

RESPONSIBILITIES AND REWARDS OF PARENTHOOD

Note to the speaker:

Source material for this outline can be found in chapters 5-8 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Do not, however, read to the audience directly from the book. Keep your information fresh and up-to-date by the use of additional, more recent material. Open the Bible frequently, and read directly from it as your authority

A HUMAN BABY—FROM CONCEPTION TO TIME OF BIRTH (12 min.)

All of us have been children and may now have our own; what do we know about this miracle from God?

There are amazing facts and remaining mysteries about reproduction (Ps 139:16; *g92 4/8 13-16*)

The progressive development of the embryo and the fetus is a marvel (Ps 139:13, 15; *w92 8/1 3; g92 1/22 14-17*)

Amazing changes must occur quickly at the time of birth (Ps 139:14)

What important matters should be considered during pregnancy?

How the mother's eating, drinking, and other practices affect the baby (*g89 2/22 9-10*)

Decisions to be made before the baby's birth

Importance of the home atmosphere into which the baby will come (*g88 9/8 6*)

How children are a reward from Jehovah and are to be taken care of (Ps 127:3)

ROLES PLAYED BY THE PARENTS (12 min.)

It is necessary for the roles of the father and the mother to harmonize so that they are well balanced (Php 4:5)

The mother's crucial role

She cares for the baby's physical needs

She must look to the emotional needs of the baby, especially the need for love (1Th 2:7; *g87 5/22 7, 10-11*)

The vital role of the father (*g87 5/22 8-9*)

The father should be involved with the baby and its care from the beginning; his role takes on greater prominence as time passes

He provides material needs and masculine qualities that round out the baby's personality, especially if the child is a boy

He is responsible to provide spiritual training as the child grows (De 6:6, 7; Eph 6:4)

It is the father's responsibility, in cooperation with the mother, to discipline when needed, doing so lovingly and wisely (Col 3:21; Heb 12:7; *g87 5/22 11*)

The father and the mother are partners in the family's affairs (Ec 4:9)

They present a united front in the training and the disciplining of the children (Pr 13:10)

Agreement is necessary in stepfamilies too (*g86 1/8 8-9; w84 10/15 21-5*)

Wise parents work together to make it easy for their children to honor them (Eph 6:2)

Parents work together to create a peaceful home environment for their children

Single parents, with difficult task of being both "mother" and "father," can be successful with Jehovah's help (*w80 9/15 19-20, 25*)

TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN FROM INFANCY (10 min.)

The time to start is right away! (2Ti 3:15; *w88 8/1 12-13; w88 5/1 6; g90 8/22 28*)

Each child is different, and training should be adapted to each one's personality and abilities (*w88 5/1 5*)

Help your children to grow, giving encouragement as they progress and try new things (*g88 9/8 7-8*)

Parents need to explain sex to their children, especially when they ask questions about it (Keep brief; *g92 2/22 3-8*)

From babyhood onward, children learn from the example of others and imitate them

It is vital that parents not only instruct well verbally but also set good examples in conduct (*g87 5/22 11*)

Give your children a set of values that will go with them as they live out their lives in a corrupt world (Eph 4:13-15)

THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINING IN LOVE (10 min.)

There is a wrong and a right view of discipline (Pr 13:24; *g87 5/22 11*)

You should provide guidelines and firm limits for your children (Pr 6:20-23; *w88 8/1 18-19*)

It is necessary that children understand clearly what your guidelines are

When you discipline, it is important that you communicate the reasons for the discipline

When disciplining your children, imitate Jehovah, who disciplines in love (Pr 3:12)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTHOOD ARE HEAVY, BUT REWARDS ARE SATISFYING (1 min.)

Parents have the heavy responsibility of providing food, clothing, and a home for their children

Children also need parental *instruction*, correction, and moral guidance

This should be a regular part of family life (De 6:6, 7)

It should begin at infancy (Mr 10:13-16; 2Ti 3:15)

Parents who are diligent in caring for these responsibilities will reap rich rewards and will be proud of their children

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

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TO BE COVERED IN 45 MINUTES

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