

# Godly Parenting Produces Godly Children

*Proverbs 22:6*

Halifax, 9 September 2007

## **Introduction:**

Today, I am going to break from our regular sermon series in Ephesians because today we have the privilege of witnessing a baptism—

- the baptism of Joanna Robyn Bigney who was born a little over a week ago.

As my text for this occasion, I have selected a very familiar proverb...

- Proverb 22:6:
  - “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Every Christian parent ought to have a keen interest in this topic...

- Surely, if you yourself love the Lord and are walking in His way,
  - you want your children to do the same.
- How could you not want that for them more than anything else—more than health, more than riches, more than anything at all!
  - You know that there are only two ways—and these ways are radically opposite:
    - the one is the way to destruction and the other is the way to life...
    - the one is the way to everlasting misery and the other the way to everlasting joy...
    - the one is the way of alienation from God under judgement, the other is the way of union with God in blessing.
  - How dreadful it would be for your children to go in the way of death...
    - How wonderful it would be for them to continue in the way of life!

And parents,

- Proverbs 22:6 speaks to you about the influence you have on whether or not your children continue in the way they ought to go.
- Let’s begin this morning by looking at the overall thrust of this Proverb...

## **I. The overall thrust of Proverbs 22:6 is that godly parenting produces godly children.**

- The Proverbs often tell us about the effect of certain things we do...
  - For example, Proverbs 28:19 tells us that
    - “He who tills his land will have plenty of bread.”

- This shows you the connection between hard work and fruitfulness.
  - All things being equal, the one who tills will have bread and the one who doesn't till will be lacking...
    - In the same way, if you train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old, he will not depart from it.
- A. God Himself has established a connection between parental training and godliness in His covenant of grace with us.
1. This connection is clearly set up with Abraham when the LORD first establishes the Covenant of Grace with Him.
    - a. In Genesis 17:7, the LORD promises that He will be a God not only to Abraham, but also to his descendents after Him.
      - 1) He promises that He will make them to be His people.
        - God might have been pleased to be completely random about his election and to come to Abraham first and then to someone on the other side of the world who had no connection with Abraham.
        - By nature, a believer's children are just as dead in their trespasses and sins as any one else.
          - Even though their parents should train them and tell them of God's love, they could no more believe than a corpse can get up walk around the room.
      - 2) And so it is that when God tells Abraham that He will be a God to him and to his descendents, and that He will make them to be His people...
        - He is not talking about the **natural results** of parental training...
          - He is promising to work the miracle of regeneration in Abraham's seed when they are trained up in His covenant!
      - 3) This is a very gracious thing for Him to do!
        - If you are a believer, of course you want your children to be believers with you...
          - but they are no more deserving of this grace than anyone else's children,
          - nor are they any more inclined to God than any other fallen son of Adam (which we all are).
        - But God, in His kindness to us, extends His grace to our children as long as we will but train them up in His way...
          - We must not think that it is merely because of our training that they become Christians if they do...

- It is not...
  - It is because of God's free grace...
    - But it is grace that He has promised to work if we will train them up in His way.
    - We can be sure that we will have the promise if we meet the condition...
    - We can be sure that our children will be godly if we will train them in godliness.
- b. The LORD made it clear to Abraham that the promise to bless his children depended on Abraham training them in the way of righteousness.
- 1) In Genesis 17:14, the Lord makes it clear that failure to train them in His covenant will forfeit His promise concerning them...
- a) In verse 12 and 13, He commands Abraham to mark out his sons as those who are his people by circumcising them on the eighth day.
- They are to be marked out by the sign of the covenant as those who belong to God and who have His promises.
  - Now the LORD God did not intend this to be a bare sign!
    - Circumcising the child meant that the parent recognised that the child was in the covenant with him...
      - and it meant that the parent was obligated to train the child up in the covenant way—the way of faith...
      - And it meant that God would bless that parental training to work faith and life into the heart of that child.
- b) But in Gen 17:14,
- The LORD says that the covenant child who is not circumcised will be cut off from his people...
    - If the parent was unwilling to mark out his child as one belonging to the Lord and so unwilling to bring up his child in the way of the Lord...
      - God's promise to bring covenant blessings on that child was forfeited.
  - Now if the mere omission of the sign that the child belongs to the Lord is enough to exclude him from the promise,
    - how much more is the omission or the perversion of his covenant training enough to forfeit the promise?

2) In Genesis 18:19, the LORD makes it clear that His promise is conditional upon faithful covenant nurture.

- Turn to Gen 18:19 and follow along with me...
- Look carefully at what the LORD says here of Abraham:
  - Gen 18:19: “For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”
  - Notice what the goal is here...
    - The goal is stated at the end of the verse:
      - “that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him...”
      - of course “what God has spoken” refers to His promise to bless Abraham and his descendants after him.
  - The LORD has known, or chosen, Abraham with that goal in view...
    - But notice what Abraham must do if that goal is to be reached:
      - He must command his children and his household after Him.
        - The Lord says,
          - “I have known him in order that he may command his children and his household after him...”
      - He it to train them in what God has trained him in...
        - And to make it perfectly clear, we are told what that is:
          - Abraham is to “command them... that they keep the way of the LORD to do righteousness and justice.”
          - He is to teach them to walk in God’s way...
    - Obviously, if Abraham does not command them to walk in the way of the covenant,
      - they cannot know God’s promise and what it means for them to be His people.
      - And if they do not hear the good news, they cannot receive the promise by faith.
    - Abraham is to command them to keep the way of the LORD **in order that** the LORD might bring to Him what He has promised...

- Do you see that at the end of the verse...
  - “that (the word means in order that) the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”
- If Abraham does not command his children to keep God’s way,
  - then the LORD is under no obligation to be a God to His children.
  - They have broken the covenant.
- That is the reason that throughout redemptive history so many covenant children have been cut off...
  - It is because their parents did not train them up in the way of the LORD...
    - The LORD is under no obligation to fulfill His promise to such children.

2. This same principle is carried over into the New Testament.

- a. When Peter preaches the gospel for the first time at Pentecost,
  - declaring to God’s people that the Messiah who had been promised to them has now been given to them and has made satisfaction for their sins,
  - He commands them to repent and be baptised in His name for the remission of their sins...
    - And in doing so, he shows that the covenant promise, now that Christ has come, is still “to you and to your descendents...”
    - Listen to what he says in Acts 2:38-39:
      - Acts 2:38-39: Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."
  - God is pleased to promise His life-giving Spirit to the children of believers now that Jesus Christ has come!
    - He has still commanded us to give our children the sign of the covenant in faith, promising that we will train them up in the way of the covenant...
      - Our gracious Lord promises to our little ones when we bring them to Him for blessing...
        - not merely by applying the sign, but by marking them out as His own and then training them up to keep His way.

- b. That He is pleased to do this is borne out every day by the fact that believer's children,
  - who are just as dead in sin as any other children by nature...
  - are indeed converted when they are trained up in the LORD.
  - If this were not so, there would be no more likely-hood that my child would be saved than the children of a pagan.
  
- 3. We are taught to affirm God's promise to children who are trained up in the LORD in the songs that God has given us to sing as His people.
  - a. In Psalm 103:17-18 we are taught to sing:
    - Psalm 103:17-18: But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.
    - God will bless our children if we will train them to keep His covenant.
  
  - b. When we sing Psalm 78, we promise that we will tell our children the good news (the gospel) of what God has done so that they might be saved.
    - Listen to what it says:
      - Psalm 78:2-8: I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. We will not hide *them* from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. [That, of course is the gospel—we tell them what Jesus has done... it goes on:]
      - For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know *them*, The children *who* would be born, *That* they may arise and declare *them* to their children, That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments; And may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation *that* did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to God. [You see the connection there? you are to tell them so that they can have life in the covenant]
      - And did you notice how it describes those parents who do not train up their children in the way of the LORD?
        - It says that such parents hide what God has done for them...
        - Isn't that awful? to hide the gospel of salvation from them?

TRANS> Wow!

B. Parents, what a great responsibility this places upon you!

- If you do not train up your children in the way of the LORD, you forfeit God's covenant promise that He will be their God!
1. If your children do not go on to follow the LORD it means that you did not train them up in God's way...
    - a. It means that your children were not blessed according to God's covenant promise...
      - not because God's promise failed,
        - but because you failed to meet the condition of the promise.
    - b. Now don't get me wrong—
      - That's not the only reason it failed...
        - It failed because of the hardness of your child's heart as well...
        - The child will be judged, not for the wickedness of his parents, but for his own wickedness.
      - It is **not** on account of you that they are condemned as sinners,
        - but it **is** on account of you that they were not rescued according to God's promise to you as a parent in His covenant.

TRANS> Now I know that many of you parents do not want this kind of responsibility laid on you...

- But God did not consult with you when He placed it on you.
    - That responsibility is reflected in the words of Proverbs 22:6:
      - "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
    - I am amazed at the length to which some have gone to change the clear meaning of Proverbs 22:6...
      - One commentator saw that the word child could have the possible meaning of "young official,"
        - so he wrote a paper to argue that Proverbs 22:6 was about the sure results of training up young officials in the way they should go...
        - Anything to deny the responsibility that God has placed upon covenant parents!
2. I can hear the objections to what I have shown you already...
    - a. "But what you have said is not fair—it that is true, it makes the children's salvation dependent upon their parents."
      - Not really!

- The LORD does not say He will **not** save the children of unfaithful parents—
  - It is only that unfaithful parents forfeit the special promise given to them concerning their children.
  - Besides, if parents want to throw out the special promise to covenant children,
    - it doesn't really help anything but the pride of unfaithful parents who want to claim that
      - “we did everything we could for him—he just wouldn't listen to us.”
- But taking away the promise to covenant parents will not help the child!
  - All it will do is take away the encouragement and the blessing of the promise from other parents who believe the promise and are earnestly looking to God's grace to help them train up their children in His way.
  - You see, an unfaithful parent cannot condemn his child,
    - his child can still be saved...
    - Indeed, God often saves the children of unfaithful parents who do not keep His covenant.
      - It is only the special promise to them as covenant parents, assuring them of the salvation of their children, that is forfeited.
- If you have ever been a parent,
  - you know good and well that if God should not save your children,
    - you would have no grounds for standing up against God and for declaring that you, as a parent, have done all that you should have done in the training of your children!
  - If He saves your children, it should humble you!
    - You know good and well that it is only by grace that He has done so!
    - You know that if He has regarded your efforts as a parent, it is not because those efforts were flawless,
      - but because He is merciful and tender toward your weakness.
    - There is no injustice in God's promise to covenant parents—there is only grace!

TRANS> I hear another objection:



b. Another will say, “but God is sovereign and salvation is by grace alone through faith alone. This teaching makes their salvation conditional upon parental obedience.”

1) But brothers and sisters, God’s sovereignty in salvation is in no way compromised by His promise to faithful parents...

- If God has elected a child to be saved on the basis of His promise to that child’s parents,
  - it is by God’s grace alone that the parents will be able to meet the conditions of the promise...
  - and it is by His sovereign grace alone that the child will be raised from spiritual death.
    - It is only on the basis of what Christ has done that the child is saved.

TRANS> Perhaps an illustration will help...

2) God is the one that nourishes our bodies, right?

- But the fact that He is pleased to do this by means of food in no way diminishes the fact that He is the One who nourishes us...
  - not when we see that He is the one who provides the food and sees that it gets to us...
    - and that He is the one who then causes that food to nourish us.

3) Let me ask you a question...

- Has God not made the salvation of a people dependent upon the gospel being brought to them by a preacher?
  - Does Romans 10 not say, “How can they hear without a preacher?”
    - Does someone not have to bring the gospel to them?
- Does that fact take away from God’s sovereign grace?
  - Does it make the LORD dependant upon the whim of the preacher?
  - Not at all.
  - It only means that when He has elected a people who have not yet heard the gospel,
    - that He sovereignty raises up a missionary to take the gospel to those people.

TRANS> God's special promise to covenant parents to save their children in no way limits His sovereignty or grace...

- It rather magnifies them both!
- But I hear yet another objection...

c. "What about the terrible burden this places upon parents, especially when their children do not believe?"

- Many want to relieve the burden from parents whose children have not continued in the covenant...
  - And of course I am all for removing burdens that the Lord has not given us...

1) But I must ask you,

- Is a burden that humbles you (and that ought to humble those around you whose children have not rebelled) bad for you?
- I think not!
  - God chastens those that He loves, and one of the ways He very often does that is through our children...
    - Isn't that the way He chastened David for his unfaithfulness as the master of His household?
      - He told him that there would be no peace within his own home because of what he had done!
      - God often uses disobedient children to humble us.
  - Even if our children are believers,
    - parents have many reasons to be humbled when they see their own weaknesses reproduced in their children...
      - or the problems their children have that are a direct result of their parental negligence or their error.
    - Our problem is not that we are too humble—
      - Our problem is that we are too proud.
      - If God uses our children to humble us, it is because He loves us.
        - Did He not love David when he humbled him?

2) You will say,

- But how can I bear the burden all along the way as a parent—knowing that my failure will forfeit the promise?

- a) Again, is that such a bad burden to bear?
  - Of course not—not if God has indeed given to you as a parent!
- b) In fact, it is a very healthy burden to bear!
  - Parents who hold to the doctrine that God has given them a conditional promise concerning their children will necessarily be much more diligent in their parenting!
    - If they deny the promise, they will deny their responsibility for their children and will try to shift the blame.
- c) I observed that as a general rule,
  - those parents who believe the promise of God to them concerning their children tend to receive the promised blessing.
  - When they see their children slipping,
    - they begin to cry out to God for grace to help them as parents and to help their children...
    - They cry out in faith on the basis of the promise!
    - They hold themselves responsible and don't just try to pass off all the blame onto their children.
    - They see their inadequacy and cry out to God.

TRANS> And this leads me to another point...

- 3. You don't need to be all weighed down by this promise to you regarding your children!
  - a. It certainly should sober you and make you diligent...
    - But more than that,
      - it should make you dependent on the grace of God!
  - b. Let me ask you a question by way of analogy...
    - Does the Lord require that we continue in the faith if we are to be saved?
      - Of course He does...
      - But He also promises that we will be kept by His power through faith.
        - In other words, it is only by the grace of God that we will continue.
        - The fact that some don't continue does not make you question the promise of God to keep you, does it?
          - No, at least it shouldn't...

- It should only cause you to question whether the condition of true faith was ever met by the person who did not continue...
  - You should know that they went out from us because they were not really of us.
- c. In the same way, if you are to fulfill the condition of the promise to those who train up their children in the way they should go...
- how will you do it?
    - Will it not be by the same means by which you persevere?
    - Will it not be by the grace of God?
      - I tell you that the same grace that works in you to enable you to persevere in faith is the grace that works in you to enable you to train your children in the way they should go.

TRANS> So you see then that Proverbs 22:6 teaches you that godly parenting produces godly children.

- This is not something that should make you squirm and start looking for excuses...
  - It is something that should make you thankful—thankful that a special promise is made to your children!
  - And it is something that should make you plead earnestly for God’s grace to enable you to train your children in the way they should go so that when they are old they will not depart from it!

## II. But what is the way they should go?

- That is the next thing I want to look at this morning...
    - If you are going to teach them in the way they should go, you need to know what that way is.
- A. This is fairly straightforward...
1. You are to train your children in the way they **should** go rather than in the way they **would** go...
    - a. In other words, you are not to leave it up to them!
      - That is something that became very fashionable in the 60’s...
        - Parents said,
          - “I am going to let my children decide for themselves!”
    - b. Now that is about the most foolish thing a parent could ever do!

- It is foolish because the Bible tells us that foolishness is bound up in the heart of child.
    - We are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins.
    - If we leave our children to their own way, we leave them to destruction!
2. So the point is that we are to impose something on them...
- a. We are to indoctrinate them...
    - The word “train” in proverbs 22:6 has to do with putting something in their mouth so that they will become accustomed to it.
    - We are to spoon feed them the way of the LORD from the very beginning.
  - b. We looked at Gen 18:19 before,
    - and if you will remember, the Lord says there that we are to **command** our children and our house to keep the way of the LORD.
      - And I assure you that the word command means just that—command!
    - Commanding them is the very opposite of leaving it up to them!
      - We are to tell them what to believe and we are to tell them how to live.
        - Not our own way, but in the way of the LORD, the way of righteousness and justice.
3. Now I know that this is the very thing that our adversaries accuse us of doing!
- a. “You are trying to force what you believe upon your children! You are trying to force them to believe what you believe.”
    - And I think we should stop being ashamed to admit it!
    - They make it to be such a dreadful accusation that we are afraid to own up to it...
      - but we need to just admit that it is true!
  - b. You should say, “Of course I want my children to believe and practice the truth.”
    - “What do you think, that I want them to believe lies and falsehood?”
      - Do you think I want them to believe that there is no God when there is a God who not only made us and is worthy of all worship,
        - but who has also sent His Son to redeem us?
    - Do you think I want them to believe that it’s okay to steal and murder and lie and cheat and curse God and covet and commit adultery?

- Of course not!
- c. And you will find that as you talk to your accusers, they are just as much wanting to impose what they believe on your children as you are!
- They want to impose on them the notion that it doesn't much matter what you believe or how you live...
    - except of course for a few things...
      - They want them to believe that unprotected sex and drunk driving and smoking are very very bad!!!
      - They will try to impose these things on them because these things are so important!
    - and the most important thing they want to impress upon their children and everyone else's is that it doesn't really matter what God says about anything.
      - Who do they think they are to impose such a thing on our children?
      - We need to turn the accusation on them!
        - The very idea that they should try to indoctrinate our children with the view that we need not listen to our Creator and the only Redeemer!
4. And so you see that we need not be ashamed to impress what is right upon our children
- If we leave our children to their own way, they will not go in the way they should go...
    - It is true that we are trying to impose upon them something that they are not naturally inclined to...
      - but that thing we are trying to impose upon them is the truth!
      - It is something that is good for them!
      - It is the way that they **should** go, not the way they **would** go if left to themselves.

TRANS> But just exactly what is this way that they should go?

B. The way is Christ!

1. Godly parents insist that their children live in Jesus Christ.
  - a. To live in Christ means that they live in His grace.
    - We are to teach them to look to Him for the grace of forgiveness and to live in the joy of that forgiveness.

- We are to teach them to live in His righteousness, knowing that through His sacrifice and obedience, they are fully accepted before God...
  - We are to teach them to live constantly in His promises, looking with hope for His grace to work in their lives and at last to bring them to their promised inheritance in heaven...
  - We are to teach them to live constantly in His commandments—
    - to love God with their heart, soul, and mind, and to love their neighbour as themselves...
    - They are to do that by looking to Jesus for grace and strength that He gives to them through His Spirit!
- b. Parents, you will constantly see your children moving away from Christ from their very earliest days...
- You will see them complaining and rebelling and resisting...
    - And with firm sweetness and constancy,
      - you are to keep on drawing them back to Him—pointing them to Him—calling them to live in Him.
  - You are to remind them that they were baptised into Him...
    - That baptism signifies that they are merged together with Him to have all the benefits of His salvation...
    - And you are to urge them to live in Him, looking to Him and depending on Him for all of His grace.
2. The way of Christ is a delightful way!
- a. Oh if you will lead them in this way, they will not depart from it!
- They will come to love it and they will see clearly the emptiness of all those false ways...
- b. What better way is there than the way that gives us grace to be completely forgiven?
- What better way than the way by which we become holy and pure, a people who perfectly love God and our neighbour, even as Christ?
  - Who, having truly started out in such way, could turn from it?
  - Who, having truly understood such a way could despise it?

TRANS> Christ is the LORD's way...

C. But many Christian parents err because they deviate from training their children in the way of Christ...

1. Some deviate into legalism...

- This is an awful way to impose on a child!
  - Such parents tell their children the commandments—which are all very good and just...
    - but they do not tell them of the forgiveness we have in Christ for coming short of those commandments
    - and they don't keep on leading their children to Christ to find grace to help them keep those commandments.
- The cold law that constantly condemns is laid heavily upon these children with no hope given.
  - The cleansing that comes from Jesus and the grace that comes from Jesus is completely ignored!
  - Sometimes the gospel is mentioned as something you do one time, a mere decision... but it is not set forth as something you constantly live in!
    - What a terrible burden to lay on a child!
- Is it any wonder that such children grow up with either a cold morality by which they sharply judge all their neighbours...
  - or buck the whole thing in bitter rebellion and abandonment, wanting nothing to do with it ever again?

TRANS> That's the way of legalism...

2. Others deviate into the antinomianism...

- a. Antinomianism is often thought to be the opposite of legalism... and in a way it is...
- The word antinomianism means “anti law”
  - It is the idea that God's grace is a grace that leads to licentiousness...
    - In other words, that in Christ, God doesn't care anymore about our sin and we needn't concern ourselves with it either.
    - There is a strong emphasis on God's acceptance of us just the way we are...
      - which of course is true in Christ—He does accept us the way we are...
      - but in Christ, He also makes us hate the way we are and love the way we should be...
      - and in Christ, He gives us strength to change, to be sanctified and to become more and more like Christ...



- Rather than avoiding the law, we love the law!

TRANS> So in a way, antinomianism is the opposite of legalism...

b. But in another way, I want you to understand that antinomianism and legalism are both the opposite of grace.

- Antinomianism it is just like legalism in that antinomianism supposes that there is no grace from Christ to enable us to obey the law...
  - It is all left up to us and our own strength...
    - the legalist is trying to obey apart from grace...
    - and the antinomian is avoiding obedience because he supposes that there is no grace to help him obey.
      - In both cases, the way of Christ is not followed which is the way of grace that teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust.

c. Children who have been trained up in antinomianism also have good reason to depart from it...

- They completely lose respect for Christ and his salvation as they understand it.
  - Who wants a salvation that fully accepts you, but without going to work in you to change you?
  - What a dreadful thing it would be to be stuck with myself as I am now for ever—
    - I don't want God to accept me like this...
    - I want Him to accept me through Christ,
      - but in Christ to change me so that I won't be defiled and corrupt and loveless any more.

TRANS> And so parents, you need to see it that you train your children in the way of Christ...

- It is the way of Christ, that having found and having tasted, they will not depart from.
  - God has marked them out as His people by baptism, showing that they are united to Christ...
    - And you are to train them in what it means to be in Christ!

### **III. But how do you train them in the way of Christ?**

- How is such training to be done?

A. Well, I have already said something about the word train—it means to indoctrinate them, to put something in their mouth...

1. You need to constantly fill them with Christ.

- If you don't fill them with him,
  - you can be sure that the devil and the world will find plenty to fill them with ...
- But if you fill them with Christ, they will be forever satisfied and will have no appetite for the world.
  - See that their education does not just have Christ tacked on to the edge, but that He permeates everything!
  - If he is only sewed on the hem of garment of their training,
    - He can be cut off...
    - But if He is weaved through their entire training, He cannot be removed.

2. And let me tell you, get to them quickly!

- Get to them before the devil and the world do.
  - It is never too early to begin feeding Christ to them and training them up in the way of Christ...
  - but it is very easy to start too late!
- If they can rebel and buck and pout,
  - they can learn to submit and obey and give thanks.
  - If you leave them to their own way for too long,
    - they will grow so accustomed to it that they will have to labour to live in Christ.
    - Parents who put off correction often claim that they are too tender to discipline their children,
      - but there is no tenderness in leaving them to their own wretched miserable way.
      - A miserable cranky child is a child without discipline.

TRANS> So you see that you are to fill them with Christ all through their training...

B. But how do you fill them with Him?

1. You bring His Word to them...all of it... the law and the gospel...

- You show them what He requires of us and you show them what He has done for us.
  - Even a child who cannot speak can understand a rebuke as well as a hug of forgiveness.
2. You are to bring them to Christ in every way possible...
- You bring them to Him in family worship—in regular times of instruction that are set apart in your schedule and carefully guarded.
  - You bring them to Him by bringing them to public worship where they see you listening to God’s word and learn to do the same.
    - Ask them questions after the service to make sure they understand...
  - You bring them to Him by speaking of God’s goodness when you are blessed, and by seeking His help when you are in need...
  - You bring them to Him by correcting them with His truth when they err and then by leading them to pray and ask Him for forgiveness and help...
    - praying for them before them can speak...
    - leading them line by line in prayer when they can...
    - and having them pray when they are able.
      - And don’t be hesitant to show them how ugly their own way is when they sin so that they will see how beautiful his way is.
  - You bring them to Christ by example...
    - Children are very good at imitation...
      - If you are walking in His way, they will learn to imitate you...
      - But if you are not, your words will have very little affect on them.
3. But above all, you need to pray earnestly for them
- a. To train them without praying for you as the trainer and for them as the one receiving the training betrays that everything you are supposed to be teaching them you do not believe...
    - If you are teaching them the way of grace through faith,
      - but you are not yourself depending on His grace,
      - what kind of trainer will you be?
  - b. “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
    - Who can hear these words and believe them and not at once feel the need to drop to His knees and cry out to the LORD for help!
      - It is a crushing one when it is embraced without Him....
      - It is a precious truth when it is embraced by grace.