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Fundamentals of Parenting

This article will be the first in a series of articles addressing the fundamentals of raising children, a critical topic for all parents. As I am not an expert in this area, I thought I would rely on the writings of experts who are upright in faith such as Dr. James Dobson, an American Christian author and a psychologist. He is an expert in family and marital counseling and childhood development. He also has conservative and original Christian views in American public life.

In the introduction of his book "Parents' Answer Book", Dr. Dobson points out to the anxiety of new mothers and attributes it to their lack of knowledge on how to handle their newly born babies. On this topic, he poses the following question: "Did the moms of newly born babies during and before the early 1900s have the same anxieties?" The answer was, of course, no it was not. When a child was born during that period, the new mother was tended by aunts, grandmothers, and neighbors, who hovered around her to offer their advice and help. These relatives and neighbors, with true love, offered their experience in child care to the new mom and her new born. The mother trusted in the advice of these women who had answers, whether right or wrong, for every question related to child development... Nonetheless they had answers.



In the mid-1900s and the beginning of the 21st century, the society developed so fast and the social ties became weaker. The society became more mobile, family members move far apart where there is more work opportunities and better income. This caused family members to become isolated from each other and also from their bigger families that they belong to. This isolation has led the parents of this age to feel that they are severely deficient either in handling their family affairs or in caring for their children in a world that rages with fast pace change and modern day challenges.

This anxiety has brought parents rushing to the "Experts", child development and psychology to answer their questions about the complexity of childhood. Dr. Dobson comments on this point in that the result of this social development produced many children, since the 1920s, who were brought up based on the opinions of these "experts". He adds: "In fact, no country on earth has embraced the teaching of child psychology and the offering of family specialist more than has the United States."

According to Dr. Dobson, one should expect that the mental health of American children to be better than that of the children raised in other countries who didn't have child psychology counseling advantage. Obviously this is not the case! To the contrary, Juvenile delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, unwanted pregnancies, mental illness, and suicide are rampant among young men and women and continue to increase in a steady rate.

He also adds: "In many ways, we have made a mess of parenthood!" Why? Because in general, behavioral scientists have disregarded the principles of the Bible and its timeless wisdom that it offers. Instead, the twentieth century has spawned a generation of experts who ignored parental attitudes and practices of two thousand years. Alternatively, they replaced this conventional wisdom with their own wobbly-legged insights of the moment. Each professional society in child psychology started writing literature based on limited experience and biased views. They sold to us some guesses and suppositions as though they are the Truth.

Therefore, Dr. Dobson explained the skewed views and teachings introduced in recent decades in many societies. These false teachings view the discipline of parents to their children, with love, as destroying their self-esteem. They view Christian spiritual instruction as hazardous, defiance being a valuable ventillator of anger, and that authority of any kind is rejected.

Thus, Dr. Dobson points out that even though he is one of those "experts" professional in child development and psychology, he always relies on two main reliable and time-honored sources, which have been ignored by liberal and modern experts:

- The Scriptures with its two Testaments.
- The traditional wisdom accumulated over the years by our predecessors and has been handed down generation to generation.

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