

Training Children for the Glory of God

Proverbs 22:6

I. The Call to Equip “Train up”

Throughout ministry I’ve had upset parents come to me telling me of their wayward children and how they’ve poured into them from a young age the truths of Christ through God’s Word. I’ve gotten this quote several times, “Pastor, I cling to the promise of how we should train up a child in the way he should go and he will not depart from it.” I lovingly, yet tactfully want to tell them in their grief as they continually pray for this wayward child that this Proverb in this wisdom literature is indeed inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is not a promise from God, but a principle that supposed to happen. There are a few biblical examples in which the parents did everything, yet they still went away from God.

Eli- Had two sons who were evil, Hophni and Phinehas.

Samuel- He had two sons who he made judges, but they didn’t walk in the ways of the Lord.

David- Absalom was King David rebellious son who wanted King David dead.

Jesus- Jesus did all the right teaching and still had Judas betray Him!

Even though this is not a promise, but a principle, it is God’s will for us to practice it!

Deut. 6:6-7 “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

II. A Commitment to Encourage “the way he should go”

a. Guide them away from the world. (Proverbs 13:24)

Proverbs 13:24 “***Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.***” When we think of the rod we naturally think of discipline, which could be needed, but I want you to think of the rod in the context of a Shepherd. Parents, you are the shepherd of your children. The rod for a shepherd was used to direct, to guide, and to protect. If the sheep was running away off course, the rod would guide them back on the path. The rod fought off predators. Parents, know what your children are watching on their devices. Even children’s shows are teaching unbiblical relationships, trying to normalize sin! Encourage, build your child up using the Word of God!

b. Guide them through the Word. (Ephesians 6:4)

Ephesians 6:4 “***Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.***”

III. A Continual Engagement *"he will not depart from it."* Do not disconnect home from the church! What I mean by this is that you should act the same at home as you do in church! The Christian walk is more caught than it is taught because of your actions! We are to engage our children through what we do and what we say, and they should both point to Christ! Jonathan Edwards said, "every home is a little church."

How to Engage

1. Pray for them.
2. Portray the importance of private and public worship. Model the importance of the Word, of church, of discipleship. Get them involved in the children's ministry or youth ministry. Utilize Bro. Dalton. It is rare that a church this size has a family pastor, use him for God's glory!
3. Proclaim the truth of God's Word and discipline yourself to studying it.
4. Prop up against a mighty and able God! We are not able to do this stuff in our own strength! You may have done everything on this list and more, yet your child has left his or her Christian training and Satan wants to use this against you, even paralyze you with this. Give it to God, He will relieve you of any guilt. You are not a second class Christian if this happens, you are normal, and we the church need to be alerted to prayer, to call upon the hounds of Heaven to track down those loved ones for God's glory! I love what E.M. Bounds says and I believe is true for our families.

"What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, now new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Spirit can use- men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men- men of prayer." - E.M. Bounds

How to Respond

1. Remember that our time is short, be urgent!
2. Release your concern to Christ, He will relieve you of your guilt and give you hope!
3. Rely upon Christ and His power for this huge task!
4. Run into His open arms! The prodigal son is what we pray for!

Will you answer the call to equip, commit to encourage, and be in continual engagement with your children? We want to point them to Jesus!