

**Contemporary Morality: Quiverfull and Biblical Parenting
Articles below.**

Where does the term 'Quiverfull' come from?

What do followers of the Quiverfull movement believe in?

What are Nancy Campbell's criticisms on natural family planning?

What are Carpenters' views on family? Do you agree with them? Give justification for your answer.

Why should parents follow the Bible in their parenting?

How can Biblical parenting help in conflict?

What is the aim for children when using Biblical parenting?

When Having Kids is a Religious Experience

By TED GERSTEIN & JOHN BERMAN

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In the Carpenter family's nicely decorated living room outside Nashville, Tenn., the "Nightline" team stared at a couch that couldn't possibly fit another human being. The eight kids squished together began shouting out their names, "PEYTON! COLE! OWEN!"

Ken and Devon Carpenter are the parents of eight kids, aged 1 to 15. It might sound like a sitcom or a remake of "Eight is Enough." But this isn't a sitcom. This a movement. The Carpenter family is part of the "Quiverfull Movement." The name comes from the Bible -- Psalm 127/128:

"Children are a heritage from the Lord / children a reward from him/ like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man /whose quiver is full of them."

What does that mean? Quiverfull followers believe that all forms of contraception, all forms of birth control and any form of family planning goes against God's plan.

"As I understand, and to the extent that we are involved in it, it is just a matter of, it's a mind-set that says we will take as many children -- happily -- as God blesses us with," Ken Carpenter said.

It isn't simply about having as many kids as possible, though.

"It's not a contest," he said. "For us, it's about having as many as the Lord gives us, and being happy with that. If the Lord gives us more, great. If we are done at eight, that's fine. Whatever He gives us."

The Birth of the Movement

Quiverfull is largely an American phenomenon, beginning with the release of the book "A Full Quiver" in 1989.

There is no official organization, but in 1995, the Web site quiverfull.com went online with just 12 subscribers -- now there are more than 2,600. There are probably several thousand Quiverfull enthusiasts all over the United States right now -- and the movement is believed to be growing.

There are certainly a lot of question about the practice. Is it dangerous for a woman's body to keep having children, one after the other?

"I don't struggle in that area, I have pretty easy pregnancies and deliveries and recovery," Devon Carpenter said. "God designed us to have children, and thankfully, we do have good doctors out there for things that come up."

If there is a grandmother to this movement, it's Nancy Campbell. Her magazine has been advocating this lifestyle for decades. Campbell explained why followers even have a problem with natural family planning or the "rhythm method."

"When we really stop and think about it, it's not natural," she said. "We have to go against the way that God designed our bodies. He designed them to be fruitful, so if a couple [doesn't] want to have children...they've got to do something to their body so it doesn't work the way God planned it."

What about simply not having sex?

"What married couple is not going to do that?" Campbell asked.

Supporting a "Full Quiver"

There are other questions. How can anyone afford this? Ken Carpenter has a good business producing videos for some of Nashville's biggest names. That puts a roof over their head. And what about planning for his children's college education? He isn't sure about college, but it isn't about the money.

"There is a mindset and worldview that's taught on a college campus that is in conflict with the scripture we read this morning," he said.

The Carpenter children are home-schooled. Ken Carpenter hopes his sons find professions and that his daughters learn to be mothers. He believes that it is a woman's primary function to become a mother. And a father's primary function?

"I think a dad ought to be the primary instiller of wisdom and ought to be teaching his sons leadership," he said.

'The Biblical Model'

The role of the father as the head of the household is at the center of the Quiverfull movement.

"I know that notion is going to rile a number of people," Ken Carpenter said. "[But] I do consider myself the loving head of this family, responsible to lead them. That's the biblical model of fatherhood."

Devon Carpenter concurred, saying that her role is to be "nurturing and loving and submissive to my husband and shepherding to the children."

Both husband and wife say this is the life they want to lead, and want their kids to lead -- which means thousands more diapers, and many more chaotic mealtimes.

If there is one thing that this life guarantees, it is nonstop motion.

How about the future? Are more kids on the way?

"Yes," Ken Carpenter said. "Should the Lord bless us with more, I would be thrilled."

Biblical Parenting

QUESTION: What are the basics of biblical parenting?

Biblical parenting reveals the truths and practices needed to raise godly children and teaches you these timeless principles are and how they practically relate to parenting. God is the Designer. Parent His way. We are not experts or perfect parents. We are humbled by our mistakes of the past. Our confidence is that by applying God's principles to family life He will restore the family to its glorious design.

The basics of biblical parenting involve more than simply raising a child. Parents are directly responsible to God for more than providing food, shelter, and protection. When we adopt God's standards as our own, we produce quality character that is different from a child's natural inclinations. [Proverbs 22:6](#) emphasizes the significance of biblical parenting: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." As parents turn to the Bible for instruction they are able to open up channels in their children's lives so that God's grace can flow in.

What are the basics of biblical parenting, and what hinders that flow? As parents we shape our children's attitudes, actions, and associations. When we are inconsistent in delivering godly instruction and wisdom to our children, we practice ineffective parenting. When we place unreasonable demands by abusing our authority, we practice ineffective parenting. When we make anything more important than our children, we take another step away from love, and a step away from effective biblical parenting.

What are the basics of biblical parenting in responding to conflicts? Let's say your five-year-old wants that "just before dinner" treat. Your "no" prompts whining and temperamental tears. Before raising your voice or threatening to take swift measures, take a moment to ask the Lord to calm you and bridle your tongue. We need to establish an atmosphere in which God's wisdom, patience, and grace can be applied. As parents we have an opportunity and a responsibility to exercise self-control and obedience.

Many parents are caught off-guard and later regret how they responded when their rules and regulations were challenged. It is certainly easier to apply the basic "if/then" approach, while demanding immediate obedience. But it is far more beneficial if we parent our children as God parents us. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. . ."([Titus 2:11-12](#)). As we focus on God, our parental authority should encourage self-control and obedience in our children.

What are the basics of biblical parenting and authority? Parents must understand that parental authority is never manipulating children with a few choice phrases or standard punishments. It is impossible to *force* children to behave appropriately. We may see brief periods of responsibility and obedience, but when children reach adulthood, they often reject authority; their godly character is as yet undeveloped. It's been said that "character is who you are when no one else is around." Children generally know that their parents are wiser than they are. They also know there are times when they need guidance and authority. The proper application of parental authority will help children to appreciate and benefit from their parents' wisdom and experience. In the Bible, Eli *spoke* to his sons about their bad behaviour. He even *instructed* them in how they should serve God. Yet God rejected Eli's

house because Eli failed to *restrain* or exercise authority over his sons ([1 Samuel 2:22-25; 3:12-13](#)).

What are the basics of biblical parenting and setting priorities? When exercising authority, a parent makes the most loving choice they are capable of at that moment. A single disciplinary action may have non-dramatic outward results, yet still have spiritual effects that are cumulative and strong. When a child is given an opportunity to recognize authority, or change their past behaviour, they are trained in biblical principles. Warnings were issued to the Israelites before judgment fell. They were given chances to repent and change their behaviour. Effective parenting is applying methods of discipline that focus on biblical principles and on training beyond punishment. Appropriate discipline serves to assist children in making the correct choices - even in our absence. "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" ([Hebrews 12:11](#)).