

Seminar on Raising Godly Youths

30 Jan 2021

The following are the questions asked during this seminar.

Q1) My child has much head knowledge on the Bible but when the opportunity arises, he can't really apply what he learns. I am impressed by how young Joseph and Daniel can fear God even when in a foreign country away from families. How can I guide my child to apply the biblical learning on his own?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

<https://youtu.be/I3n63ZxgAgA?t=4322>

Q2) I understand it is important to have good Christian friends. However, my son's character is more reserved and not good in sports and many of the boys around his age are very sporty and do not want to include him. Can you give some advice on that?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q3) As a late first generation believer, I did not benefit from growing up in a Christian home. Thus I did not have a precedence I could follow for bringing up my own children. While I know in broad terms what we should aim for, the practical actionable aspects eludes me. I am ashamed to say that growing up in a typical Singapore culture, the mindset of wanting to be taught what is the right-way of doing things is ingrained in me. So while understanding the "why" and urgency of the need to bring up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the how and the specifics can sometimes be unclear. Some example that had been helpful to me were, when Pastor Quek mentioned that in his home, lying is a clear case for the rod; the home should be a place/refuge from the world for the children so that the attractions of the world would pale in comparison. Also I would like to know what are suitable devotional materials (on top of Proverbs and RPGs) and how parents can guide the children in the reading of the bible (particularly which books/chapters are suitable for which age/maturity), etc. Thank you for reading my long question.

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Q4) How to have my child convinced on something that most of his/her classmates are doing but not good based on Christian values? I can tell him/her the reasons but he/she just can't seem to personally accept it wholeheartedly.

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q5) 1 Samuel 3:13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.“ does this verse mean that parents who have disobedient teens should ground them at home and forbid them to go out or have access to the worldly friends?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q6) Teenagers may start to take interest in the opposite gender. How do I teach them to glorify the Lord in this aspect and also the risk of pornography?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q7) My child does whatever you tell him to such as go to church, do his QT, go for teenz class and pray. He may even do his QT without me reminding him. However I feel that he may not be saved because I feel that he does not really enjoy doing these. He probably does it because he is afraid to go to hell if he dies. He doesn't seem to have an intimate relationship with the Lord. He doesn't seem to bear fruits of repentance in that he don't seem to have fruits of the spirit such as patience with family members etc. How should I help him?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q8) Do you let your children attend those sexuality education as they didn't teach abstinence and against LGBT? Also, how to teach children in same gender schools about their reaction when they see their friends in LGBT relationships especially with the current news that MOE are under questioning about a girl hormone treatment. With the advance of social media, our children may face being shamed in public if they go against LGBT friends. How do I go about to teach them to stand firm in the Lord?

Answered during the seminar. Please refer to this video link for the answer.

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Q9) How do parents help their children to manage/control the time spent and content accessed in a godly manner when they are using electronic devices (like mobile phones and laptops). We cannot be policing their use of devices all the time.

ANS—The age of the child is important in terms of time control. The younger they are the more control is needed. During my time in NS, I had to train my first batch of recruits. We were taught to train them hard the first month so that they would have no time to indulge in self pity and also to let them know who was in charge. Thereafter in the second month lessen the control. In the third month, when they were about to complete their training and be posted out, I could be their friend. But always remind

them that when they were told their duties they must remember who was in charge (like in their 1st month experience).

All computers and electronic devices must be placed where you can see what they are doing. This is where a parent's presence at home is crucial. They must seek your permission to use each time. These days there are mobile apps that allow parents to monitor their children's hand phones.

Children and parents are not friends. Friends are equals but parents and their children are not. They will never be. The notion of parents being friends is of the world controlled by the devil. Let your child know that in the home, the parents' control and rules bind their heart and behaviour. There's a different set of rules for your child's friends and him. When they compare the rules, they will want parents' rules to change to be like their friends'. You have to let your child know that we need to keep to our rules and not compare. For example, we did not want our children to have a hand phone until they were in secondary school because there their schedules would have last minutes changes. They would need to contact us because of these changes. Also they were old enough to learn self-control. Once self-control is taught and learned, and as they grow older, hopefully these lessons on self-control will help them stand on their own two feet. Self-policing is self-control.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Teach your children that we have an all knowing God from the moment they are old enough to understand. Once they are born again in Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God will take over the control to regulate their behaviour and desires. Always pray for them all your days.

10) Is it ok for parents to give their children the "cold shoulder"? If not, how should parents then deal with their youth/ adult children when they commit sins?

ANS – Is the "cold-shoulder" definition to not talk to them for a while until all parties concerned are ready to speak and listen and change? If so then practise it. The hope is for repentance and restoration. If they are not ready to listen and you are not ready to speak calmly there is no hope of restoration. But if "cold-shoulder" means never to speak with each other again, or not speaking for years, then that is wrong.

When the child has transgressed, let him know that it is not only your parental duty but more so your love for him that requires you to point out that he has transgressed. For example, parents must not attend the wedding of a confessed Christian to an unbeliever. After they are married, you need to communicate with them to help them. Discipline is always with the hope of restoration and not judgment that sentences one to hell. When Israel sinned the LORD never stopped sending His prophets to rebuke them. **Jeremiah 2:35** "Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned." Always leave the door open for your child to come home just as the Lord always leaves His door open for us.

11) How do I handle teens who are addicted to gadgets (games, social media , pop music etc). My teenage child attends YF and he thinks he is saved. it seems like the lure of the media seems to have taken over most of his time and he hardly have time for bible reading, quiet time etc. It doesn't help especially in the current Covid situation, when he is required to have the gadget for study and project work.

ANS – The first step is to confirm your child’s salvation by speaking with him. Tell him that if he is born again, how can such an addiction be honouring to Christ? Has he fully surrendered his life to Christ to be his Lord? He needs to stop disobeying God. Attending YF and other church activities is important as evidence of salvation but these are not a means of salvation. Addiction means a very long struggle. Even those in the golden years can struggle with addiction. It is a spiritual warfare. Pray for your child and be a godly example for your child. The strength to overcome comes from the LORD when the love for Christ is deepened. This will lead to new convictions.

12) Currently, secondary schools can admit between 20% to 50% of places through Direct School Admission (DSA) exercise. Can our children participate in DSA exercise to gain admission to schools? Is it faithless if we were to train our children in a particular area in the hope that they may use such "talents" for dsa?

ANS – What is the reason for participating in DSA? The wrong motive behind it is a sin. If you push your child in that direction for carnal and “to get ahead” reasons, then it is a sin. If your child studies hard and aims only to be a godly witness for Christ and he gets into DSA without aiming for it, then it is not a sin. Furthermore he will not be corrupted by it just like Joseph and Daniel who did not aim to be powerful and rich. Their main concern was to not defile themselves before God. When they were promoted to great wealth and power they were not corrupted by these carnal things. They remained spiritual.

13) My teen is involved in a BGR against our blessings. The “opposite” party is an unbeliever and has led my teen into worldly vices. Even after a year long of prayer and counselling, my teen is still hanging on to this treacherous relationship. Dear Rev Quek and Mrs Quek, can you kindly advice us how to deal with this situation so that they may part ways. Thank you.

ANS – As a teen he is still under your direct care and supervision. Curfew might help after establishing his salvation. Discipline at home with rules of do’s and don’ts must be followed up with actions. Confiscating the hand phone and taking away certain privileges are ways to stop his sinful behaviour. Ask his friends from church to pray and help. Ask the Session members in charge of the Teens or YF to pray and give counsel. As parents we must also be godly in our conduct and pray for the LORD’s mercies. Maintain the headship of Christ in the home so as to provide a Christian environment. Keep praying and continue to counsel with God’s Word.

14) How can I encourage my child/teenager to be more involved in church activities and YF?

ANS – Are parents also involved in church activities? The moral authority comes from a godly testimony. Your child needs to be involved for the right reason. He needs to love Christ i.e. be born again and attend for the sake of Christ. You could make it compulsory and send him to the YF meetings/retreat/camp since he's still very young and pick him up after the meeting and pray that the Word of God will convict his heart. Attending Bible study sessions and church camp together will help tremendously in making new friends from church who will encourage him.

15) How do I “encourage” my daughter to wear “proper” clothes that is pleasing to God? (I consider short shorts, mini skirts, crop tops and spaghetti tops to be improper.)

ANS – The root of the problem is the heart. Dressing like the world (lack of modesty) is the symptom. When the cause of the problem is resolved, the symptom resolves itself. If your daughter is born again, exhort her to fear the Lord and love the things of the Lord like attending church, and fellowships, praying, keeping a regular QT, regular Bible Study and reading the Bible, etc. Immerse her in spiritual activities to encourage her through godly brethren to be spiritual. It is a spiritual battle you are facing. If your child is not born again, one of the symptoms is carnality and the desire to be like the world.

16) “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” 1 Timothy 5:8 To what extent does this verse describe in providing for one's family? If my child is already a working adult but still living with me, must I provide for them?

ANS – Why do you provide for your child? The answer to this question answers the above question. We provide for our children because of love and our privilege. The line between providing and spoiling varies from child to child and always on a case by case basis. When the child is grown he ought to stand on his own two feet leaning upon Christ alone. That is the goal and hope of every parent.

17) The Bible is replete with examples of godly men having ungodly children and vice versa. We see this in our church as well. Why? What do parents have to do to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (besides reading/teaching the Word and prayer)? Is there a case for a Parent Support Fellowship to provide parents with godly, actionable counsel and prayer support for their parenting role.

ANS – Being godly in one area of godly men's ministries is no guarantee that other areas of their lives are glorifying to God. For example King David was a man after God's own heart who was described by God as a very good king. God did not cite David as an example of a godly husband or father because he was not. Abraham was a good father to his son Isaac who in turn was a good father to his son Jacob. Their sins were recorded because no one is perfect except for Christ. Parenting is unique. Parents are different and no two children are the same even for twins. The Session and all the ministries are provided to support you in your own spiritual well-being. To bring them up in the fear

and nurture of the LORD begins the moment the child is born. The spiritual well-being of the parents is the key factor. When you are spiritual they will be spiritual. They learn by imitation. When you teach them it will not just be hollow words. The ministries in the church allow for smaller groups to meet such as the young mother's group or any the fellowships or Bible Study groups. Through them many have received help when God's Word is applied. There is no need for any "official" group to be formed for help to be rendered.

18) During this pandemic, after so many months of worshipping at home, my children has some reluctance to go church. The reason they go is I push them with no choice but to go. I'm worried that if tomorrow if I'm called home suddenly, the whole house will run topsy turvy and spouse is not stern with them. What am I supposed to do?

ANS – This pandemic is of the Lord. All our faith is tested now. The root of the problem is spirituality. The pandemic only reveals it. Thank God that you have been made aware of your children's spiritual condition. Now they are still with you, you need to pray for their salvation and pray with them. Pray for an opportunity to speak with them about whether they are born again. Lack of interest in worship is an unhealthy sign. It is a sign of carnality. Live day by day and trust in the Lord. Notions like "if I am called home . . ." are thoughts of one who is weak in faith or lacks faith. Our lives are in God's loving hand. If we are children of God and the Lord takes us home to glory He will continue to care for our children in ways that He knows best. Sometimes parents make a mess of bringing up their children and are stumbling blocks to them. Trust in the good and gracious Lord.

19) How do we conduct family worship? Are there any resources that can help parents?

ANS – Family worship is simply family coming together before the LORD. How it is to be done depends on the age of your children and your spiritual maturity. If your children are kindergarten age then gather them together and read from a devotional book for children. If you do not have a devotional book then read a Bible story like a parable or a miracle and then draw lessons from it that they can understand. If they are older you can use the RPG and elaborate on the lesson. Encourage them to ask questions. Begin with prayer and end with prayer with sharing about your and their joys and struggles in between. Share how God has been working in your life as parents. Most importantly make family worship enjoyable and not a chore. It is not a time of interrogation or fault finding.

20) What is the age of accountability as mentioned in the preaching?

ANS – The age of accountability varies from person to person. The biblical guideline is to know the difference between the right and left hand. My thoughts based upon interaction and observation of children is when they enter primary 1. You know your child best. Every child is unique.

21) What should I do if my husband, though professes to be a Christian, is carnal? The efforts I have made to create a godly environment is negated by him teaching them otherwise. What should I do?

ANS – You need to pray for the Lord’s mercies. If he is close to someone in the church then ask that person to help. The Lord is sovereign. You can only do your part as a godly wife and mother and pray for your husband without ceasing. Your holy witness is crucial.

22) If my spouse is not a true believer, and I have been carnal in the past. My children are already grown up and they are also carnal. It is already too late for us to reverse all our parenting mistakes? We can only watch our children walk the broad way to destruction. Do you have any advice for parents who are in this situation?

ANS- It is never too late as long as you have breath. You need to pray for your family’s salvation. Be a godly witness at home. Pray for opportunities to share Christ with them. Let them know that you love them. Share openly with them why you came back to the Lord. Remember that salvation is of the Lord.

23) If my child has not professed to be a believer, how can I expect him to “obey” the Lord? Is there a contradiction for we know that before salvation our nature is depraved?

ANS – The age of your child is important. If you were a believer when your child was born, and you created a Christian environment for your child to grow up in, he would experience Christ externally before he experiences Him internally. From a young age he will imitate all that you do. For example, when you tell your toddler to put his hands together and pray as you give thanks for his meal and then to say amen at the end, he will do it. You must pray with him and for him always. There is no contradiction. If your child is already a teenager or older and is not a believer, of course you cannot expect him to behave as a Christian. Pray for his salvation.

24) My child went through very tough times in school and church for years and has stopped going to church. Please advise how we as parents can do to encourage him to attend church together with us like we used to when he was younger.

ANS –It is not possible to answer this question if the “tough times” are not described. Perhaps teach your child not to “throw the baby out with the bath water”. Has your child confessed Jesus Christ to be his Lord and Saviour? Where does he stand with God?

25) Besides praying fervently for our young adult children who have gone wayward , what else can parents do .. even despite parents and family trying to be fervent and diligent in the Lord . While it is the Lord’s prerogative on whom He will eventually save . It is heartbreaking to see their hearts turning to hard ground (age around 19-21) & turning cold towards matters of the Lord and even exhibiting disobedient attitudes as they get older and more Influenced by the Uni / working world & friends. Any advice on this?

ANS – Salvation is of the Lord. No matter how hard you think their hearts are, there is no heart harder than that of Saul (later became Paul the apostle). They must be made to see

that ultimately they will stand before God to be judged, either as believers or unbelievers. Put the fear of God in them. Do not give up and keep on praying. Surround them with godly examples. They need to see Christ in your life. That is crucial.

26) From the point of our children, is there a specific point in their lives that they can tell when they become saved? Growing up in a godly environment and sometimes having a few occasions of outward profession, would they be unable to tell when exactly they become saved?

ANS – Salvation is of the LORD. God has His ways and they are higher than ours. Look at their lives and commit them to the LORD. They do not need to have a “night and day” experience to feel that they are saved. Salvation is the transformation of heart, mind, soul and body by the power of God regardless of what state we were in before salvation. The bearing of the fruit of the Holy Spirit from day to day is how we know we are saved. It is not how sinful we were but how holy we are.

27) My teenagers find it hard to complete their school work and attend all church activities in their age group. As we have taught them not to do any school work on the Sabbath Day, so they are torn between attending church activities on other days and complete school work properly and on time. What should I advise them?

ANS – It depends on the nature of school work. Teach your children to organise their time well. The requirement from God is to do all things to the glory of God. Attend all activities only if other areas of their witness for Christ are not compromised.