



THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN
13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13, 14; 29:15, 17

These **proverbs** deal with the all-important subject of **child rearing**. The Word of God has much to say upon the subject, and what it says doesn't sound anything like modern psychology, or what the world is currently propagating. Sadly we have become a society that is dependent upon the opinions of "educated experts" who for the most part are bent on eroding Biblical values. We have become a society that has come to respect the opinions of the so-called "experts" over the clear teaching of God's Word.

Children are the **hope** and **blessing** or the **plague** and **curse** of the next generation, and what it will be has much to do with child training. God gives children to dads and moms to **teach** [Deuteronomy 6:7], to **provide** for [II Corinthians 12:14], to **nurture** [Ephesians 6:4], and to **love** [Titus 2:4]. God stressed the importance of child rearing in commanding *Israel* to take the time and effort to train their children [Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:6-7; 11:19; 31:11-13], AND THIS IS STILL THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS! The task assigned to parents is no easy one, especially in these "*last days*" [II Timothy 3:1-4], when "*evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse*" [II Timothy 3:13]. GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO PARENTS A MOST SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITY, AND YET PRECIOUS PRIVILEGE OF CULTIVATING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN!

Child training starts in the home, and in order to carry out this responsibility and to fulfill this privilege GOD HAS ESTABLISHED A VERY DEFINITE ORDER IN THE HOME! God created the family and He determined its inner structure. There is a **Divine Order** for the family and it is an order of **authority** and **responsibility**!

CHRIST

The **head** of the husband, and LORD of the family [I Corinthians 11:3]



HUSBAND

The **head** of the wife, and chief authority over the children [I Corinthians 11:3].



WIFE

The **help-meet** to her husband, and secondary authority over the children [Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:22].



CHILDREN

Obedient to both parents [Ephesians 6:1-3].

Many seem to think that they can eliminate the authority of headship between husband and wife, and yet retain authority of husband and wife over the children! BUT IN DISOBEYING THE ONE HIERARCHY WE DESTROY THE OTHER! This **Divine Order** for the family is for the good the well-being and the happiness of each family member. FAMILY HAPPINESS BEGINS WITH EACH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY RECOGNIZING AND SUBMITTING TO GOD'S ORDER OF HEADSHIP! It is each family member realizing their role and their responsibility in God's order of headship! FAMILY HAPPINESS WILL NOT BE THE RESULT OF REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S ORDER! God's order has its basis in authority and AUTHORITY MUST BE MAINTAINED!

In all child training **the responsibility of the children must be recognized:**

The responsibility of obedience-"*Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right*" [Ephesians 6:1]. If it is right for children to "*obey*" their parents, then it is wrong for them to disobey their parents! "*Children obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord*" [Colossians 3:20]. If it is pleasing to the Lord, when children "*obey*" their parents, then it is displeasing to the Lord when they disobey their parents. GOD'S DESIGN FOR CHILDREN UNDER PARENTAL CARE IS TO OBEY THEIR PARENTS! To "*obey*" is "*to submit, to yield, to comply to carry out to perform, and to act in accordance with instruction and commands*" This obedience involves listening [Proverbs 1:8; 4:1, 10; 8:32, 33; 13:1; 15:5; 23:19]. If children have the responsibility of listening to the instruction of their parents, then PARENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GIVING GOOD INSTRUCTION!

The spirit and attitude of obedience to parents-"*Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise*" [Ephesians 6:2]. The word "*honour*" means "*to esteem, to reverence, to show respect and dignity*" This is inward [Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 27:16], and this is outward both in word and in gesture [Proverbs 20:20; Matthew 15:4]. CHILDREN ARE TO OBEY THEIR PARENTS WITH A SPIRIT OF ESTEEM, REVERENCE AND RESPECT! "*Honour*" is the attitude behind the act!

In all child training **the responsibility of parents must be recognized:**

Parents must recognize that children are a gift from God, and as such are to be highly esteemed.

Parents must recognize that children are not born in innocence. Babies are precious, sweet, and adorable, but don't let appearance fool you! Every child born into this world has a totally depraved nature, a nature that is bent toward evil and sin! They do not come into the world seeking God and righteousness! They come into the world seeking the fulfillment of sinful and selfish desires! NEVER FORGET THAT THE DRIFT OF THE CHILD'S NATURE IS TOWARD SIN AND AWAY FROM GOD [Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Proverbs 22:15; Isaiah

48:8]. SIN IS AN INBRED DISPOSITION! PARENTS MUST REALIZE WHAT THEY ARE DEALING WITH!

Parents must recognize the value of their child's soul [Matthew 16:26]. No interest should weigh with parents as much as their child's spiritual interests. **THIS MUST BE UPPERMOST IN THE MIND OF PARENTS IN ALL THEY DO FOR THEIR CHILDREN!** The truth of **Matthew 6:33** should be taught by **precept** and **example**. It is irresponsible to teach your children either by direct instruction or example that this world is the main thing! The focus of child training should not merely be upon **behavior**, but upon the **heart**. To focus to behavior only is to focus on the symptoms rather than the root of the problem. The philosophy of the world is to focus upon **self-esteem**, and the whole concept of such a philosophy is based upon an unbiblical perspective. **CHILDREN SHOULD BE TAUGHT THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPIRITUAL!**

Parents must recognize the impact that child rearing (whether proper or improper) **has upon society, upon future generations, and upon the Lord's churches.**

Parents must recognize that it is their responsibility to rear their own children. It is not the government's responsibility! It is not the school's responsibility! It is not the responsibility of the church! It is not the responsibility of day care! It is not even the responsibility of the grandparents! **IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REAR THEIR CHILDREN!** All of these other things should coincide or harmonize with what the parents are trying to achieve at home! **FAMILIES ARE THE NURSERIES OF BOTH CHURCH AND STATE!**

Parents must recognize the power of their example and influence in the lives of their children. A child needs a mother's touch, and a child needs a father's touch (this gives balance), and therefore it is imperative that both father and mother realize the power of their influence in their child's life. **NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF AN EXAMPLE!** It is a myth that *"children will listen to what you say in spite of what you do"* **ACTIONS WILL ALWAYS SPEAK LOUDER AND CARRY MORE IMPACT THAN WORDS [II Timothy 1:4-5].**

Parents must recognize the needs of their children. Children, like all people have **physical, emotional, and spiritual** needs, and it is the responsibility of parents to both recognize these needs and to strive to meet those needs. Modern culture has been duped into thinking that love for children is displayed by giving them more materially than dad and mom had, and the results of such a philosophy have been devastating!

Parents must recognize the individuality of their children. **JUST BECAUSE TWO PEOPLE ARE RAISED IN THE SAME HOUSE DOES NOT MAKE THEM ALIKE!** Parents must not only recognize that their children have different **temperaments** and **personalities** but must make some allowances for such! Many parents make the mistake of treating their children exactly the same way, and dealing with them in exactly the same way, all in the name of "fairness" but such is really unfair because they are not the same! Parents

need to recognize, understand, and appreciate that each child is fearfully and wonderfully made.

Parents must recognize how God continually trains His children-God is always training and teaching His children, and He does so knowing our sins, our weaknesses, our strengths, our needs, and He leads accordingly.

Parents must recognize that the world's ways are not the pattern for child rearing. If parents strive to rear their children according to God's pattern, they will be fighting an uphill battle with a world that is engulfed in humanistic philosophy, but it is imperative for parents **NOT TO GET CAUGHT IN THE WORLD'S TRAPS OF CHILD REARING, AND NOT TO YIELD TO THE PRESSURES AND PULL OF THE WORLD!** The philosophies of the world are anything but Christian

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

This **proverb** deals with the actual responsibility of parents toward their children *“train up a child in the way that he should go”* and again, the foundation of this responsibility is **authority**. Five keys to *“train up a child in the way that he should go”* are ❶ The right kind of **love**. ❷ The right kind of **discipline**. ❸ The right kind of **consistency**. ❹ The right kind of **example**. ❺ The right kind of **authority**. The **proverb** also contains a promise for faithfulness in this matter. The promise is *“when he is old, he will not depart from it”* That is, the impressions of proper training do not easily wear off. The other **proverbs** that speak upon the subject of child-rearing relate to the parent's responsibility to **correct** their children. **THEY CANNOT BE PROPERLY TRAINED WITHOUT CORRECTION!**

The word **“train”** means *“to draw, educate, rear; and instruct, to drill, to discipline, to break, and tame, to form by instruction, and to make prepared”* The word **“train”** implies **thorough instruction**, as to **rooting** and **grounding** in correct and right principles of action. The **proverb** reads **“train up”** and in **Ephesians 6:4** it is **“bring them “up”** The word **“up”** means *“toward a higher position”* and is expressive of *“movement toward a specific goal”* This training of children involves **commitment**, not just throwing an occasional hint at them! **IT IS A COMMITMENT AND NOT JUST A PASSING FANCY!** Dads and moms must not become so busy with the affairs of the world that they do not have time to **train** and **teach** their offspring. God gives children a mind that will receive impressions like moist clay, He gives them a disposition to believe what dad and mom tell them, and to trust their word **AND HE GIVES THEM TO DADS AND MOMS TO TRAIN!** All child training should begin as **Elkanah**, and **Hannah** did, with the **dedication** of the child to the Lord [**I Samuel 1:28**]. There are too many parents who raise their children for themselves; they dress, educate, and instruct their children for themselves **and not for God!** The responsibility and the goal of child-rearing is to **train them for God** [**Ephesians 6:4**]. **THE WORK OF TRAINING CAN BEGIN TOO LATE, BUT IT CANNOT BEGIN TOO EARLY!** **Satan** begins with the infant, **YOU CANNOT BEGIN TOO EARLY!** Authority must be established in the dawn of life! **“Train up a child”** keeping in mind that one day you must let go! This training involves **the communication of expectations** both in word and example! Children are to be trained with **affection** and

patience. LOVE SHOULD BE THE THREAD THAT RUNS THROUGH ALL CONDUCT TOWARD YOUR CHILDREN! They are to be trained **orderly** [Isaiah 28:10], and with a great **burden.** *Paul's* words to the *Thessalonians* regarding his ministry toward them [I Thessalonians 2:7-9], serves as an example of the spirit of child training.

Notice, they must be trained "*in the way that he should go*" Not in the way they will go. They are born with a decided bias toward evil [Proverbs 22:15; 29:15]. The Bible speaks of the way of the **ungodly** [Psalm 1:6], the way of the **wicked** [Psalm 146:9], the way of **transgressors** [Proverbs 13:15], the way of the **heathen** [Jeremiah 10:2], a way that is **not good** [Psalm 36:4], the way of a **fool** [Proverbs 12:15], a **stubborn** way [Judges 2:19], a **broad** way [Matthew 7:13], and a way of **darkness** [Proverbs 2:13]. THESE ARE THE WAYS THAT A CHILD WILL NATURALLY GO! Therefore it reads "*train up a child in the way that he should go*" EDUCATE A CHILD TOWARD A HIGHER POSITION THAN THEY WILL NATURALLY GO! This work is too important to take lightly. This training is not a sporadic or occasional thing, but SOMETHING THAT DEMANDS CONSTANT ATTENTION! In order for parents to "*train up a child*" THE HABITS OF PARENTS MUST BE BOTH **RIGHT** AND **REGULAR!** Children know whether or not dad and mom are living the Christian life inside the house, AND NO AMOUNT OF PRETENSE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE CAN MAKE UP FOR THE DAMAGE OF NEGLECTFULNESS DONE INSIDE THE HOUSE!

They need to be taught to **reverence** God. Dads and moms should be more concerned with godly **attitudes** and **character**, than performance, athletic skill, external beauty, or intelligence.

They need to be taught a **knowledge** of the Word of God. Dads and moms cannot make their children love the Word of God, BUT THEY CAN ACQUAINT THEM WITH THE SCRIPTURES! Teach them reverence for God's Word. FILL THEIR MINDS WITH SCRIPTURE! Oh, how many fill the minds of their children with the world, instead of the Word of God. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT AS THEY BECOME TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS THAT THEY HAVE THEIR OWN BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS!

They need to be taught the **duty** and **privilege** of going to the house of God, DO NOT PUT JOB, RECREATION, SCHOOL, SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, OR FAMILY AHEAD OF THE HOUSE OF GOD! Train them concerning the importance of **hearing** the Word of God, and how to **behave** in the house of God [I Timothy 3:15].

They must be taught to **obey** which implies **boundaries** and **rules!**

They need to be taught to show proper **respect** and **treatment** toward parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, classmates, the elderly and the handicapped, and to look out for the needs of others.

They need to be taught **courtesy** and **helpfulness!** THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH A CHILD HAVING GOOD MANNERS!

They need to be taught to properly care for their own property and the property of others.

They need to be taught how to behave in public places, and taught to be a good citizen, taught perseverance, and to tell the truth.

They need to be taught how to **work**, to do his or her best at whatever they do. They need to be taught **initiative**, (doing of something without being told) and **responsibilities.**

They need to be taught responsibility about money. They need to be taught about giving, about earning money, about spending and saving.

Train a boy to be a man, and train a girl to be a lady! We live in a society that wants to homogenize the sexes. BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS NEED TO BE TRAINED IN THEIR GOD-APPOINTED ROLES!

Prayer is a very important role in training up a child, and must not be overlooked. Parents live under God's authority and are to function as stewards. A steward is a manager, not a owner, and he serves the true owner by managing his affairs. GOD HAS ENTRUSTED PARENTS WITH THE FRUIT OF THE WOMB TO MANAGE AND TO RAISE! It is always wise for the manager to consult with the owner. Parents need to pray first of all for themselves, they need to pray for their children, and they need to pray with their children.

“He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” [13:24].

The “rod” is an instrument of correction and punishment! The Scriptures speak of the “rod” of God [II Samuel 7:14; Job 21:9; Micah 6:9]. The word “*spareth*” has reference to “*refraining from the use of*” This proverb teaches that TO REFRAIN FROM THE USE OF CORRECTION AND PUNISHMENT IS NOT AN ACT OF LOVE! Modern society cannot seem to reconcile itself to the fact that love and punishment go together [Proverbs 3:12; Revelation 3:19]. All correction and punishment should be in love, and with the purpose of training up the child! This proverb also teaches that love is displayed by the exercise of chastening-“*but* (in contrast to the one who spares correction and punishment), *he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes*” The word “*chasteneth*” means “*to restrain or moderate behavior*” and such must be administered many times! The truth of this proverb is illustrated in Hebrews 12:6-11. From this passage we learn that there are varying degrees of correction and punishment [verse 6]. Chastening is a mark of sonship [verses 7-8]. Chastening breeds reverence [verse 9]. Chastening should be for the profit of the child [verse 10]. The goal of chastening should be for God [verse 10]. Chastening is not to be joyous, and it is to “*afterward*” yield that which is beneficial [verse 11]. The work of correction and punishment must be done wisely, firmly, consistently, and lovingly!

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying” [19:18].

Parents are cautioned against a foolish indulgence of their children. “*Chasten thy son while there is hope*” implies that sinful behavior not corrected can result in a time when it is too late! Consider God's wise and loving discipline of His children. He has pity (compassion, and sympathy) upon His children [Psalm 103:13]. he comforts His children [Isaiah 66:13]. Yet, when His children need correction and punishment, though the flesh cries, He loves so well that He spares not for their crying [Psalm 89:30-32]. He uses the rod, and if need be, heavily [I Peter 5:6], and He does so for their profit [Hebrews 12:10].

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him” [22:15].

“Foolishness” is folly, thoughtlessness, lack of foresight, irresponsibility, indiscretion, recklessness, and rebellion. It is said that such is *“bound”* (tied, chained, and secured) *in the heart of a child* THIS FOOLISHNESS IS CONTRARY TO ONE'S OWN SELF INTEREST! Such *“foolishness”* shows itself in **evil tempers**, in **ungodly deeds**, in **willfulness**, and **obstinacy**. There is a difference between **foolishness** and **childishness** [I Corinthians 13:11], and a child is not to be punished for being a child, but for wrong-doing! One can laugh at childish ways, but *“foolishness.....in the heart”* is no laughing matter! The remedy for *“foolishness”* is the *“rod of correction”*

“Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” [23:13-14].

The importance of the phrase *“Withhold not correction”* cannot be overestimated! PERSEVERE IN SPITE OF APPARENTLY UNSUCCESSFUL RESULTS! The means of *“correction”* may need to be changed, but *“Withhold not correction”* To merely threaten with the *“rod”* without using it, is a withholding of it! Because of child abuse, many avoid any kind of physical discipline. The *“rod”* indicates the infliction of pain! Such discipline is **necessary** and it is the **duty** of parents to administer the *“rod”* This **proverb** teaches that it is not the purpose of the *“rod”* to destroy, but to prevent destruction. The parent is to **correct** and **punish** a disobedient child, because it is right, because God requires it, and the welfare of the child demands it.

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame” [29:15].

Both *“reproof”* (to disapprove, to scold, to correct and condemn verbally) and the *“rod”* (physical punishment) are necessary in the training of children. *Eli* gave *“reproof”* but spared the *“rod”* [I Samuel 2:22-25; 3:13]. HE FAILED TO ENFORCE THE REPROOF! The phrase *“a child left to himself”* is sadly descriptive of today's society, and has reference to the neglect of the *“rod”* and *“reproof”* The phrase *“bringeth his mother to shame”* speaks of the **result** of such neglect [10:1; 17:21, 25; 19:13]. Rather than punishing children for disobedience, many parents of today seek to bribe their children in order to get them to behave. THIS IS BACKWARDS AND IS A UNDERMINING OF AUTHORITY!

“Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest: yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul” [29:17].

This *“correction”* includes both **verbal** and **physical** correction. THE PURPOSE OF ALL CORRECTION IS TO TEACH THEM TO DO RIGHT! *“Correct thy son”* THIS IS NOT OUT OF DATE! This **correction** must be like our gracious Father's discipline, never more than can be borne! There must be **discipline** or **correction**; not relaxed in fondness, not pushed on in harshness, but with **authority** and **love**!

In order for the home to be what it ought to be, GOD'S ORDER MUST BE FOLLOWED!