

## Training Our Children

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The world's smallest school is the home. Proverbs 1:8-9 states, "My son hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." Children mimic and memorize their parent's attitudes and actions. Moses stated in Deuteronomy 6:3-9 that the Israelites were to teach their children diligently the commandments of God. Paul speaks of Timothy being trained in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15). A child is going to be raised in knowing Christ or Baal, righteousness or unrighteousness, light or darkness (2 Cor. 6:14ff).

A child is governed by rule before he is governed by principle. Paul said in 1 Cor. 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Our parents gave us rules to follow we did not understand. For example, we had to be in the house before dark. As children, we may not have understood the principle involved, but we understood the rule. All of our lives have been influenced by what we have been taught and trained (Prov. 22:6). God's wisdom says to give a child what he needs, and when the child is older, he will know what is needed (Gen. 18:19; Prov. 6:20-23).

How should I raise my children? The peerless answer is for us to live the Bible, and teach it to our children. What can and should a child learn from parents?

- To make God, Christ, and the Church the main priorities of life (Exod. 20; Matt. 22:37-40; 6:33; 7:5; 1 John 5:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17).
- To make Bible reading a daily habit (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:13-14; 1 Cor. 3:1-4).
- To be careful of the company he/she keeps (1 Cor. 15:33; Amos 3:3).
- To be pure in mind, heart, and life is worth more than material possessions (Matt. 16:24-26).
- That becoming a faithful, fervent Christian is the most important attitude and action in life (1 John. 2:14).

There are three words every parent needs to always remember and live in raising their children: love, consistency, and discipline. If any one of these three are not met in our thoughts, words, and deeds, it causes an imbalance in our lives and destroys the effort and work we have invested in our children. Notice, none of these three words indicate perfection (without sin).

- Love - Love God the most, your spouse second, and your children the third. Always maintain this order. Why? If you love your children more than God then you will defend and enable them in their wrong doings.
- Consistency – Our light must not flicker and work must never end (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Cor. 15:58). Anxiety in children elevates whenever their normal schedule is interrupted. We know this is going to happen. Consistent parents help their children to overcome in these situations, which prepares them for the *bumps* in this life.
- Discipline – Just about every parent is an expert *disciplinarian*. How do I know this? Try discussing your ideas with them or correct their child in a way that opposes their ideas, and watch what happens. Parents need to incorporate instructive and corrective discipline. The Bible calls for spanking, PERIOD! (Prov. 22:15; 23:13-14).

Children are the fruit of the home, and one can really know what the home is like by watching how the children act and behave (Matt. 7:18; Ps. 127:4; Eph. 3:17). Children are to obey and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-3). Little ones are very special people, and the utmost care should be given to them. I dearly love my sons and would fight to the death for them. That is exactly what we are doing and training them to do against the wretched devil. May we raise our children to love the Lord, and in doing this great task; let us use the Bible as our only substance, stability, and source (2 Pet. 1:3).

