b4 bed!

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Do you often find yourself criticising your children?
Do they hear you complaining about them to others?
How much fun do you have with them?
Let's determine to speak life into our children's lives!

In one of our Handouts we ask the question:
Do your children **know** (by your actions as well as your words) that you value and love them?

This is something which I didn't feel – probably because I was never told.
EVERY DAY tell your children you love them, and show appreciation.

You need to know how to treat each individual child, so that they **FEEL** loved and special.
The book, 5 Love Languages for Children, explains the different ways in which love can be expressed.
[It's one of the books we recommend the book](#)

Handout - “Children learn what they live”
(on A5 sheet of paper)

(PHIL) Don't put unfair expectations on them.
Remember their age and capabilities.

SCHOOL REPORTS

Our eldest son, Tim, has 3 children. Eldest (Lois) is 14.

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They were on holiday, and all 3 shared a room.
One evening, he wanted the younger 2 to get to sleep, but Lois kept disturbing them, and chatting & joking with them. So Tim said to her “Come on, Lois, you're 14. Act like a 14 year old!”
So she said “How is a 14year-old supposed to act!”

DISCUSSION 1: (Groups 6/7) 8 mins.

Do you share Bible times and prayer times with your children?
Do they learn Biblical truths from you?

Do you pray with them and for them?
It will teach them that you believe in a God who is interested in them, and wants a relationship with them.
You won't have time for everything on the list – pick out what is relevant for you!

(PHIL) Teenagers:

We're going to turn our attention to teenagers

Remember how you felt as a teenager

Treated like a child
Humiliated in front of peers
Misunderstood

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(JAN) Your child is now heading towards adulthood.

Make it as painless for him/her as possible!

Make sure that they know that you are on their side!

Pull back from treating them like children
Let them begin to take responsibility for things.

Some rules may need to be relaxed.
Be prepared to discuss, and reach agreement
Show them respect – and expect it in return!

Choose your battles!
You may not like their hair – or their clothes – but take a look at yourself!!!

Keep communication open – even when they grunt.
They will get through it.
Your children should be able to know they can speak to you about anything!
If **you** never talk with them about certain subjects then they will feel like those things are forbidden territory!
The sooner your children know that they can talk about anything, the easier it will be!
Don't duck the big issues!!

Say “What does the Bible say about this situation?”

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If you talk with them about how the Lord is working in your own life, it will make it easier for them to talk with you about those things too.

If your child is having trouble standing up for what is right because of peer pressure, you can help them when they know they can come to you for a listening ear.
Start trusting them more, and nurture them into adulthood!
Whilst we want to protect them – we also need to prepare them!

Help them to see that the guiding principle for their decisions should be, “does this activity honour God?”

Honouring God in all actions is a great life rule for people of any age.

DISCUSSION 2: in groups share your thoughts together (6 mins)

(JAN)

3. How can I help my children reach their full potential?

Don't live out your dream thru them!

Don't pass on your fears and phobias to them.

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Encourage them to try different things – don’t stifle them!

Work on their strengths.

Encourage good Christian friendships.

Encourage them to go on Christian camps and Christian projects.

We need to give them roots and give them wings.

They need good foundations, but then encourage independence.

Nurture their talents to help them reach **their** full potential.

Encourage them to grow in confidence and to become independent adults, dependent on God.

Eph 2¹⁰ For we are **God’s handiwork**, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God **prepared in advance for us to do**.

Each child is an individual

(PHIL)

1. What if my children do not become Christians?

DISCUSSION 3. (For a few minutes discuss in 2s or 3s)

How would it make you feel if they don’t become Christians and reject your faith?

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Would you feel a failure?

Would you feel responsible?

PAUSE

If your children are Christians – be very sensitive towards those whose children are not Christians.

Other people can be very insensitive – sometimes without even realizing it.

Prov 22⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

We know that God has given every person the freedom to choose to become a Christian.

If you use this verse to say that if you raise your children correctly and teach them the Christian faith, then they will automatically become Christians, then you have taken the free choice away from them!

There is no guarantee that children raised by Christian parents will become Christians and remain so as adults.

We all have to make our own choice.

The very first people on earth – Adam & Eve, chose to turn away from God.

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This proverb is a general principle about the importance of training children correctly while they are still young.

Biblical scholars generally agree that this proverb can be seen as telling parents to encourage and nurture their children along the lines of their natural abilities (“**in the way he should go**”), in order to prepare them for adulthood.

But this verse can also be a warning that if you encourage a child in the way he wants to go (and we all have a sinful nature), then don't expect him to change his ways later in life!
Habits can become deep-seated and very difficult to break, especially when they have begun in early childhood and not gone unchecked!

The proverb **does not say** “**train up a child to be a Christian and they will become one, and stay committed to The Lord for their whole life!**”
You are **not** responsible for their own choices.

But obviously we want to do everything we can to encourage them into the Christian faith.

When your own children have rejected the Christian faith, it is hard to listen to others talking about their Christian children and their achievements, and

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to hear young people talking about their walk with God, or their gap-year missions etc.
Are members of your church sensitive to your situation?

If your children are not Christians, what can you do?

Keep praying.
Ask others to pray for them (and for you).

Still love them, and include them.
Don't reject them – or make them **feel** as if they have been rejected, or let you down.
You may not like their actions/choices, but you can still **demonstrate** practical **Christ-like love**.

So that's all we have to say in the time available!
Leave you with 1 verse from Paul's letter to Titus.
Paul was instructing Titus on how to teach in the church.

I want to take this verse and apply it to parents:
Titus 2⁷ In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity...

Cultivate Christlikeness

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We have included a list of web-sites and books that you might find helpful.

Care for the Family are holding an event in Solihul on **Nov21st called “Faith in the Family”**. For more details please go to their website – which is on your handout.

Any Questions?

Prayer:

Phil 1 ⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.