

THE CHILDREN

Excerpts from the Ministry of Brother Witness Lee

1

Taking care of children is a great burden, a serious responsibility. The parents, especially the mother, first need knowledge of their children's condition and situation. Then the parents need an understanding of their children's motive, desire, disposition, character, and environment. The mother and father need to consider all the factors, including the influence of the relatives and the family background, which will affect the raising of the children. Then they need to look to the Lord and pray to Him for wisdom.

2

With Adam and Eve there were two main matters: the fall, which they caused and the gospel, which they received and preached. Adam and Eve were saved, and they passed on the word of salvation to the following generation. We also must share these things with our won children, telling them the sad story of man's fall and proclaiming to them the good news of God's salvation.

3

In taking care of children, what is most important is not knowledge or ability --- it is an intimate concern.

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Not knowledge or ability ----
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4

A brother may be careful to be in spirit with the saints, but not with his children. Actually, we should be more exercised to be in spirit with our children than with the brothers and sisters.

5

I hope that some of the sisters will take up the burden to compose lesson books or story books for the children's meeting. This field, the children's meeting, from the preschool up to sixth grade, is a great work.

To give the new believers and young ones a lot of teaching is not the proper way to take care of them. **The proper way to foster them is to show them a pattern.** By showing them a pattern you water them, supply them, nourish them, and cherish them. This is fostering. If you find that your experience is somewhat lacking, point the new believers to different people in the Bible, for example, to ones such as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and David in the Old Testament and Peter, John, Paul, and Timothy in the New Testament. We can present the lives of Bible characters in such a way as to foster the growth of the young ones.

If we give too much teaching to new ones and young ones, we shall damage them. Every mother knows that one of the most important matters in the raising of children is proper feeding. Caring for children is ninety percent a matter of feeding and ten percent a matter of teaching. This also should be our practice in caring for new believers in the church. We must learn to have ninety percent feeding and ten percent teaching. Feeding involves the presenting of patterns either from the Bible or from church history. By reading the biographies of saints throughout the ages, we nourish ourselves and experience a kind of fostering. The point here is that the best way to feed others and foster them is to give them a proper pattern. If there is no pattern, there can be no fostering. Only by having a pattern can we feed others.

**Caring for children is ninety percent a matter of feeding,
And ten percent a matter of teaching.**

Help the children to realize that as a human being they need to behave themselves, honor their parents, love their brothers-sisters, obey their teachers. We need to convey to them some basic knowledge of God, of God's creation, and of Jesus Christ as the Son of God incarnated to be a man that He may be our Savior. Tell them about the Lord Jesus' salvation through the cross.

The number one thing for you to do is to remember your Creator when you are so young.

The second thing for you to do is to know the Bible in your childhood.

God uses culture to preserve people until they receive Christ. Before children receive Christ, they must be trained according to culture and under the law. Never tell little children that they have no need for culture. On the contrary, teach them to honor their parents, to love others, and to share their possessions with others. Eventually, when they attain to a certain maturity, they will decide to receive Christ into them. Then we need to help them grow into Christ and with Christ. Gradually we can help them turn from culture to Christ. Eventually, instead of living according to culture, they will live according to Christ.

What shall we do in children's meeting? We do not need too much teaching. Premature education damages children. **Don't give them premature knowledge.**

It is always good to help children to grow up in humanity. Help them to know:

*What a human being is;
How to honor their parents;
How to be a proper child.*

Build them up in the proper humanity. This is the way to prepare them to be the best material to receive God's grace.

God's grace is like a dye to color textiles. The quality of the job always depends on the quality of the textile. If the textile is high quality, the outcome is high, and the color is bright. A man like Paul was educated in a humanity of high standing, and then he was colored by God's salvation. The outcome was that he became high and bright.

**Singing is more needed than
Talking and teaching.**

Most children and young people like to sing. Therefore, you must learn to use some hymns and songs and how to sing with others. To learn the Bible, to learn the truths in our publications, and to learn the hymns all need time and labor.

13

Concerning the children's work or the children's meeting, I feel that singing is needed more than talking and teaching. This is why we need more songs --- good, practical children's songs.

Don't sing too formally.

14

In children's meeting we need a log of songs. All these who take care of the children's meeting should learn how to take the lead in singing. Don't sing too formally. Sing in a very living way, and in different ways.

15

Children don't want to hear you teach for an hour--- they'll get tired out. But they never get tired of singing. Collect children's songs, the more, the better.

**Collect children's songs,
The more, the better.**

16

For children's work you need a lot of singing, the more songs, the better. Children can be easily, deeply, strongly impressed with the singing of songs, especially short songs and slogan songs. They will never forget these songs.

Short songs and slogan songs.

If we call one another brothers and sisters in the church life, and yet when we come to the practical things, we don't care for each other's children, the second generation will think that our brotherhood and sisterhood is not genuine. To them the brotherhood in the church life will be unreal. But if someone will take up a burden for the young ones and care for them as their own children, the brotherhood in the church life will be a real brotherhood, and both parties will benefit. This was Paul's concept in Romans 16.

**Real brotherhood is to care
For one another's children.**

You may think that such young ones are useless for God's testimony, but God's economy is different from our natural concept. According to Numbers 3 God would use even the infants to protect His testimony. We need to follow God's strategy. This means that we need more young ones from one month to twenty years of age and we need enough older ones to take care of them. The churches in the Lord's recovery need to become normal in this matter.

Care about each drop.

A great ocean comes from drops and drops of water. If we don't care about each drop, then in the end there will be no ocean.

The children's work is a basic work in the churches. The reason is that we have so many young people, family units, and children. The churches have a lot of children. The easiest way to have the increase for the church is to raise up our children properly and bring them to the Lord.