

“Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth.” Psalm 127:4
Session 5: Examining Your Goals

I. Examples of unbiblical goals

- A. Developing special skills
 - i. Special skills are not bad in themselves; they have a place in your child’s development
 - ii. What must be sacrificed to achieve these goals?
 - iii. What are the parent’s motivations?
 - iv. What are the values that will be taught by the leaders of these activities?
- B. Psychological adjustment
 - i. Where does the Bible encourage a psychologized way of looking at ourselves?
 - ii. Are children taught to have a biblical view of competition and how to return good for evil?
- C. Saved children
 - i. Temptation to think that if my child gets saved, it will be easy to work with him
 - ii. Take note of the important cautions in this section
 - iii. We can’t save our kids
- D. Family worship
 - i. Family worship is a means to an end; it is not the end in itself
- E. Well-behaved children
 - i. Well-behaved kids are a *secondary benefit* of biblical child rearing.
 - ii. This is not a primary goal
 - iii. Emphasis on well-behaved children can obscure dealing with heart issues
 - iv. The importance of manners is properly rooted in Philippians 2 - preferring others above yourself
- F. Good education
 - i. Are good grades a biblical objective?
 - ii. Grades don’t reflect how much effort and hard work have been done
 - iii. A better gauge: what will produce character strength in adulthood?
- G. Control
 - i. Goal is to manage kids—this is not a biblical goal

II. What is our goal for our children?

- A. Best summed up in the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism
 - i. "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever"
 - ii. This is where parents need to start with their kids

III. What if our kids are not Christians?

- A. Even if your kids don't know God they are still commanded to obey God
- B. There is, of course, a tension here. Our kids are called to do something they cannot do without grace
- C. This tension shows how profoundly we need the grace and power of the gospel.

Take Home Principle #5: The most important thing about your child is what they think about God. (A.W. Tozer)

Homework: Read chapter 5 in "Shepherding a Child's Heart". Try to have a date night to discuss the following questions:

1. What is our parenting goal? How can we keep this goal continually before us?
2. Which unbiblical goals seem to be the greatest temptation for each of us? Why?
3. How are we going to deal with each of the unbiblical goals Tripp mentioned?
4. How can we help each other avoid unbiblical goals in parenting? Are we open to help from each other?
5. How are we doing with Family Worship? What changes should we make?

Resources: familylifetoday.com

"Parenting with Kingdom Purpose" by Ken Hemphill

"Passing Along your faith to you Children" by Josh McDowell

"Having a faith of their own" by Kara Powell