

## HOW TO TEACH CHILDREN GODLY VALUES

Proverbs 20:7 ... "The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."

In our previous devotional we considered what your children will inherit from you when you die. We suggested that the most important thing you can pass to your children is not material possessions and money, but your faith in God. Today we will look at what it takes to teach godly values, character, and morality to your children while you are still living. Today's verse is an excellent launching pad for this subject as it clearly depicts how your children will be blessed, or not.

There are three principle ways that we learn anything: 1) Through teaching or indoctrination, 2) through example or demonstration, and 3) through self-study. Ideally, we obtain our knowledge and learn to adjust our behavior through all three of these methods. A teacher introduces a subject in the classroom. The teacher, parents or others may then serve as examples of that lesson. And, the student increases his/her knowledge by self-study. This is the same methodology every parent should embrace with their children. You must teach, train, demonstrate and motivate their interest in improving from birth to their teen years.

If your child does not get the message or accomplish the lesson the first time, you repeat it until they do. The reason this is such an important message for parents, is because teachers have limits on the amount of time they can spend trying to guide their pupils. It's called: Time on Task. However, parents have no such limitations. As a father or mother, you can spend as much time as it takes to teach your children what they need to learn.

In reality, however, you only have a few short years to influence your children before they must start making their own decisions. If you want your child to grow up pleasing God and treating others well, you must train them to do so. You must not give up. Some children learn easily, others are hard cases. But, do not give up, because the moment they leave your home, society will have to enjoy or suffer the consequences of your parenting. I have heard many parents exclaim in frustration that "I'll be glad when that kid leaves home and goes out on his own." However, that is a very irresponsible attitude as it says you do not care what pain and suffering your child may inflict on others.

Godly values must be taught, and parents are the ones responsible for teaching them. Yes, pastors and Sunday school teachers can have positive influence. Godly teachers can contribute. But it starts in the home with parents, and it is reinforced in the home. Please do not give up on your children. Keep training. Keep teaching. Keep praying – for them AND with them. And, above all, demonstrate consistently the values you want your children to learn.

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