

What Kind Of Child Will This Be?

Introduction

- I. The birth of John the Baptizer is recorded in Luke 1:5–20, 57–66.
 - A. John is described as a man of courage and unselfish devotion (Luke 3:2–6).
 - B. “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist” (Matt. 11:11).
 - C. John was the man he was due in large part to his parents (Luke 1:6).
- II. Notice the question in Luke 1:66, “What kind of child will this be?”
 - A. It is natural for parents to think of this when they hold a newborn child in their arms for the first time.
 - B. Think of the hopes, dreams and prayers you had for your children!
 - C. Want to suggest some things that will determine the answer.

Discussion

- I. **Some Things Are Determined Before Birth**
 - A. Genetics: at the moment of conception 23 chromosomes from the father are united with 23 chromosomes from the mother, forming a new 46 chromosome cell.
 1. Within 30 hours after insemination, the first cell division occurs.
 2. All of the physical characteristics that child will have as an adult are already determined: eye color, skin pigmentation, sex and IQ.
 - B. The spirit of life in the “fetus” (baby) (Psa. 139:13–15).
 1. David thought of himself as being alive in the womb.
 2. Though not totally developed, all his parts were made and Lord knew him as a real human being!
 3. When as yet his genes were producing the proteins which in time would complete his physical body, the Lord knew him (Psa. 139:16).
 4. The only real difference between an unborn child and a newborn child is the way they feed and obtain oxygen—both will depend on parents 18 more years.
 5. I don’t have to understand it to believe it (Eccl. 11:3–5).
 - C. The Gentiles were “without natural affection” {KJV} (Rom. 1:31).
 1. Albert Barnes commented on this verse: “He doubtless refers here to the practice so common among the heathens of exposing their children, or putting them to death.”
 2. Pages of history are bloody with record of heathen sacrificing children.
 - a) The Canaanites were destroyed for this (Psa. 106:37–38).
 - b) Manasseh followed the example of the Canaanites (2 Chron. 33:6).
 - c) The ancient Persians buried their children alive.
 - d) In the Grecian states, infanticide was enforced by law (Aristotle).
 - e) The Romans were the most unrelenting in the treatment of children.
 - f) The Roman father had absolute right over the life of children.
 - g) Sacrificed among the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and the Chinese.
 3. One who can kill the child in her womb is without natural affection.

II. Children Are Also Products Of Their Environment

- A. The major shaping of the child takes place in *your home*.
 - 1. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Pro. 23:6).
 - 2. In your home your child will develop attitudes:
 - a) About how they view God.
 - b) About the Church and the people of God.
 - (1) Your criticism of others.
 - (2) How you participate in the worship services.
 - c) About the reverence we should have in worship.
 - (1) By your actions they determine its importance.
 - (2) My parents never let me sit behind them in the assembly.
 - d) About the importance of the written word of God (cf. Deut. 6:7).
 - e) Children are also shaped by the TV and what you let them watch.
- B. They are further shaped by the *public schools*.
 - 1. Evolution: the difference between general and special theories.
 - 2. Morality: there are limits which God has set.
 - 3. Marriage: an outdated institution?
 - a) They will have teachers who are feminists or homosexuals.
 - b) The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the nation.
- C. Influenced by their friends (1 Cor. 15:33).
 - 1. Selection of friends is one of the most important decisions they will make.
 - 2. Friends are important (Psa. 142:4).
 - 3. "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed." (Prov. 13:20).
 - 4. Parents must help their children choose good friends (Prov. 27:5–6, 17).
 - 5. Friends should help us be more like Christ (Ecc. 4:9–12).
- D. Don't give up hope: it is possible to raise Godly children in a sinful society.
 - 1. Think of Daniel, Joseph, Moses and Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5).
 - 2. There are many who want to give advice—ask to see their children first.

III. Further Shaped By Our Choice Of A Mate

- A. Parents must stress the importance of a good, godly mate (Eph. 5:22–29).
- B. Parents must stress permanence of marriage (Matt. 19:1–9).
- C. It is impossible to overestimate the value of a worthy spouse (Prov. 31:10, "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies").
- D. "An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who causes shame is like rotteness in his bones." (Prov. 12:4).

Conclusion

- I. We become the children of God when we are "born again" (John 3:3–5).
- II. How we turn out spiritually is entirely dependent upon us!