

Young Mothers 2018

October 7, 2018 | Lesson 07

Assignment:

Young Mother's SS on Training Minds and Character 2006; 2010; 2014 (Panel)

Training Minds and Character of Young Children

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Memory Passage: Deuteronomy 6:6-7

⁶These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

I. What is character?

A. Definitions

1. Oxford dictionary – the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.

2. “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.” – John Wooden

B. As Christians what should our character exemplify?

1. An example – God’s testimony of Job
Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.
2. Obedience to God’s commands and instructions
3. Christlikeness

C. Our motivation – to live to bring glory to God

D. Our source of character qualities comes from the Bible

Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

II. How can we train the minds and character of our children?

A. By example

Proverbs 23:26 Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways.

1. Our example

Titus 2:7 In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds. . . .

“Wicked parents are the most notable servants of the devil in all the world and the bloodiest enemies to their children’s souls. More souls are damned by God through the influence of ungodly parents – and next [to] them . . . ungodly ministers and magistrates – than by any instruments in the world besides.”

Richard Baxter

2. Other Godly examples
 - a. Bible examples
 - b. Others who have lived for God throughout history
 - c. Present day examples
3. Be on guard for examples that counteract the teaching of Christian character.

“A religious education should be consistent. It should extend to everything that is likely to assist in the formation of character . . . It should select the schools, the companions, the amusements, the books of youth. For if it do nothing more than merely teach a form of sound words to the understanding and the memory, while the impression of the heart and the formation of the character are neglected, very little is to be expected from such efforts.”

John Angell James

B. By instruction

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 *⁶These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

1. Content is the Bible
 - a. II Timothy 3:15 *From childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

- b. II Peter 1:3 *His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*
 - c. Book of Proverbs
- 2. Wealth of resources available to us today
 - a. Bible story books
 - b. Dramatized audio Bible stories
 - c. Scripture songs and songs that teach Christian character
 - d. Books

C. By commands taught and enforced

Proverbs 3:1 *My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments.*

Proverbs 4:4 *Then he taught me and said to me, “Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live.”*

- 1. Teach
- 2. Remind – valuable use of questions
- 3. Enforce
- 4. Praise and encourage



D. By Prayer – COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON GOD

1. To change us
 - a. Enable us to be examples of Christ-like character
 - b. Give us wisdom to teach our children Christ-like character.
2. To change our children and mold their character.
God must open their hearts to the truths put in their heads.
 - a. Not just outward conformity
 - b. Inner transformation
 - c. Frequently God uses hardships to teach us character.
 - 1) Abigail Adams in a letter to her son John Quincy, "It is not in the still calm of life . . . that great characters are formed. The habits of a vigorous mind are formed in contending with difficulties. Great necessities call out great virtues. When a mind is raised, and animated by scenes that engage the heart, then those qualities which would otherwise lay dormant, wake into life and form the character of the hero and statesman."
 - 2) Romans 5:3-4 *And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope.*
 - 3) Our character muscles grow in the difficult application of God's truths to everyday life situation.



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III. Character traits

A. Example of a list for very young children:

1. BE RESPECTFUL

... by listening carefully to and instantly following all instructions.

A wise man will hear and increase in learning
(Proverbs 1:5).

... by looking at the person speaking to you
Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways (Proverbs 23:26).

... by speaking/answering in a way that shows I appreciate the other person

She opens her mouth with wisdom; and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue (Proverbs 31:26).

... by caring for the Lord's property in our home

2. BE HONEST

... by telling the truth in word and action

A faithful witness will not lie (Proverbs 14:5).

3. BE KIND

... by initiating good to or for others

He who diligently seeks good seeks favor
(Proverbs 11:27).

... by avoiding behavior that provokes anger
For the churning of milk produces butter, and pressing the nose brings forth blood; so the churning of anger produces strife (Proverbs 30:33).

4. BE HAPPY

... by obeying with a happy heart

A joyful heart is good medicine (Proverbs 17:22).

*Watch over your heart with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life* (Proverbs 4:23).

B. Sampling of other character traits to teach as our children mature:

1. Response to authority

- a. Obedience and Respect

Ephesians 6:1-2 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise).

- b. Learning to entreat

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, 2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

- c. Listening

Examples of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:10) and the Messiah (Isaiah 50:4 *He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple.*)

Matthew 11:15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

- d. Quick to listen, obey, repent

James 1:19 . . . Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;

Psalm 119:60 I hastened and did not delay to keep Your commandments.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- e. Teachable

Proverbs 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.

2. Heart attitudes and actions
 - a. Calmness

Psalm 131:2a Surely I have composed and quieted my soul.
 - b. Gratefulness

1 Thessalonians 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

“I’ve just disciplined myself for so many years to ‘give thanks in all things,’ that it’s become my reflex reaction.”
Joni Eareckson Tada

“The grateful heart that springs forth in joy is not acquired in a moment; it is the fruit of a thousand choices.”
Nancy Leigh DeMoss Wolgemuth, *Choosing Gratitude*

- c. Gentleness

Colossians 3:12b Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.
- d. Humility

I Peter 5:5b Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.

1 Corinthians 4:7 What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?
- e. Integrity

Proverbs 10:9 He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out.

f. Joyfulness

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

“If joy were more general among the Lord’s people, God would be more glorified among men; the happiness of the subjects is the honor of the sovereign.” C. H. Spurgeon

g. Kindness

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

h. Love & Compassion

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Matthew 7:12 Treat people the same way you want them to treat you . . .

Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

i. Patience

Psalm 27:14 Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord.

j. Self-denial

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.

k. Valor, courage

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Romans 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

l. Diligence, endurance, persistence

Ecclesiastes 9:10a Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.

3. Keys to character development – God's work in the lives of our children

a. Offering – Surrender

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

b. Understanding and Wisdom

Proverbs 4:5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.

- c. Meditate on and remember God's Word for application

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it . . .

Psalm 77:11-12 I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will meditate on all Your work and muse on Your deeds.

- d. Sensible

Proverbs 14:15 The naive believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps.

- e. Yieldedness

Romans 6:13 And do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.