

Life in the Middle Years

Summary Points - Visit 5 - Chapters 9 to 11

1. In parenting, a moral contingency plan is a response developed in advance of an unexpected challenge that the child has never faced before, but is likely to face as his or her peer and authority world expands.
2. When a choice has to be made between right and wrong, or even good, better and best, we can choose to remain comfortable or we can choose to be courageous, but we cannot be both at the same time. Being comfortable so often calls us to take the side of silence. To speak up and take a stand contrary to that of a peer group, takes moral courage.
3. Phrases and responses parents should avoid saying or doing during the middle-years.
 - a. do not harp
 - b. do not use sarcasm
 - c. do not rob them of the joy of serving you
 - d. do not say, when they do something wrong: "The Bible says."
 - e. do not give your children a "death" identity.
4. Getting to the heart of a middle-years child requires that parents deal with wrong attitudes with the same sense of urgency that they deal with wrong actions. However, that means treating them as separate and independent wrongs. Both need correction!
5. When it comes to communicating, "sexual knowledge" is not innocent knowledge, because sexual knowledge cannot be separated from moral knowledge that regulates human emotions and responses.
6. When it comes to children, the communication of sexual and biological details needs to fit into a relational and moral context, if they are to have any real, and lasting protective meaning to children.
7. Middle-years children are too young to date or to flirt with real-life romantic notions that pre-maturely introduce or encourage boy friend, girl friend relationships. Preadolescence is not the time for children or their parents to be engaged in such thinking.
8. Social media is an entirely different world with it's own unique challenges that a young teen is not morally or emotionally mature enough to handle.
9. The character strengths and weaknesses of a child will be magnified with the use of a smart phone.
10. Your child's digital world requires a manageable level of self-control, civility, manners, moral sensitivity, kindness, life-giving character, and all the self-confidence and close family identity that is required to successfully battle peer pressure.

11. Digital threats to consider:
 - a. to family time
 - b. to sleep
 - c. to healthy brain development
 - d. to emotions
 - e. to relationships
 - f. to spiritual well-being

12. When your kids present a request like that may involve risk of some kind, you can find the best answer by employing the following four question:
 - a. If you say, "Yes" to your child's request, what is the best thing that can happen?
 - b. If you say, "Yes," to your child's request, what is the worst thing that can happen?
 - c. If you say, "No," to your child's request, what is the best thing that can happen?
 - d. If you say, "No," to your child's request, what is the worse thing that can happen?