

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION FOR THE CHURCH LIFE

Message Two

The Importance of the Children's Work in the Church

Scripture Reading: Deut. 6:7-9; Prov. 22:6; 2 Tim. 3:15; Acts 16:31; 1:14; Rom. 12:12

- I. In the past we did not focus on the children's work; however, if children's education is not developed, it will be difficult to have a healthy society—cf. Deut. 6:7-9; 11:18-20; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:15.**
- II. At the beginning, children's meeting was mainly to care for the saints who brought their children to the meeting; it was simply a child-care service; gradually, the matter of preparing teachers came in, and we compiled material:**
 - A. From our experience we feel that the children's work is very important; the children's work should not simply be babysitting in order for the saints to come to the meetings.
 - B. However, the children's work has another function, that is, to cultivate and nurture our next generation; this is worthy of our careful consideration and examination.
- III. The children's work has an additional function, which is to gain the families of the children—Acts 16:31; cf. Exo. 12:3-4; Gen. 7:1:**
 - A. Children like to make friends; it is particularly easy for children between the ages of six and twelve to make friends, and they listen to their friends:
 1. It is therefore easy for a child to lead another child; when the children sing hymns together, the gospel is operating and spreads from one child to another child.
 2. Our purpose, however, is not focused only on the children, but even more, through the children, we want to reach their parents and siblings.
 - B. From this we can see the importance of the children's work; the children's work is greatly related to the growth of the church.
- IV. There is not a definite way to take care of the children's work; there should not be only one aspect to the children's work:**
 - A. There should be many locations for the children's work, meetings can be held at different times, and we can use different methods to conduct the children's meetings; there should also be many goals, and the teaching material should also cover many aspects:
 1. Having many locations—their meetings must have many locations; every saint should open his home and have a children's meeting in his home.
 2. Having material—we have considered using videotaped material, which some localities use; we want to produce a video that shows children from various countries wearing their traditional dress and singing the hymns.
 3. Having many purposes—we can also contact the children's parents and preach the gospel to them and to their relatives; this is the principle of our gospel work; the more people we contact, the better.
 4. Having many ways—the households with children can take the initiative to open their homes and ask their children to invite other children in the

neighborhood; the children can watch the children's videotapes, sing children's songs, or listen to a story; this is the way to have a children's meeting once a week.

5. Having different times—it is best to have different meeting times for the children's meetings; the schedule should be flexible; we need to utilize the time when the children are out of school to have children's meetings.
- B. The way to carry out the children's work depends on the brothers taking the lead in the children's work:
1. We should not make any special arrangements to get teachers for the children's meetings in the meeting halls; rather, we should find a number of younger brothers and sisters who meet regularly to be the teachers; this kind of service does not require much manpower.
 2. We need to prepare material for the children's meeting; we should not have children's meetings without preparation:
 - a. The brothers taking the lead in the children's work need to write and compile material; but the saints can decide the best way to use it.
 - b. If some saints are designated to prepare teaching material, the saints will not need to labor that much; we can give only some principles related to the children's work; it is up to the saints to carry them out.
 3. The children's meetings should be in many locations, at different times, and use different methods; we hope that all the saints will pray concerning this matter and not take it lightly; this requires everyone's cooperation—Acts 1:14; Col. 4:2; Rom. 12:12.