

The Three Stages of Parenting That Every Parent Needs to Know

Written by admin

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By Greg Baker

STAGE 1 - CAPTURING YOUR CHILD'S HEART

We'll say that this is the ages between 0 and 12. But this can vary a year or two in either direction of the age 12.

At this stage of your children's life, you have a very unique opportunity. You can capture their heart. This is the main goal for this age. Yes, you have to teach them. Yes, they need discipline. Yes, you need to provide for them. But all of these things ought to be done with the goal of capturing their heart.

Children, at this age, love to be around their parents. They aren't looking to always be off with their friends. They want to help daddy fix the leaky faucet or help mow the lawn. This is the age where their largest ambition in life is to grow up and be just like daddy! They want you to notice them. They want to show off for you. They want to spend time with you.

That'll all change by the time they get into their teen years. So if you don't capture their heart when they are young, you'll struggle getting it when they are teenagers. The teenage years become significantly more difficult if you haven't managed to capture their heart and keep it when they enter those chaotic teenage years.

Several Tips to Capturing Your Child's Heart:

1. Discipline to capture their heart, not to get your revenge. In disciplining, I always wait until I notice that my child has yielded his will to me. As soon as he has given me his will, I show mercy. Interestingly enough, showing mercy when he has given you his 'will' always brings him closer to you. I see to it that my children laugh and know that all is forgiven after disciplining them. I wait until I can tell that they are repentant, sorry, and yielded to my will. Once that happens I give them mercy, reduce the sentence, or commute the sentence, and show them love and affection. It is amazing how easy it is to capture their hearts at this point.

2. Spend time with your children. Children define love as time. Give them time. Don't brush them off. Yes, they are more apt to be in the way than a help when they are young. But get

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them involved anyway. Spend time with your children.

3. Be consistent. A Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality will create confusion and insecurity in a child. Be consistent in your disciplining. Be consistent between children. Don't treat one child differently than another at the same particular age.

4. Make home more fun than any place else. If you don't, your children will want to be elsewhere, particularly when they become teenagers.

STAGE 2 - PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

This is predominately the teen years of your child's life. If you did the last stage right, then you have your teenager's heart. Now you need to get them ready for adulthood. This is the stage where they need to gain an understanding of life. And that is your job, mom and dad!

In order for an adult to make wise decisions in life, which is the ultimate goal for the parent, they need understanding. They need to know how the world works. They need to understand things like marriage, friendship, finances, worth ethic, preparation, character, God, and so forth. Here is where they need to gain an understanding of their own.

Most parents never teach their teenagers how to have a good marriage. Most parents don't know how to do that either so it's hard to teach your teenager. Most parents never explain how to make good friends, and how to be a good friend, and how to balance a checkbook, and how to treat the opposite sex.

Teenagers are great at asking, "Why?" Well, if they asked politely and respectfully, then take the time to explain it to them. Give them understanding. Let them know why you do what you do. Let them sit in on family decisions.

No one can learn to make wise decisions if they don't understand. Parents, give them this understanding. If you have their heart, they will listen to you. Not every teenager has to rebel against mom and dad. If you have their heart, they won't. Teach them about child rearing even though they have no children yet. Don't let their friends be the authority on sex. You do that. You give them all the understanding that you can give them!

The most important adult relationship they can achieve is that of marriage. But how many teenagers entering adulthood really know how to have a good marriage? Few do. Teach your children about relationships. Teach them to communicate, to solve problems, to solve problems instead of running from them, to love, and to be committed. If they don't get this from you, where will they get it from?

STAGE 3 - REAPING WHAT YOU SOWED

Adulthood.

You do realize that if things go according to nature that you'll spend more time with your

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children as adults then you will as children? This is where you reap the rewards of parenting-or suffer the consequences of your failure.

Having an adult child that you are close to is one of the greatest joys in life. Being able to be proud of your adult child is one of the singular pleasures in life.

Many parents never get to see this. They never captured their child's heart, they never took the time to give their teenager understanding, and now they live with a strained and difficult relationship with their adult child. I've counseled many parents who struggle deeply with adult children who constantly break their hearts with unwise decisions.

If you did the first two stages right, then the odds will be that you retain a significant amount of influence over your adult child. They will seek your advice. They will strive to make you proud of them. They will honor you.

If you didn't do them right, then you probably will experience much pain as your adult children blunder from bad decision to bad decision in life. Often, they point their finger at you, and blame you. Right or wrong, this is never enjoyable.

But it ought to be. This ought to be when a parent reaps the benefits of child rearing.

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