

Subject: *Training Our Children in God's Way*

Scripture: *Proverbs 22:1-6*

After our children are baptized, what should we do to help them? We have the duty and privilege to train them to live and please God. It is the responsibility of parents and church family to come alongside the parents to train them as disciples (followers) of Christ. This involves our prayers, Bible teaching, encouragement, and setting a good example for them to follow. Conversion and baptism is only the beginning of the Christian life. It may be compared to leaving the starting line in the Christian race. We must help them all the way to the finish line.

What is involved in training our children? There are at least three essential elements in this training: 1) they need our instruction; 2) they need our discipline; and 3) they need our example. Training our children requires our personal involvement.

1. Train them to fear God

To fear God is to have a reverence for God. Proverbs 22:2 reminds us that all people have the same Creator and Judge.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth... God is the Creator of all, but He is not the spiritual Father of all. Christ said that unbelievers are children of the devil (Jn. 8:42-44).

Proverbs 22:4 says by humility and reverence for God a person is blessed with riches, honor, and life. The fear of God is the main theme of Proverbs. ***Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.***

The rich and poor will all meet God in judgment. ***Hebrews 9:27 It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.***

We can teach them to fear God and to remember that God is our Creator and Judge, but we will only train them to do this by instruction, discipline, and by our example.

2. Train them to study and obey Scripture

The Bible will tell them good character is worth more than great wealth (vs. 1). Solomon had a fortune, but he understood that a good name is far more valuable than silver and gold. This is not the name your parents give you, but the name you earn over time by being the person you are. A good name means our reputation, our character. A. W. Tozer gives seven tests that reveal a person's character: 1) what we want most; 2) what we think about most; 3) how we use our money; 4) what we do with our leisure time; 5) the company we enjoy; 6) who and what we admire; and 7) what we laugh at. These are the things that reveal our character and our good name.

The Bible will warn them about sin and its consequences (vs. 3). A wise person looks ahead and seeks refuge from God's judgment. On the other hand, a naive person plunges ahead with no preparation. Scripture warns us to prepare to meet our God (Amos 4:12). Avoid sin and its consequences.

The Bible will tell them the way they should not go (vs. 5) and the way they should go (vs. 6). A "froward" (perverse; crooked) person is a stubborn person who lives outside of God's will. He encounters things that hurt and entrap him. A wise person keeps (guards) his life by

avoiding this dangerous path (*Prov. 4:14-15; 14:12; 16:25*). One commentator said: “There is only one right way, God’s way, the way of life. That way is specified in great detail in Proverbs. Since it is evident that childhood training secures lifelong habits, parents must insist upon this way, teaching God’s Word and enforcing it with loving discipline consistently throughout the child’s upbringing.”

God’s plan for training children is found in *Deuteronomy 6:4-9*.

We have this reminder in *2 Timothy 3:15-16*.

Scripture is sufficient for every child, every family, and every church.

“In God’s Word, parents have every truth and every guideline necessary for raising their children in righteousness and godliness. And what a child needs to know about how he should relate and respond to his parents is there also. The Bible was completed two thousand years ago, but men have not changed since then and neither has God. What Scripture has to say is timeless and up-to-date. No human discovery, philosophy, or attitude is new or surprising to God or outside the scope and judgment of His revealed Word.” (J. MacArthur)

There are a few other things I wish we had time to consider, for example...

Train children to love and trust God.

Train them to worship.

Train them to pray.

Train them to serve God and others.

Let’s make sure we are training them to fear God and study and obey Scripture so that when they are old they will not depart from it.