

The Christian Marriage & Family

Part 3

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[00:00:01] Gott, our Father, love me thy children, who in thee have rested thy word.

I will stand in their hearts responsive, as thy Spirit strives to move.

Lord, I will put thee in the knee, as the hands that bowed betrayed.

Guide me on, and put me in the knee, ever on my Godless way.

[00:01:03] Amen. The subject that is before us tonight is the Christian family. And again, this is a very important subject, because considering the world around us, the teaching of modern scientists, we will immediately find out that what they say and what they practice is not in accordance with what the Holy Scriptures tell us. So again, the spirit of this age is influencing us, or is trying to influence us, and we have to take heed to what the Word of God tells us about the Christian family.

[00:02:03] The whole problem starts when we try to give a definition of what is a family. People of this world tell us a family is everywhere where people live together. This is a family. No matter if there are father, mother, and children, wherever people live together, younger ones and older ones, that should be a family. If we look into our Bibles, we will easily find out that the Christian family is composed of a father and a mother and at least one child, in most cases more than one child. Of course, there are exceptions. Maybe there is only a father left or a mother left, but the normal family, that is father, mother, and children. Again, the subject before us is not only important, [00:03:01] it is also not easy.

Not easy for the same reason that the subject of the marriage was not easy, because of the failures and the shortcomings of the one who is going to present this subject tonight. I told you yesterday that I have brought with me my wife. I left my children at home, so they could tell you a lot of my mistakes that I made being a father. God gave us in his grace, God in his grace has given us five children and ten grandchildren, and with this, unfortunately, a lot of opportunities to make mistakes. So I don't tell you how to do it because I did it. Unfortunately, in many cases, I did it not. So maybe you can learn a little bit from my negative experiences. [00:04:04] Again, the subject before us is a very comprehensive one, so we have to set up certain priorities. We can't cover all the passages in the Bible that speak about our families. That would take, I don't know how long, a very, very long time. There are many

instructions, instructions given in the New Testament, examples, positive and negative examples. But again, I would like to underline that the subject before us, the Christian family, is also a wonderful subject. Children are a wonderful gift that God has given us, a gift that he has given us. We should be thankful for the children, for the young people that God has given us, but we should also take up our responsibility [00:05:04] that is linked to the responsibility that God has given us. I would like to start reading a verse from the book of Genesis. As a headline, Genesis chapter 33.

Chapter 33, verse 5.

And he, that is, Esau, lifted up his eyes and saw the woman and the children, and he said, Who are these with thee?

And he, that is, Jacob said, Now please pay attention. He said, The children that God has graciously given thy servant. [00:06:01] Every child is a gift of the grace of the loving kindness of our God and Father.

Let us never forget the children that God has graciously given thy servants.

Maybe there are couples here tonight who do not have children. That is a great sorrow, isn't it? And we, those to whom God has given children, we should be very, very careful when we talk with couples who do not have children. We should pray for them. We should have a lot of understanding for them because it is not easy to have no children.

[00:07:05] I know couples who have no children who have used this position in order to serve the Lord Jesus Christ even more.

I know a very dear couple, and the woman told me that after some years she accepted that she has no children, and she said, We are children free, free to serve the Lord.

And they use the time they have, the spare time they have, in order to serve the Lord even more. It is true, having children is a huge investment in time. It is a huge investment in time. In time you cannot use or spend for other things. [00:08:05] But on the other hand, it is an investment that will always have a return on investment. It is a sowing, and afterwards it will be a reaping.

So we would really like to consider this very, very important topic. And also for those who do not have children, also for the young people who are not yet married, it is very important to study this subject. Maybe one day you will be father and mother, or you will be in contact with others who have children, who are maybe in trouble, in need, and whom you could lend a helpful hand. [00:09:04] The Lord Jesus Christ would like to have our children for himself. But there is another one who would also like to have our children for himself. And that is the enemy, that is the devil. You remember the story of Pharaoh in Egypt.

He told Moses, you can go. The old ones, they can go. The young ones, they remain in Egypt. You remember Daniel in Babylon.

Away from home, the devil wants the children for him. There is an area of tension and of conflict. The Lord says, the children for me, and the devil says, the children for me. [00:10:04] And politicians know that he who has the youth has the future.

Pharaoh knew this. Nebuchadnezzar knew this. And also today the world knows it very well. He who has the youth has the future.

So the great challenge for us is really to raise them up, our children, to the glory of our Heavenly Father. So that they really accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and as Lord. We will refer to this later on.

There are three great principles in Scripture concerning our families that I would just like to underline first of all. [00:11:05] The first principle is called salvation. The second principle is called service. And the third principle is called fellowship. Salvation. The Lord wants to save our families.

You and your house.

When Noah entered the ark, God says, you and your house. The prison guard in Philippi asked, what shall I do? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ was the answer and you will be saved, you and your house. God does not only want to save individuals. Of course, every individual is responsible to respond to the call of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the thought of God, the intention of God is to save families. [00:12:03] That's the first principle. Second principle, God wants us to serve Him as families. You remember one of our last points regarding marriage was to serve God as couples in our married life. But if God gives us children, this is a great opportunity also to serve Him together. Remember Joshua at the end of his life, this wonderful statement. But as for me and my house, we want to serve the Lord.

Serving the Lord together with our families, with our children, is one of the great principles of Scripture. And the third one is fellowship. In Deuteronomy, it is said several times that the families, the parents together with the children, [00:13:07] should appear in the presence of the Lord in order to worship Him, in order to have fellowship with Him. And dear friends, it is really a great, great treasure, a great advantage when God gives us children and we appear together with our children in the presence of the Lord Jesus and have fellowship with the Father and the Son together with our children. So these are the great principles, salvation, service, and fellowship. Now, to make the subject a little easier for us, I would propose to do it in three sections. In the first section, we would just very briefly like to see what the Lord Jesus Himself, [00:14:07] when He was on earth, said about our children.

Secondly, we would like to consider the great and perfect example of bringing up children. The perfect example of education.

We all who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, we have a Father in heaven. He is bringing us up. He is educating us. And He is not making any mistake. So we will consider the great example, God as Father dealing with us, His children, and we want to learn how we act and deal with our children. Thirdly, God willing, tomorrow we will see a human example taken from the Old Testament. [00:15:11] We will consider the relationship between Abraham as an earthly father with his son Isaac. An earthly example. Not a perfect one, but a very, very good one. Abraham and Isaac. So, let us turn first of all to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 10, to see what the Lord Jesus taught about children. Mark, chapter 10, and we read as of verse 13.

And they brought little children to Him that He might touch them. [00:16:02] But the disciples rebuked those that brought them. But Jesus, seeing it, was indignant and said to them, Suffer the little children

to come to Me. Forbid them not, for of those is the kingdom of God. Verily, verily, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter into it. And having taken them in His arms, having laid His hands on them, He blessed them. This is a wonderful example how the Lord Jesus Christ dealt with children. And this is an example for us how we, as parents, should deal with our children. They brought little children to them. Who brought the children? Who brought them? What would we answer? [00:17:03] The general answer is the mothers brought them. But scripture doesn't say that. I am sure mothers did it, but they brought little children. To bring children to the Lord Jesus Christ is a task for everybody. Not only for the mothers, not only for the fathers, but for every child of God. If there are young children around, it's a challenge for all of us to bring them in contact with the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, in our local meetings, we all can help to bring children to the Lord Jesus Christ. He should touch them.

And having taken them in His arms, having laid His hands on them, He blessed them.

[00:18:05] I could envy these children.

I would have loved to be a child in the time when the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth. What a wonderful scene before us. The Lord Jesus was asked to touch them. To get in touch with them. But He did much more than to touch them. He took them in His arms.

That speaks of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. And let us not forget, dear parents, the Lord Jesus loves our children. They are the very object of His love, of His divine love.

He took them in His arms.

He laid His hands on them.

[00:19:03] That speaks of security.

Real security can only be given by the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, we take care of our kids. For sure we do.

We try to protect them as good as possible. But there is one in heaven who once was on earth. He is the one who is not only able to protect us, He will also protect our children. And the third thing is He blessed them. That includes that the Lord Jesus Christ gives to the little children what they are in need of. Oh, how wonderful. The Lord Jesus Christ. He loves the children. He protects the children. And He is the one who is going to bless them. [00:20:04] A wonderful Savior is Jesus, our Lord.

But then comes in our responsibility.

The disciples rebuked those that brought them.

And the Lord Jesus said, let them come.

We, parents, we adults, in a more general way, can be an obstacle.

We can be a hindrance for our children to come to the Lord Jesus Christ. The children normally don't have a problem to accept Jesus as their Savior. They want to come.

[00:21:01] But we, parents, we adults, can prevent or hinder them to come.

How that?

We can hinder them by a selfish, egoistic behavior, for example.

We can hinder them by inconsistency.

If there is a divergence between our words and our doings. And children will realize that very easily. If we tell this and we do something else.

If we preach water and we drink orange juice.

Children will realize it. And that can be a hindrance for our children to accept the Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:22:07] Suffer the little children to come to me.

Don't hinder them. To come to me.

I would really emphasize these words. To come to me. The Lord Jesus Christ wants to have our children. He wants them to accept Him, first of all, as Savior. And secondly, as Lord.

It is one thing to accept Jesus as Savior.

This is the beginning. This is the starting point, of course. But the second point is as well important.

And is as important as the first one, to accept Him also as Lord. [00:23:06] But the Lord Jesus wants both.

To be Savior and to be Lord.

And this makes it very clear what is the great target of education.

We will later on talk a little bit about education. But the great and the main target. There are different targets in educating our children. In bringing them up. But the main target. The main point. The most important point is that our children accept the Lord Jesus as Savior and as Lord. Savior is the one who saves them. Who gives them eternal security. Forgiveness of their sins. Accept Him as Lord means to follow Him and to serve Him.

[00:24:08] And these are two different things. First of all, they have to be saved. And secondly, they should follow and serve the Lord. You remember the great principles? Salvation, service, fellowship.

And there is a wonderful example in the Old Testament. And I would like to draw your attention to this wonderful example. This is the young Samuel. 1 Samuel chapter 1, I think.

Yes. I like this example very much because the mother of Samuel is called Hannah. Verse 22. Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, I will wait until the child is weaned. [00:25:04] Then will I bring him that he may appear before Jehovah and there abide forever.

To appear before the Lord, I would say this is accept Him as Savior. Abide there forever, accept Him as Lord. Verse 28, the end.

And he, Samuel, worshipped Jehovah there.

This is fellowship.

Chapter 2, verse 11.

In the middle. And the boy ministered to Jehovah in the presence of Eli the priest. That is service. Verse 18, chapter 2.

And Samuel ministered before Jehovah.

[00:26:05] A boy.

Children. A boy, Samuel.

He ministered the Lord Jesus.

You, as children, you can already serve the Lord Jesus Christ when you have accepted Him as your Savior. Two questions. Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior? Do you know that He died for your sins? That your sins are forgiven? Second question, if yes, are you ready, are you prepared to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, a child, together with your parents, together with other adults, like little Samuel did? And the story ends, for the time being, in verse 26. The boy, Samuel, grew on and was in favor both with Jehovah and also with men.

[00:27:06] Isn't that a wonderful example? He appeared. He abode.

He worshipped. He ministered.

He grew up.

He was in favor of others and in favor of the Lord. That is the main point. A wonderful example, the example of Samuel.

That is really wonderful to see that.

Now, let us turn to the perfect example.

Our Father in Heaven. We all have a relationship.

We have a two-fold relationship to God. Minimum, a two-fold relationship. Or the typical Christian relationship. I want to put it this way. The typical Christian relationship is a two-fold relationship.

[00:28:03] We are children of God because we are born of God. We are sons of God because we have a personal relationship to Him. So, our kids, our children, they are born of their parents. Normally, there are exceptions when somebody has adopted. Is that the correct word? Children.

But normally, children are born of their parents. But secondly, there is also this relationship father, mother, son, and daughter. It is not only by birth, but it is also a personal relationship that exists. We are children of God because we are born of Him. We are sons of God because we have the adoption He has put us in a certain position before Him. [00:29:03] Now, when we think of our Heavenly Father, what is the first thought that comes up? What is the first thought that comes up if you think that the Heavenly God is your Father? I'm sure the first thought is, He loves me. Yes, our Heavenly Father loves us. 1 John 3, See what a love the Father has given us that we are children of God.

Our Heavenly Father loves us.

The warming and enlightening sunshine of the divine love touches us every day of our life.

And dear friends, this is given us as an example. [00:30:04] We should love our children.

This is the first important lesson to learn.

We should love our children.

I'm sure many here would know where love is mentioned for the first time in Scripture. It is not the love between Adam and Eve. No, it is not.

I am sure Adam and Eve were linked together, were clinged together, were glued together with love. No doubt about it. But God does not mention love when He speaks about Adam and Eve. Genesis 22 is the first time where love is mentioned. Abraham took his beloved son. [00:31:02] And for sure we know why. Because Abraham and Isaac reflect something of the divine love of the Father to His Son. God loves His Son.

But this is also given as an example for us to love our children.

We have that wonderful example of the Hebrew servant who said, I love my Lord.

I love my wife.

And I love my children. And again, Titus 2, we had this verse before.

The mothers should love their children.

Yes, we are exhorted.

We are encouraged to love our children.

Now, what does it mean to love our children? [00:32:03] We have been thinking about love before. What does it mean for a husband to love his wife and for a wife to love her husband? And the same is valid when we ask the question, what does it mean to love our children? So love children involves, includes, to give the children all they want. Is that love?

If we give to our children all they want, we spoil them, we pamper them. But we don't love them.

God does not give us all that we want. Fortunately, He does not. Imagine a moment God would give us everything that we want. No, He does not. He gives us that what is good, what is necessary for us. So we should take care to give our children that what is useful, needful, necessary for them. [00:33:02] And to love our children means to have an attitude to give sacrifices, to invest.

I already said, it is a huge investment. We have to invest. We have to invest time. We have to invest money also, yes. A child costs a fortune. But it's love.

We don't even ask how much it costs. I don't know how much. I would never ask. I would never make a calculation. It doesn't make sense to do that. But it costs, yeah. It costs a lot. Money, time, interest. Nights where you cannot sleep. The mothers, you know what I'm speaking about. Parents, the fathers hopefully the same. So, loving our children is easily said, but not always easily done.

[00:34:07] The Apostle John tells us to love not with our tongues, but in deeds and in truth.

Of course, we should tell our children that we love them.

That is also valid for our marriages, for our wives and husbands. To tell them that we love them. But that's not all. That's not the main point. The main point is not to tell them that we love them. The main point is to show them that we love them. In deeds and in truth.

Word and action should be on the same level.

[00:35:04] A correspondence between our words and our deeds.

So, we would like to encourage us to really love our children.

And to have this high standard before us. That God, our Heavenly Father, loves us. And by the way, this is also valid in a general aspect.

When we think of older brothers and sisters towards the younger ones. That does not only refer to a real family. Father, mother, children. But this refers also to the family of God in a general sense.

We, the older ones, should love the younger ones. [00:36:04] The second point concerning our relationship with our Heavenly Father. Is that we as His children have a full confidence in Him.

We call Him Abba Father.

That means we have full confidence and access to Him.

Peter says that we invoke Him as Father.

We pray to Him as Father.

And we do that in the full confidence that He loves us. And that He is not against us.

But that He is for us.

[00:37:01] We can trust in Him.

A hundred percent.

And the second lesson for us as parents is this. Our children should have a full confidence and trust in us.

And again, I repeat what we had this afternoon when talking about love between husband and wife. Love and also confidence and trust.

Cannot be required.

We cannot tell our children, you have to trust us. You have to have confidence in us. We can't require confidence.

Confidence is a value that has to be acquired again. [00:38:02] How can we acquire?

How can we obtain the confidence of our children? We can do that, for example, if we are calculable for our children. If we are predictable.

If our reactions are comprehensive for them.

Not that in the same occasion, one time we act like this or react like this. And the other time we react totally different. We can acquire the confidence, the trust of our children by transparency, harmony between our words and our actions.

If we as parents live in a selfish and egoistic way, we will not acquire the confidence and the trust of our children.

[00:39:15] So our behavior, and for sure we are not perfect. Nobody is perfect. But our general attitude is under the observation of our children. And either it helps that they have confidence in us, or they don't trust us. They don't believe us.

So we would like to learn from the perfect example, God our Father, that we try to win, to acquire the confidence of our children.

You see, a little baby has full trust and confidence in his mother or her mother.

[00:40:12] If you tell a boy of the age of two years to jump down in the arms of his father, he will jump. He has no doubt that his father is there to get him, to accept him, to receive him. But when the boy is five years old or seven years old, he might ask, Dad, are you really there to help me when I fall down? So, trust and confidence.

There is a third point.

It is true, God is our loving Father. We have confidence. We have access. We call upon Him as Father.

We invoke Him as Father. [00:41:03] But at the same time, we respect Him. Peter says, Ye invoke Him as Father, who... I want to read the verse, 1 Peter 1. 1 Peter 1, verse 17.

And if ye invoke as Father him who, without regard of persons, judges according to the work of each, pass your time of sojourn in fear. So, we at the same time respect God.

He is God who judges without saying the position of the person.

[00:42:02] We honor God.

Everything that we do should be done for the glory of God. We honor Him.

And we also obey Him.

God must be obeyed.

This is what the Apostle said in the beginning of Acts. God must be obeyed. God must be respected. God must be honored. God must be obeyed. And this is also a challenge for us, dear friends, dear parents. Our children have to respect us as their parents.

They have to honor us.

And they have to obey us.

And it is our duty to make this as easy as possible for our children. [00:43:05] We can make it very hard for our children to obey or to honor or to respect us. Or we can make it easy for them to do so. So, to honor, to respect, to obey is a challenge for us as parents.

But it is also a challenge for our dear children. There are children here tonight. I'm very happy to see you. I'm always happy to see children in the meetings. Dear children, God tells you to honor, to respect, and to obey your parents. It is not me to tell you. It is not your parents to tell you. It is the Bible that tells you children obey your parents. [00:44:04] Children honor your parents.

So, you should really do this.

You should respect their position as parents.

Sometimes you get the impression that parents are no longer the parents of the children but that they are the colleagues of their children. They are great chums.

No, they are not.

Of course, a friendly atmosphere is desirable.

The Lord Jesus calls us his friends. We don't call him our friend, but he calls us friends. So, a friendly atmosphere is for sure something we should desire. But let us not think that we are the colleagues of our parents. [00:45:04] We are not.

Your parents, dear children, are your parents and you should respect them. So, the challenge is for us to create at the same time an atmosphere of love and of respect. This is what we learned from 1 Peter 1, verse 17. Create an atmosphere of love and of respect at the same time.

We will consider the example of Abraham tomorrow. Abraham succeeded in doing exactly that. He had a relationship to his son Isaac that was marked by love and by respect in the very same time.

A fourth point that is to be thought about when we think of our relationship to our Heavenly Father. [00:46:10] He is bringing us up.

Education.

Education is one of the main tasks.

And it is a very difficult task that God has given to us. And we now turn to Ephesians, chapter 6. Just to underline what we just had before us.

Verse 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is just. Honor thy father and thy mother. Now verse 4.

And ye fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. [00:47:10] If we had more time, we would look into Hebrews, chapter 12. You can read that at home. Hebrews, chapter 12, tells us how God our Father brings us up. He brings us up on the basis of a relationship because we are his sons. He has a motive to bring us up.

That is love.

He has a clear target in bringing us up. It's for our profit.

And so, should we bring up and educate our children?

There are two cornerstones, two basics of Christian education.

[00:48:07] They are mentioned in verse 4, Ephesians 6. This is discipline and admonition of the Lord.

What does it mean? Discipline means to detect or to note what is wrong and to stop it.

That is discipline. Discipline, I repeat, is to detect or to note what is wrong and to stop it.

Admonition, on the contrary, is to show the good way.

And these two things always work together.

[00:49:01] Discipline is, to a certain extent, negative. We have to stop something. Admonition is positive.

We have to tell them what to do. Poor children, when the mother always says what the children should not do and who never says what they should do, always stopping what is going wrong will be

a frustration for our children. Yes, we have to stop what is wrong. We have to detect it and to stop it. But at the same time, we have to tell them what to do. But on the other hand, poor children who only know what to do and who are never stopped when they are doing something wrong. So these two things, these two cornerstones, they always work together, discipline and admonition.

[00:50:04] Bring up your children.

I would like to put the emphasis a little bit in different ways. Bring up your children, not the children of other parents. It is much easier to raise up other children than our own children. To tell to other people what they should do with their children is much easier than to do it with our own children. Of course, we can help other couples when we see something goes wrong. But the responsibility is bring up your children.

Secondly, it says bring up your children. It does not say bring up your husband or bring up your wife.

Marriage is not an educational establishment. [00:51:04] Don't try it. You will fail. Bring up your children, not your husband or your wife. Bring up your children.

Thirdly, although here it is said to the fathers, it is a common responsibility of father and mother. There is a wonderful example in the Old Testament that is repeated in the New Testament. That is the example of the parents of Moses. The narration is, we do have it three times in Scripture. Exodus chapter 2, we have it in Acts I think chapter 7, and we have it in Hebrews chapter 11. If you read the text in Exodus, you will realize the responsibility of the mother. If you read the text in Acts chapter 7, you will realize the responsibility of the father. He is mentioned. [00:52:02] If you read the text in Hebrews 11, you will all of a sudden read of the parents of Moses. So the mother had her responsibility, the father had his responsibility, and they did it together, the parents of Moses. It is important that our children have parents, not only a mother, not only a father, but parents. It is very risky when the mother says yes, and the kid goes to the father and he says no, or the other way around. So we should really speak with a common voice, particularly when the children are young and not grown up.

Education should be appropriate with regard to the age of our children [00:53:02] and with regard to the character of our children. If you have children in different age, you can't educate them in the same way. A kid of the age of 5 needs another education than a child that is 10 years old. And also take into consideration the character of your children.

One character is different from the other one, even if the parents are the same. So take care to the character of your children.

And start early enough to educate your children. I like a verse from the Proverbs. I would like to read it. [00:54:02] And I like particularly the Derby version. Proverbs 22, verse 6. Train up the child according to the tenor of his way.

And when he is old, he will not depart from it. There is a note that says, train up the child at the entry of his way.

The starting point is important. We cannot start early enough to bring up, to educate our children.

There is a fifth point when we consider God as our Heavenly Father.

He is teaching us.

I want to read from Titus chapter 2.

[00:55:14] Verse 11.

For the grace of God, which carries with it salvation for all man, has appeared, teaching us that, and so on.

Of course, again, the context is a different one, but we clearly see that God is teaching us. The grace is teaching us. And for sure, one of our main responsibilities as parents is to teach our children.

They need the teaching of their parents, a positive teaching to show them the right way, [00:56:03] admonishing them, show them the right way. How do we do that?

By opening the Bible, by explaining the Bible, the truth of the Bible to our children, again, according to their age.

When they are young, we can read the stories of the Old Testament. We can open the Gospels. We can show them this is the most important thing. We can show them the Lord Jesus Christ. There are so many things in the Bible, in the Gospels, but also in other portions of the Bible, that we can read and study with our children, what they can understand. When you have a child of 3, 4, 5 years old, 6, 7, 8, [00:57:01] you wouldn't read maybe the prophet Jeremiah, or you wouldn't read Ephesians chapter 3 with them. Start with something else. Read something that they can understand. Teach the children.

It is ever so important to make the Lord Jesus Christ precious to our children. And we cannot start with this early enough. And again, I do not only address the parents.

I address us in general. Do we have it on our hearts to make the Lord Jesus Christ precious for the young generation, for the children growing up in our local assemblies? That is ever so important.

But of course, teaching our children involves also [00:58:06] that we have very open discussions with our children on daily topics and subjects, on things which are important for our children. There are so many dangers in the world around us. Children who go to school, young people who go to university, they learn a lot of things which are absolutely contrary to what we find in our Bibles, contrary to the good teaching, the sound doctrine. So please, dear parents, take up the responsibility to discuss with your children about all the dangers that are around in this world, in the religious world, [00:59:03] in the political world, in the moral world. The standard of values in this world are totally different from the standards which are set up in the Bible. And we have to talk about that with our children. Let us not forget it. It's ever so important. Sexual education of our children, that is our responsibility and our task. I know it is not easy.

With the own children, it's much more difficult than with others. At least this is my experience. But nevertheless, it is our responsibility, also as brothers and sisters in the local assemblies, to talk with the children, with the young people, about the things of sexuality.

Sexual education, according to the age of the children, for sure, [01:00:06] has to be on our agenda.

Don't forget them.

If we don't do it, be sure others will do it. If we don't do it, others do it. And what others tell them, teachers, Internet, whatever, is most probably totally against the doctrine of the Word of God.

We have to talk to our children about the dangers of media, of the electronic media. They grow up with the Internet.

And we all work with it, I guess.

We have to work with it. But there are real dangers. How do we handle the Internet?

[01:01:06] It costs a lot of time.

But there are also other risks, great risks. Talk with your children about the dangers and the risks and help them.

Dangers of drugs, alcohol, bad friends, bad influences from the world around us, all that should be discussed with our children. Practical holiness. These are all current topics, things our children have to do with. And if we as parents have no idea about these things, we should try to get the necessary information or to ask maybe others to help us and to help our children. [01:02:02] But it is really our duty to teach our children.

There is a sixth point, very briefly, although it is very important. When we think of our Heavenly Father, it is a blessing that we can have fellowship with Him. 1 John 1.

Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son. We have fellowship with God, our Father. We have fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And we should as parents, this is the lesson for us, lesson number six, we should have fellowship with our children. What does it mean to have fellowship, to have common interests, to have a common way? [01:03:03] Do we have common interests with our children? Are the interests of our children our own interests?

It is important to share information with our children, to share interest, to share activities, to do something together with our children. Fathers, why don't you play football with your boys? That's okay.

Why don't you go to a swimming pool with your children when they like swimming or do something else? Common activities according again to the age and the character of the children. And, of course, fellowship is expressed when we talk with them.

A seventh and a last point.

[01:04:04] Our Heavenly Father has prepared a place for us. The Lord Jesus Christ gives us this precious information about the house of His Father.

One day we will be there.

How can we apply this to us as parents? The application for me is this. In our hearts, our children should always have a place.

The day will come when they leave our houses.

We did the same, didn't we? One day they will leave the house where they have grown up. But still, and we let them go.

But still, also our married children, [01:05:04] also our grandchildren can include them. They should always have a place in our hearts. We should pray for them and we should love them.

They are one day responsible for themselves. That's true.

But they can always have this place in our hearts.

We can always be with them in our prayers, wherever they are. We can pray for them. We can love them. So just to repeat very briefly, we have this wonderful example of our Heavenly Father.

He loves us.

We have confidence in Him. [01:06:01] We respect Him.

He is bringing us up.

He is teaching us. We have fellowship with Him. And He has prepared a place for us. We should follow this perfect example, very well knowing that we are not perfect at all.

Do we have a guarantee that our children will follow the Lord Jesus Christ?

We do not have a guarantee. Why not?

Because every individual is responsible to respond to the call of God.

[01:07:04] We have had this perfect example before us tonight. And I would like to read just at the end one verse in the prophet of Isaiah, chapter 1.

Verse 2.

Can you imagine this? A perfect education.

I have nourished and brought up children. Without any mistake. Because God doesn't make a mistake. But nevertheless, they have rebelled against me. If our children accept Jesus as their Savior, if they follow Him as Lord, [01:08:08] it is always grace.

It is nothing but grace.

If they don't do, if they don't follow the Lord Jesus Christ, we should be very careful.

Particularly when it refers to children of other parents. Never say the parents made the mistakes. It does not become us to say that it was their mistake. They have their own responsibility, the parents and the children. But here you see, God brought up children in a perfect way, and yet they have rebelled against me.

Maybe there are parents here tonight, I don't know you, [01:09:01] but maybe there are parents here who have children who have gone their own ways. This verse might be a comfort for you. I have brought children up, and they have rebelled against me. Let us pray. Let us earnestly pray that our children will react in a different way. That our unperfect education will nevertheless be a help for the children that they accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and as Lord. It is all His grace. Children given by grace.

[01:10:07] To see what fruit this children bear. Fruit that may suit their glowing eyes.

Praise evermore with joy our state, For this communion with this Lord, My check of good, [01:11:01] O separate Our hearts from what we give them.

O wondrous love that gave for us The objects of His tender care, They chasten still, but still resist To hold and guard them where they are.

[01:12:08] Yet never rest but peace and still With drunken song His tender love He'll give till free from every ill They find they rest with Him at last.

[01:13:02] Amen.