

Intentional Parenting

(because it doesn't happen by accident)

Who Will Rear Your Children?
Faith Baptist Church

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Introduction: Somebody will rear your children. In fact, a number of somebodies will. One of the chief responsibilities of a parent is to recognize his God-given responsibility both to be that primary somebody and to screen who those other somebodies will be.

Our goal in guiding the lives of our children is that of reaching and shaping their **hearts** for God (Proverbs 23:15-19).

How can parents win the battle for a child's heart? What strategy can they employ to win the battle against those who would seek to shape them differently? Is there yet hope for another godly generation in the darkened society in which we live?

Consider the Competition

Scripture is replete with instruction regarding both the reality and power of the enemies of the Christian. In particular, believers battle the Devil, the flesh, and the world (1 John 2:15-17). Viewed as a unit, we learn that Christians face a destructive enemy (1 Peter 5:8) whose philosophies and personnel occupy primary spots in our society (Eph. 6:12; Col 2:8). Nor must Christians merely fight the real enemies on the outside; they must wage war with the insidious enemy of the flesh on the inside (James 4:1). It seems that sinners

are constantly enticing (Proverbs 1:10) and that the world is continually endeavoring to stamp its image upon each of its inhabitants (Romans 12:2).

How can we recognize the enemy in terms of his desire to **destroy** our children?

1. The enemy of your children possesses a carefully crafted **strategy**.

The Devil and this world system have captured modern culture. Their agenda is in place and the voice of Biblical Christianity is quickly becoming a whisper.

a. The enemy powerfully **communicates** and has mastered the art of **connection** .

The majority culture has mastered the concept of a target audience. Your children have a bull's eye on their back. And within their arsenal, culture has the latest tricks and technologies at its disposal.

b. The enemy **patiently** waits for change to occur in the lives of your children.

He understands the importance of bombardment. Saturation is his goal. Sound bites and fleeting images are repeated with such regularity that they become the very thoughts our children think—and the way they think!

- c. The enemy endeavors to **shape** your children's lives.

Culture shapes people. It literally changes their image. The goal of the enemy is the antithesis of God's goal for your life (Romans 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18).

Summary: The enemy patiently communicates his message in order to shape our children's lives.

What themes does the enemy communicate in this process?

2. The enemy understands that **repetition** is the key to learning. He keeps his message simple, and it emerges with the following themes.

- a. He communicates a message of self-centeredness — **“me first.”**

At the heart of every sin is pride; and at the center of the enemy's attack is a focus on self. Self-focus, self-esteem, self-love, self-satisfaction, and every other kind of selfishness are the key points of the Devil's message (1 John 2:15-17). His message can be encapsulated by this instruction: “Consider yourself first.”

- b. He communicates a message of materialism— **“give me.”**

The idolatry of our culture is covetousness and its grip has literally strangled our society (Col 3:5). See also Luke 12:15ff.

- c. He communicates a message of hedonism— **“satisfy me.”**

In essence he says, "Indulge yourself. Satisfy your fleshly desires and expect no negative consequences for doing so."

Summary: The enemy stays on point with his simple message of self-focus.

If the enemy is so simple in his communication, why are people (parents) so readily duped?

3. The enemy is **subtle** and seductive.

An enemy rarely declares who he is, where he is, or how he plans to attack. Fortunately for the believer, we have reliable intelligence on which to depend. Much could be said about the enemy; in fact a full description would require its own Bible study.

To accomplish his carefully crafted strategy, the enemy endeavors for his victim to (a) **question** the Word of God, (b) **remove** the character of God, and (c) **abandon** his need for God.