

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
March 10, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Question concerning the introduction to the book:

1. Since "we" are naturally opposed to authority in our lives, give at least 2 ways this attitude has impacted the culture.
  - a. **It is no longer culturally acceptable to talk about headship and the dad as the "head" of the home.**
  - b. **Lack of submission to the man's God given authority.**
  - c. **No understanding of roles in marriage.**
2. How does this impact our children as they grow? What would you say is the author's point in raising this issue?
  - a. **They are confused because there is no structure that gives definition to life.**
  - b. **They are left to figure things out on their own...since no one is "in charge".**
3. In what capacity do you exercise authority as a parent? (From where do we learn how to parent?) **As God's agent.** What is the purpose for the authority that you exercise in the lives of your children? **To empower them to be able to live under God's authority and to live in unity with others as we are all called to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.** Why is it so important to understand these 2 points for the good of your children?  
**Knowing where our marching orders come from clears up our confusion enabling the family to benefit and grow according to God's word not some arbitrary claim of men. It sets a standard in place that enables them to grow and mature into God's children, if that be God's plan for their lives.**
4. Just so we are clear, what is the issue between "quality" time and "quantity" time? Which one do you find yourself gravitating towards as a parent? Why?

C. Getting to the Heart of Behavior

1. What does the Bible have to say about the heart in Prov. 4:23; Mark 7:21; and Luke 6:45?
  - a. **The heart is the control center for life... a person's life mirrors their heart.**
  - b. **The heart determines behavior... *"what you say and do expresses the orientation of the heart."***
  - c. **Behavior is not the central issue in child rearing...shepherding their heart is!**
2. Why is it so easy for a parent to get sidetracked by bad behavior?
  - a. **It is easier to deal with...**
  - b. **We feel a sense of relief when the behavior changes...so it is measureable**
  - c. **It is harder to work on the heart than on behavior.**

3. What is wrong with a change of behavior without a change of heart?
  - a. **The behavior will simply come back**
  - b. **There is nothing that helps with future behavior.**
4. Look at the behavior example in the book pages 5-6. What do you think? Pie in the sky? Helpful?
5. What is the fundamental tenet of this book? **The heart is the wellspring of life.** What is the fundamental task of parenting? **Shepherding the hearts of our children.** Where does the knowledge of how to shape heart issues come from?
6. Was there anything else that stood out from these pages that we haven't talked about?

*"Christianity has not been tried and found wanting;  
it has been found hard and left untried."*  
G. K. Chesterton

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
March 24, 2013

A. Review

1. What is the fundamental tenet of this book? **The heart is the wellspring of life.**
2. What is the fundamental task of parenting? **Shepherding the hearts of our children.**

B. Chapter 2: Shaping Influences

1. Thinking about the definition he gives for shaping influences, what were some shaping influences in your life as you were growing up?
2. The author suggests 6 shaping influences in pages 11-14. Do you find this breakdown helpful? Why? Which ones do you need more help with? (Let's look at them and the questions ask in each section. For those who children are too young to see how are they already experiencing these influences?)
3. What is the problem with "Christian determinism"? **This idea deals primarily with environmental influences without considering others.**

C. Chapter 3: Godward Orientation

1. According to Proverbs 9:7-10 what particular component is necessary for your children to respond wisely to correction?

2. What does he mean when he speaks of no child being neutral? Why is this simple discussion necessary?
3. What determines your child's Godward orientation according to the author? Why is this important? **Pg. 23...(midway-) "Since it is the Godward orientation of your child's heart that determines his response to life, we may never conclude that his problems are a matter of maturity. Selfishness is not out grown. Rebellion against authority is not outgrown. These are not out grown because they are not a reflection of immaturity but of the idolatry of a child's heart."**

D. Chapter 2, Home: A Place of Grace, by Susan Hunt

1. How does this chapter help focus our thoughts on our child's Godward orientation?
2. What importance does she place on the role of the husband in this orientation? Why?
3. What was helpful that we didn't talk about in any of these 3 chapters?

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
April 14, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is the fundamental tenet of this book? **The heart is the wellspring of life.**
2. What is the fundamental task of parenting? **Shepherding the hearts of our children.**

C. Chapter 4- You're in Charge-pg. 26-38

1. What things affect how you young parents wield your authority toward your children?
  - a. **"We are not going to do things the way our parents did them!"**
    - (1) **Interesting that you turned out so well...☺ except in homes where there have been many abuses...the principles and methods used were not necessarily all that bad...**
    - (2) **You can judge ...to a certain degree...how well your parents did in training by how you cope with society at large....my dad didn't know how to parent well...but he did teach me a good work ethic and a desire honor authority when it is carried off well...**
  - b. **We will watch our peers.**

- (1) **May not be a healthy way of wielding authority...since most “millennials” don’t like to take charge...**
  - (2) **They , too, are reacting against whatever factors have shaped them...**
  - c. **A build in aversion to authority and being an authority...requiring someone to obey us seems unfair...after all, “We want our children to love us.”**
2. If a parent is unsure about the nature and extent of his authority, his children will suffer. In what ways?
    - a. **They will never know what to expect from the parents because no consistency actually means uneasiness and confusion for the child.**
    - b. **They will never learn that there are absolutes and principles of God that alone teach wisdom. (pg. 27)**
  3. For what reason do you as a parent have authority? **God calls you to an authority in your child’s life. You have authority to act on God’s behalf because you are His agent in managing this gift of life He has given us... we are to be “good stewards” of our children in that they are to grow in knowing and loving the LORD.**
  4. Look at some of the passages from this chapter that were discussed. Note the implications in terms of parental authority.
    - a. Gen. 18:19
    - b. Prov. 3:11-12
    - c. Prov. 4:1-4
    - d. Prov. 6:16-19
    - e. Prov. 13:24
    - f. Prov. 17:6
    - g. Prov. 19:18
    - h. Eph. 6:1-4
  5. According to Scripture and to the author, what is our mandate from Scripture that cannot be ignored by parents? Why? **Scripture provides a mandate to act. A parent has no choice but to take appropriate authority over their child. A parent must engage their child. Parenting is an act of obedience to God. Not to act as God directs is sin and the consequences can be devastating.**
  6. What is the author’s point concerning this quote on page 31, *“Children only learn to be decision makers as parents allow them to make decisions.”* **Children do not have the capacity to make decisions...good decision making must be taught and modeled for them.** What is wrong with giving our children too many choices in all areas of life?
  7. Why such an emphasis on authority? **Because without a proper understanding of the authority that parents have been given our children will flounder and not glorify God in the way that God intends...then they as well will be more caught up in HOW NOT TO PARENT when they get older rather than being focused on how God says to parent. They like us**

**will spend their time spinning their wheels because they are reacting rather than following.**

8. Can you articulate the *Clear Objectives* the author spells out? (pg. 32-33) Are these helpful? Can they be implemented in your home? Would they be helpful if they were?
9. The author also begins an overview discussion about discipline. What is its purpose? What advice does he give that can free us up to be able to discipline correctly?
10. How will seeing yourself as God's agent in correction and discipline change the way you discipline your children?
11. What are some ways you fail in being an authority?
12. What qualities do you find in God that you can imitate in being a gracious authority in the lives of your children?

*"Your children are the greatest gift God will give to you, and their souls the heaviest responsibility He will place in your hands. Take time with them, teach them to have faith in God. Be a person in whom they can have faith. When you are old, nothing else you've done will have mattered as much."*

Lisa Wingate

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
June 2, 2013

D. Prayer

E. Review

3. What is the fundamental tenet of this book?

4. What is the fundamental task of parenting?

F. Chapter 5: Examining Your Goals- pages 39-47

1. The opening story seems almost unreal on one hand but if we have been paying attention we realize how true it is on the other. What overt things have you seen lately that clearly shows you some of the detrimental goals of parents for their children?

- a. **TV shows that highlight little girls...Here Come's Honey Boo Boo...Toddler's and Tiara's...Dance Mom's...Pint-sized Preachers (on National Geographic Channel 2011)**
  - b. **Parents who push their children to be involved in every sport imaginable...from football to cheerleading whether the child wants to be involved or not...**
2. Thinking back on your own childhood...can you articulate your parent's goals for you positive and/or negative...or any perceived goals?
  3. For the married without children and the married with children, what, if any, goals did you and your wives talk about for your children before you had them?
  4. After looking at the 7 unbiblical perspectives in establishing goals for our children from pages 40-44 what do you think? **Quotes on page 41 (my 61) and 42 (my pages 62-63)**
- G. Chapter 6: Reworking Your Goals- pages 49-56
1. What did the author say in the last chapter was the foundation from which we set our goals as parents and people of God? **Glorifying God and enjoying Him forever.** How does this help define our the working out some or reworking of our goals?
  2. So much in our society talks about developing our children's self-esteem. Is this the Bible's focus? What is the Bible's focus?
  3. The author does not advocate complete communal living so what does he have to say about goals from a biblical perspective concerning such things as playing sports, exercise, recreation, self-defense, good grades and the other topics that were talked about in chapter 5? **See quotes on pages 52 (my 72); 54 (my 74)**
  4. On page 55 in the objections answered section, I have this to say: **Parents should NEVER assume that their children are unsaved until they know for sure. The author comes at this from the perspective of you would never tell unbelievers to disobey God...but until we know better wouldn't the more positive approach be to treat them as believers until such time as it is revealed that they are not?**

*"There are really two major obstacles all parents face in teaching their children to obey: not only is the world they live in corrupt, but they themselves are sinful creatures too. They face a difficult struggle both inside and outside."*

John MacArthur

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
June 30, 2013

- A. Prayer
- B. Review

1. What is the overall purpose for this study? **That our children grow up to glorify God...to love the Lord their God with all the heart, with All their soul, and with all their might. (Deut. 6:4-9)**
2. Last time we talked about examining our goals and reworking our goals in parenting. Have any of you taken the time to reconsider what you have been doing or...consider for the first time what you should be doing? Tell us about it.

C. Chapter 7- Discarding Unbiblical Methods (pgs. 58-69)

1. What are some unbiblical approaches to raising our children that seem to be popular in Christian circles today? (Forget the world around us, if we can and let's just consider child rearing from the church's perspective. What do you see in your other Christian friends?)
2. Let's look at some Scripture a minute:
  - a. What do these passages (Deut. 10:12-13; I Sam. 16:7; I Chron. 16:9; Joel 2:12-13) have in common? **God's concern for the heart.**
  - b. What do these passages (Matt. 5:28; Matt. 15:18; Mark 7:21-23) have in common? **Relationship of behavior and the heart.**
  - c. What do these passages (Ezek. 36:25-27; Matt. 23:26) have in common? **Cleansed heart, changed behavior.**
  - d. What does this have to do with unbiblical methods? **We need to understand this so as to evaluate the methods we use. I used to think that the problem was that I was NOT shepherding the heart of my children, but now I realize that all that I did as a parent shepherded my child's heart...for good or for bad. Understanding this heart thing caused me to back up and re-evaluate the fact that everything I teach goes to their heart because they look to me for everything.**
3. As you look at the "unbiblical methods" discussed in this chapter let's consider a couple of them a moment.
  - a. What so bad with the "I didn't turn out so bad" approach? **True enough but look at all the issue you may have had to deal with that could have been dealt with if we had employed God's ways rather than our parent's ways...our default is always what we "know" no matter our intent.**
  - b. What is the point (s) of appeal in bribing our children... ever? And the point(s) of damage... always...the heart aspect of this? **It only promotes and develops self-interest...oh and it may work in the short term but it**

**will always come back to bite you later as our children our quick learners and because of their fallen nature they learn how to play the system for what they want ...and is a sign of laziness in the parent. What about rewards? Children should never be rewarded for fulfilling normal family responsibilities. (pg. 61)**

- c. What is “wrong” with the punitive method according to the author and why? (pg. 64)
4. Where do these unbiblical methods lead? **Superficial parenting since they only address the behavior at the moment...hence there is no heart change.** What is the product of superficial parenting according to the author? (pg. 64) What do you think of his conclusions on pages 66-69?
- D. Chapter 8- Embracing Biblical Methods- Communication (pgs. 70-88)
  1. The author is quick to say that there are 2 important elements that must be woven together in a biblical approach to shepherding our child’s heart. What are they and what is his biblical support for this claim? **Rich, full communication and the rod. Prov. 23:12-26 essentially. Let’s talk through this...since corporal punishment has been placed on the back burner by many Christian parents...or at least set aside only to be used when we have been pushed to our edge... a wrong place to use it by the way.**
  2. What do you think of the questions the author suggests on pages 73-74 and then again on page 78? How do you use this same thinking with a 12 month old or an 18 month old or a 2 year old...5 year old? Why is it important to stop wherever you are and at least think through these or questions like them?
  3. In what way can you stand both above and beside your child as you help Him understand the internal struggles with his/her sin? (pg. 79)
    - a. **We are “above” them as God’s agent to deal with sin and evil...**
    - b. **We are beside them because we too, are a sinner who struggles with many of the same things they struggle with...therefore correction MUST be given but with a humble...not a n angry spirit.**

*“As for those parents who will not use the rod upon their children,  
I pray God He uses not their children as a rod for them.”*

Thomas Fuller



MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
July 14, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Review from chapters 7-8.

1. In chapter 7 the author talks about unbiblical methods of shepherding a child's heart. Where do these unbiblical methods lead? **Superficial parenting since they only address the behavior at the moment...hence there is no heart change.**
2. The author is quick to say that there are 2 important elements that must be woven together in a biblical approach to shepherding our child's heart. What are they and what is his biblical support for this claim? **Rich, full communication and the rod. Prov. 23:12-26 essentially. Let's talk through this...since corporal punishment has been placed on the back burner by many Christian parents...or at least set aside only to be used when we have been pushed to our edge... a wrong place to use it by the way.**
3. In what way can you stand both above and beside your child as you help Him understand the internal struggles with his/her sin? (pg. 79)
  - a. **We are "above" them as God's agent to deal with sin and evil...**
  - b. **We are beside them because we too, are a sinner who struggles with many of the same things they struggle with...therefore correction MUST be given but with a humble...not an angry spirit.**

C. Chapter 9: Embracing Biblical Methods: types of Communication (pgs. 80-88)

1. Before we look in depth at this chapter, turn to Eph. 6:4.
  - a. What problems is Paul pointing out in this text?
    - (1) **Fathers – this is not a generic term parent as used in vs. 1, but specifically father as head of household...not mother...though the principles could apply when a father is absent in one way or another.**
      - **Do not provoke- exasperate (Col. 3:21)... our propensity to be short, quick tempered, impatient with our children, over-protective, showing favoritism, being neglectful, being abusive in words and/or actions, by discouraging their gifts, even heavy handed with the only forms of communication in mind being ...rules , correction and discipline...which leads to embittering our children or stirring them up to sin.**
      - **The fact that we don't spend the time necessary to discipline and instruct our children...**
        - **"Fathers..." by pointedly speaking to fathers he is making us the one who is chiefly responsible for our children's education**
        - **"rear them tenderly"... "fondly cherished"= nourish... provide our children with good pasture/food and good water...good example...how we live before them... showing them the truth....training, so they can experience it firsthand and know HOW it works**

- **discipline= firmness...chastening...corporal punishment and rules .**
- **Instruction= admonition= the spoken word...what is said to the child.**
- **“of the LORD”- clarifies what type of training and by what standard we train and instruct**

**(2) Without the father doing things God’s way the children will not grow up in the Lord. The very heart of Christian nurture is this: to bring the heart of the child to the heart of the savior in all things.**

- b. What will be the positive results of a father doing what Paul/ God commands here in this passage?

**(1) They will grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as proverbs says...**

**(2) They will honor their father and mother ...**

**(3) They will live long in the land...be blessed**

**(4) This is all done with the correct balance of corrective and instructive discipline ...good communication.**

2. Where does the author say parents are usually stuck when it comes to types of communication? Why?
3. Let’s look at the 9 types of communication laid out in this chapter. What do you think of his explanations? Which ones do you do well? Which ones do you need to do better at?
4. When will parents gain some of the most penetrating insights into their children, according to the author? **When the child prays.** How so? What do you think about this opinion?
5. Biblical forms of communication require time on our part. What are some specific lifestyle, recreational, vocational changes that you can make in order to have the time needed for communication with your children in the way discussed in this chapter? (remember Deut. 4:9-10, 6:4-9)

#### D. Chapter 10: A Life of Communication

1. What is the best way to train your children to be active listeners? **By actively listening to them.**
2. We stated when we looked at the last chapter that biblical forms of communication require time on our part. What else does it require of us? **Physical and spiritual energy.** How is this seen day to day? **Alertness, seeking forgiveness from them when we sin against them, patience, aware of our child’s needs, putting them before ourselves, being a good listener...hearing effectively.**
3. What are some of the practical examples of the cost that you will incur in parenting that the author gives?
  - a. **Parenting biblically will mean that you won’t be able to do all the things you might otherwise want to do.**

- b. If you play golf it will certainly affect your gold handicap...**
  - c. It may mean you don't have pristine home...children live here.**
  - d. It will modify the amount of time with which you pursue your recreations.**
  - e. What things in your life specifically will this require for you to give up?**
4. What blessings does the author highlight when we willingly incur the costs that he discussed?
5. As parents do the Scriptures give us any other options but to invest all that we are into our children...the sheep that God has given us to shepherd? **Psalm 145 and the many calls in the Proverbs that begin with "Listen, my son"..."pay attention, my son"...**requires that we be investing in our children from the earliest time...there is no other option...it is our responsibility and we will be held accountable by God for our work on our children.

*"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."*  
Benjamin Franklin

*"Your children are the greatest gift God will give to you, and their souls the heaviest responsibility He will place in your hands. Take time with them, teach them to have faith in God. Be a person in whom they can have faith. When you are old, nothing else you've done will have mattered as much."*  
Lisa Wingate

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
August 4, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. When will parents gain some of the most penetrating insights into their children, according to the author? **When the child prays.** How so? What do you think about this?
2. What blessings does the author highlight when we willingly incur the costs of biblical parenting that he discussed?
3. As parents do the Scriptures give us any other options but to invest all that we are into our children? **No! Parenting is shepherding and this is the flock that God has given you to "feed well and keep watered"...grow them up in the fear of the LORD. (See Deut. 6:4-9, 11:18-21. ) Psalm 145 and the many calls in the Proverbs that begin with "Listen, my son"...pay attention, my son"...requires that we be investing in our children from the earliest time...there is no other option...it is our responsibility and we will be held accountable by God for our work on our children.**

C. Chapter 11: Embracing Biblical Methods- The Rod

1. Scripture seems to indicate the importance of the rod as spoken of in Proverbs. What needs of the child does the rod address? **Folly/ foolishness must be removed, for it places the child at risk. Folly/foolishness is not being childish...they are sin...a sign of a depraved nature...one who will/cannot fear God. One who hates authority of all kind. The child who is not submitting to their parents is acting foolishly...against God's plan. Children do do childish things however because they are children. As fathers we have a responsibility to protect our children even from their own sin, if this is dealt with early the rewards can be amazing.**
  - a. Prov. 13:24- "early" (see text note)
  - b. Prov. 19:18
  - c. Prov. 22:16,15
  - d. Prov. 23:13-14
  - e. Prov. 27:5
  - f. Prov. 29: 15,17-18 (Verse 18 seems to be the completion of the sentence in the Hebrew. Interesting connection to be sure.) **Children cannot learn to obey on their own...communication and the rod are used to teach, instruct and discipline.**
  - g. According to these texts what seems to be the child's greatest problem? **Their sin...not a lack of information...for they are not born neutral...they are born into sin...sin from conception. (Ps. 51. Jer. 17:9)**
2. Why do you suppose the rod of correction has fallen into misuse over the years? **It is not that the biblical injunctions have changed...or that they are unclear...Our problem is we are listening to the wrong voices...See Col.2:8**

3. How does the author describe the proper use of the rod? (page 103) **never in anger...never for the purpose of being obeyed...it is always for the child's need to be rescued from the consequences of sin concerning the on-going behavior.**
4. What do you think about his "results" of properly administered corporal punishment? (pg. 104) Why is it difficult to spank your children consistently? Why are you often tempted to let things go?
5. What is the only reason for the child to obey Dad and Mom? **God commands it...failure to obey Dad and Mom is the same as disobeying God .**
6. What if anything else stood out to you in this chapter? **The rod is an act of faith and an act of faithfulness!**

D. Chapter 12: Embracing Biblical Methods- Appeal to the Conscience

1. What seems to be the 2 main concerns in this chapter?
  - a. **Keep our discipline and correction focused on the conscience of our children...**
  - b. **The importance of keeping the centrality of the cross and the redemptive work of Christ as the goal of all our nurturing.**
2. The author makes a big deal about the conscience. What about the Bible?
  - a. Rom. 2:14-15. What phrases describe the activity of the conscience? What proof do we have that even non-believers have a conscience?
  - b. I Tim. 4:1-2 and Titus 1:14-16. What phrases are used to describe a malfunctioning conscience? Why is this important to our discussion in this chapter?
  - c. Heb. 9:14 and 10:19-22. What hope is given in these passages?
3. Why must correction and shepherding focus on Christ?
4. What if anything else stood out to you in this chapter?

*"You cannot control your children, you say. Then the Lord have mercy on you! It is your business to do it, and you must do it, or else you will soon find they will control you. No one knows what judgment will come from God upon those who allow sin in children to go unrebuked."*  
Charles Spurgeon

*"Disobedience is NEVER a doorway to greater freedom. Disobedience is ALWAYS the pathway to deeper bondage."*  
Paul David Tripp

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
September 1, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Review

7. What is the fundamental tenet of this book? **The heart is the wellspring of life.** What is the fundamental task of parenting? **Shepherding the hearts of our children.**
8. From Chapter 11: Why do you suppose the rod of correction has fallen into misuse over the years? **It is not that the biblical injunctions have changed...or that they are unclear...Our problem is we are listening to the wrong voices...See Col.2:8**
9. From Chapter 12: What seems to be the 2 main concerns in this chapter?
  - c. **Keep our discipline and correction focused on the conscience of our children...**
  - d. **The importance of keeping the centrality of the cross and the redemptive work of Christ as the goal of all our nurturing.**

C. Chapter 14: Training Objective: Infancy to Childhood

1. What, according to our author, is the primary characteristic of this first stage of development (from infancy to 5 years of age)? **Change!** What have you observed in your own children concerning what he says about the 4 main areas?
2. What does he say is the most important lesson for your child to learn during this period? Why is it so important? In other words, what is likely to happen if they don't get this principle? What is likely to happen when they do?
3. What is His main point with using Eph. 6:1-3? **That their obedience is a response to God...they must learn that they have been made for God's glory.** Why is it important for us as parents to understand this point as well? **It shapes what and why we do what we do...helping us to have a foundation from which to start so we can be consistent.**
4. How does he define submission? (see pages 131) What is his point? I personally like this definition for submission, *"Submission is the experience of life, wherein, you most naturally and easily find God's will for your life."* How do each of you teach this concept in your own homes?
5. On page 134 he defines obedience. What do you think? How's that working for you within your own home? How often can a parent allow his children to disobey without dealing with them? Why?

6. What do you think about his appeal process? Something that might work in your home? Why or why not?
7. Training a child to do what he ought to do, regardless of how he feels, prepares him/her.... (Finish the statement with your own words). **Prepares them to be people who grow up and lives by principles rather than mood or impulses.**

D. Chapter 15: Infancy to Childhood: Training Procedures

1. What does the author say is absolutely crucial to the development of submission and obedience in these early stages of development? **Consistency in discipline...mixed messages at this stage promotes disobedience and chaos. Consistency promotes order and peace within a house after a certain point.**
2. There is always the questions of should I spank and when should I spank and how often. How does the author answers these questions?(see pages 145; 150, 153, 154) **If we don't spank we are failing to take God's Word seriously...when to spank is answered by if the child has chosen Not to do something that is within their capability to understand and do.**
3. What do you think about the author's discussion about spanking on pages 146-150? Why do you suppose he places so much discussion on this "training procedure" at this stage of development?
4. *"What if nothing seems to be working?"(Page 157)* What do you think of his answer? Is it sufficient to deal with the question?
5. What is the goal of correction? **Honoring God by submitting to the parents He has placed over the children for their own good.**

*"Children have a heart problem. They are constitutionally sinful. Like their parents, and like the rest of the Adamic race, they are fallen. What they need most are regenerate hearts. This is the most fundamental issue in parenting. It's not ultimately about behavior; it's all about the child's heart."*

John MacArthur

MOV Study  
Shepherding a Child's Heart  
Nov. 3, 2013

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What did the author say is "wrong" with too many rules?
  - a. **You are seeking to control behavior because it is visible and measurable, rather than doing the hard work of addressing the heart issue.**
  - b. **It is easier for us as parents to have a list to tick off and to show how "good" our children are...and then they aren't. For without a heart change the bad behavior will show up again:  
(1) In self-righteous legalism/phariseeism, or...  
(2) Total rebellion.**
2. And how important is the regular reading of the Scriptures for your children, in your parenting them properly and bringing them up in Christian character?

C. Chapter 18- Teenagers: Training Objectives-

1. What does the author say are the "benchmarks" for this period of life? Why is it important for a parent to understand these?
2. The author gives a list of teen insecurities on pages 184-185. What do you think of these...do you think there are others more pressing than others?
3. What do you think of his statement, *"A teen falls in with rebellious company because he is a rebel, he does not become a rebel because of the company he keeps."*?
4. Why do you suppose that the author highlights the texts that he does...Prov. 1:7, Prov. 1:8-9, Prov. 1:10-19? What is he communicating to the parent? (see also Deut. 29:22-28)
5. Why should the parents be the most influential people in a child's life? What is going to look like throughout their life?
  - a. **Being honest with our children from the beginning will give them assurance that you can be trusted as they grow.**
  - b. **When we are consistent throughout their life they will see us as allies rather than enemies.**
  - c. **If the Word is of supreme importance to the parents and that is demonstrated regularly it will be to the child as well.**
  - d. **The home is to be a place they want to be.**

D. Chapter 19- Teenagers: Training Procedures

1. What is the goal of parenting? **That our children are prepared for heaven. Also so that they are prepared to be adults...because they will "hang" with adults most of their life.** How is that attained according to all we have talked about?



2. While this discussion was had in this chapter ...it occurs a long time before your children reach their teen years. What are parents sometime tempted to do when their children have questions?
  - a. **Panic because they are not equipped to do so...or so they think.**
  - b. **Send them to someone else...expecting that the pastor or someone else can do a better job than they can.**
  - c. **They have bought into the LIE that they are not to be the best influence in their child's life.**
  - d. **If you have been answering their simple questions simply through the years by the time you get to the doubt and struggles of early adulthood they will look to you and lean into your wisdom that you have acquired through the years. If you haven't been doing this...it is not impossible but it will be harder since you won't have their trust.**
3. He talks about the frequent failure that teens experience. What do you think of this? **He has some good thoughts but I would add that if you have been doing the work of parenting with the goals that he has stated in mind when you get to this point they will see fewer failures because they have been prepared beforehand to deal with things...because they will approach things not individually but seeking your advice and counsel.**
4. What does the author mean by the statement, *"Your children need to learn to think Christianly?"*
5. God intends that parenting be temporary...we need to be preparing to let go long before they ever are ready to go. How do we do this?

*"You cannot control your children, you say. Then the Lord have mercy on you! It is your business to do it, and you must do it, or else you will soon find they will control you. No one knows what judgment will come from God upon those who allow sin in children to go unrebuked."*  
 Charles Spurgeon