



Introduction

Two major relationships that affect our children.

- Their relationship to those that most impact and shape their lives.
- Their relationship to God.

Shaping Influences

- Deuteronomy 6:7
- There are six shaping influences we want to consider.
 - Structure of Family Life
 - Family Values
 - Family Roles
 - Family Conflict Resolution
 - Family Response to Failure
 - Family History

Structure of Family Life

- When we are considering the structure of family life, we are asking such questions as
 - Is the family a traditional two parent family?
 - Does the child have regular access to both parents?
 - How many generations live in the home?
 - How many children are in the home?
 - Do all the children share the same mother and father?
 - What is the birth order or adoption order of the children?
 - What is the age difference between the children?

Family Values

- Family values are determined by questions such as
 - What is important to the parents?
 - What gets a lot of attention and what is ignored?
 - Are people more important than things?
 - Should children be seen and not heard?
 - What are the unspoken rules of family life?
 - How does God fit into the family?
- Colossians 2:8

Family Roles

- What is the structure of your family?
- Children will perceive the roles played out in the family.



Family Conflict Resolution

- A major shaping influence is family conflict resolution.
 - Does the family have the ability to talk about problems?
 - Do conflicts get resolved or do they get swept under the rug?
 - Are problems solved by going to the Bible or by exercises of power?
 - Are conflicts resolved by Dad buying Mom flowers?

Family Response to Failure

- How parents respond to their children's failures is very influential.
- Parents and other family members response to failure and discouragement can shape for good or ill.

Family History

- Family history is concerned with the events that occurred throughout the lives of the children.
- Whether an event is considered good or bad, what is most important is the question "Was the event approached biblically?"

Conclusion

- There are two extremes to avoid when considering shaping influences.
- The first extreme is to see children as helpless victims of their circumstances. This is determinism.
- The second extreme is to say these influences don't matter. This is denial.