

**Are Your Children  
At  
“Risk?”**

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**Biblical Principles for Christian Parents,  
Grandparents, and those who Love Children!**

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*Helps For Hurting Parents \** (eight pages of materials)

**Note:** (\*Represents extra materials as helps for personal study)

## Conditions Leading to a *Generation At Risk!*

- ∞ Over six million Americans will take a life-changing step this year. They will have children.
  - ∞ These youngsters will have a greater impact on society than the way they vote, the art they create, the books they read, the technological problems they solve, or the planets they visit in space.
  - ∞ The scene in American is both complex and depressing, a very unattractive setting for a tiny tot to begin his life. **Here is a summary:**
1. **Finances.** The cost of bearing, clothing, feeding, entertaining, and educating children is the greatest in our history.
  2. **Working mothers.** A majority of American mothers hold jobs outside the home, many out of necessity rather than desire.
  3. **Public opinion.** Respect for parenthood as a vocation is rapidly declining in our land. Questions like “*Is having kids really worth the sacrifice?*” and “*If you had it to do over, would you have children?*” are frequently being asked.
  4. **Objectives.** Relatively few people agree about what *good parents* should do or what a child should be like when he becomes a young adult. Ultimate objectives are unclear.
  5. **Divorce.** Divorce in some parts of our land now approaches fifty percent and in some cases goes beyond that. Children and youth find themselves in the middle of great anguish, wrath, strife and all that goes with it. And in some cases neither parent wants the child.
  6. **Drugs and alcohol.** Teen-age drug abuse and alcoholism are on the rise constantly. An alarming number of preteens are involved in both.
  7. **Death.** The second leading cause of death (and in some areas the first cause) among individuals between fifteen and twenty-four is now suicide. Many youth feel there is nothing to live for.
  8. **Crime.** Crime among children and youth is rapidly rising to epidemic proportions. One child in about every seven can be expected to appear in juvenile court before he turns *eighteen*.
  9. **Runaways.** The statistics are grim, revealing that over one million children (most from middle-class families) run away each year, some never returning.
  10. **Abuse.** Child battering, gross neglect, incest, and parental abandonment are increasing, becoming a serious national problem without satisfactory answers. Child abuse is now the second leading cause of death among those between birth and twelve years of age.
  11. **Illegitimacy.** The rate of illegitimate births among adolescents continues to climb. And this new mother, often just a child herself, is a prime candidate for increasing the syndrome of divorce, abuse, delinquency, and neglect.
  12. **No time.** Even mothers who stay home don’t necessarily spend time with their children. Few children eat dinner regularly with their parents. Television, peer groups, outside-the-home activities, and school involvements occupy the child’s time far more than do his parents.

**Oh, How Sad!**

## **Are Our Children At Risk?**

Things are changing in the USA! Observers and analysts are shocked at being introduced to seven-year-old children with criminal minds and street savvy.

Here are some quotes from the book: *High Risk...Children Without a Conscience!* It is a secular book from which we see what our society is saying and what we are facing as a nation.

- There is a chilling upsurge of cold-blooded killers, anti-social children ***without conscience.***
- They are called ***animalistic, wild,*** and are deprived of the essentials to *normality.*
- These are kids with personality disorders, ***remorseless,*** while often *charming* and *disarming.*
- Changing roles within the American family may be ***imperiling*** our children.
- A demographic revolution is occurring which may result in future generations that have huge numbers of ***detached children. . . Unbonded Children!***
- Our very society (the way we live in the home, etc.) is actually ***dehumanizing*** our children.
- ***Bonding is indispensable!*** How will we rear our youth? Will it be Biblically or Secularly?
- ***We live in a world that destroys families!*** All too often, today's nuclear family is portrayed on TV in the crudest terms imaginable: Dad, usually the weak character, belches at the dinner table; Mom, formerly a nurturing presence in the home, reigns as the put-down queen; and the children act bratty and disrespectful -- and are proud of it!

Prior to the 1920's, our society shared a certain God-consciousness. Not everyone was a Christian, of course, but people recognized there were *absolute standards for human conduct growing out of the Bible, and they knew they had to answer to a higher authority -- God -- for how faithfully they adhered to those standards.* Since then ***humanism, evolution, and situation ethics*** has become the foundation of people's thinking.

Research studies tell us that: the average person sees 9,230 actual or implied sex acts per year on TV, and 81% of that sexual activity -- is *extra-marital.* ***An average teenager, watching TV for ten years (8-18) would see almost 75,000 acts of illicit sex*** -- and TV has grown worse since the research was done.

**-- God's Desire for *Generations at Risk* --**

- **What is the purpose of a Christian home?** Why should we be concerned about our homes, our children, and their future?
- The home is the bulwark of society, it is the very foundation for any nation in any culture and of any century.
- Therefore, it is extremely important that parents mold the children for God's glory and honor that they might be used to *reproduce godly seed*.
- In this study it is my desire to thoroughly present the principles from the Word of God that must be lived and applied if we are to have *godly* children.
- What does it mean to bring up a child in the *nurture and the admonition of the Lord*? (Ephesians 6:4)
- There is no greater joy than to have children who *walk in truth*, who are *righteous* and live for the purpose of *bringing glory to God* and to *honor their parents*. (II John 4; Proverbs 23:24-25)
- In the final analysis every saved parent desires that their children grow up to be adults of whom they can be proud. The problem is that often those same parents **are not doing** that which the Word of God teaches so they can have that kind of child.
- In these pages, we will unfold the Biblical method of *bringing up a child in the way he ought to go*. (Proverbs 22:6) God's word has much to say about the molding of a child that he (or she) might be an adult unto honor.
- Few things touch the heart of a Christian parent more than his children and the desire to see the best for them.
- The greatest sorrows in life, for many saved parents, is to see their children become wayward, live worldly lives and become a great disappointment to them as their child drifts into grievous sins.
- The **functions** of a family ought to include all of the following:

*Home, the Place to Saturate with Biblical Principles*  
*Home, the Place of Refuge and Protection*  
*Home, the Place We Establish an Heritage*  
*Home, the Place to Teach the Fear of the Lord*  
*Home, the Place for Molding Lives for the Future*  
*Home, the Place for Forming Biblical Life-styles*  
*Home, the Place for Establish Permanent Values*  
*Home, the Place to Build Growth and Maturity*  
*Home, the Place for Rejoicing, Fellowship, and Praise*

-- Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

# Biblical Principles NOTEBOOK

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## Biblical Directives For Molding Children's Lives

### Chapter I

## God's Great Promises . . . For Those At Risk!

- **We have a generation that is at *risk!*** This is basically because we have neglected the truths in God's Word. Biblical principles largely are not known nor are they lived.
- The average Christian parent gives lip-service to the Word of God. While on one hand we state we believe God's Word, on the other hand we don't look to it or trust it explicitly for direction in molding a child's life.
- What does the Word of God say about this?

### **I. THE PROBLEM AT HAND. . . is it our problem?**

#### **A. Parents have looked to the wrong sources:**

1. Too often parents draw their ideas:
  - a. from the world's philosophies,
  - b. from the latest "*pop*" psychological advice,
  - c. and ideals and ideas of the unsaved,
2. They reenact what their parents did.

#### **B. Most parents have weak guidelines for training their children.**

1. Seldom do they have a biblical strategy.
2. They do not have any well-defined goals or plans of how they will reach them.

#### **C. Parents often have very poor goals for Christian rearing:**

1. The goal may be . . . basically, that the child does not get into trouble like teenage pregnancy, or
2. does not get involved with drugs or alcohol, or have a record with the police.

3. Often Christian parents have goals that are no different than the unsaved, and their philosophy is not much different. (This is very dangerous.)
4. They lack *definite, biblical goals* of having **godly, righteous** children.
  - a. They just wish, and do not **actively, deliberately train**.
  - b. They will wait too long, and
  - c. they will probably miss the opportunity to positively train their children to serve the Lord.
  - d. Christian parents across America have neglected their God-given privilege and responsibility to train their own children ***in the way they should go***.
    - God has given the responsibility squarely and primarily to the parents. (Not to the church or the Christian school.)
    - If the job of training (molding a life) does not get done right the parents have no one to blame but themselves.

## **II. THE GOAL AT HAND . . . is it God's Goal?**

### **Is it to keep the child out of trouble?**

#### **A. The emphasis throughout the Word of God is to train our children from their infancy to:**

1. serve the Lord,
2. train them on purpose to be righteous,
3. training them specifically to be godly,
4. particularly train them to be disciplined,
5. train them to do the things they ought to do,
6. train them to walk in the Spirit and not in the lusts (desires) of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16-24)

#### **B. This is not a negative training, but a positive training with expectant results because God's Word is:**

1. quick and powerful, (Note all of Hebrews 4:12.)
2. spirit and life, (life giving as life is in the seed) (John 6:63)
3. actively alive to change the lives of those who embrace it and live it out in daily life. (See Psalm 1:1-3 and Psalm 19; II Tim. 3:15-17.)
4. that which will bring ***success*** and ***spiritual prosperity*** as a godly life is produced.

## **Straight Talk on Survival Training**

Some years ago the Houston, Texas Police Department came up with “**Twelve Rules for Raising Delinquent Children!**” They were:

1. Begin with infancy to give the children everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe the world owes him a living.
2. When he picks up bad words, laugh at him. This will make him think he is cute.
3. Never give him any spiritual training. Wait until he is 21 and then let him “decide for himself.”
4. Avoid use of the words “no” or “wrong.” It may develop a guilt complex. This will condition him to believe later, when he is arrested for stealing a car, that society is against him and he is being persecuted.
5. Pick up everything he leaves lying around. Do everything for him so that he will be experienced in throwing all responsibility on others.
6. Let him read any printed matter he can get his hands on. Be careful that the silverware and drinking glasses are sterilized, but let his mind feast on garbage. He will become like the garbage in mind and heart.
7. Quarrel frequently in the presence of your children. In this way they won’t be so shocked when the home is broken up later.
8. Give a child all the spending money he wants. Never let him earn his own.
9. Satisfy his every craving for food, drink, and comfort. See that every sensual desire is gratified.
10. Take his part against neighbors, teachers, and police-men. They are all prejudiced against your child.
11. When he gets into real trouble, apologize for yourself by saying, “***I never could do anything with him.***”
12. Prepare for a life of grief, **for you are sure to have it.**



## **Training Up a Child In the Way He Is to GO!**

- A. “Training up” our child, remember, suggests two things, according to the usage of the Hebrew word. It conveys the idea of:
1. Taming something that is wild.
  2. And it also indicates developing a taste for something good and nourishing.
- B. When we train our children, we are to initiate techniques that bring about a submissive will. (Deut 6)
1. We also discover ways to develop our child’s taste so that he delights in things that are wholesome and right.
  2. None of this is naturally known by a child.
  3. These are things parents need to instill into the child during those growing-up years in the home.
  4. When this is done correctly, God promises that even when the child reaches maturity, that *indescribable age of independence*, he won’t turn away from the training he received.

### **Training According to Deuteronomy Six**

- A Christian counselor was asked what particular problem or struggle seemed to be the most frequent. He answered rather quickly: **the passive male**.
- Diligence and passivity cannot co-exist. God’s words are timely; they are for today. Passivity is an enemy. Dads-- we are to be the pacesetters. Moms -- with equal vigor, you are to carry out the game plan.

- A. **God’s method of survival training has a lesson plan. Note the Biblical guidelines as we give them here:**
1. **Training is to be diligently carried out.** In a world system that is aggressively committed to capturing your child’s mind and heart, no half-hearted training in the home will be successful. (Deut 6:7) *To teach diligently means to whet, to sharpen, training that penetrates, to pierce deeply into your child’s mind and heart so as to make him keen, sharp, discerning.*
  2. **Training must begin with the parent.** Nothing can really happen through us until it has happened *to us and in us*. Children will have greater respect for instruction if they witness a genuineness in the models of their moms and dads. (Deut 6:5-6; Phil. 4:9)

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3. **Training should prepare the child to think for himself.** Over protective parents, as well as easily threatened parents, are weak at this point.
  - a. Insecure moms and dads have a great difficulty instilling solid, biblical principles apart from a long list of do's and don't.
  - b. In many a Christian home a child is told what he may and may not do -- **but is not trained to understand why!** *He is not ready to meet Satan's darts, his defenses are weak because he has merely learned his parents' lists. **He lacks conviction.***
  
4. **Training is to flow out of the natural setting of the home.** (Deut. 6:7-9)
  - a. The Israelites were to talk (not preach) about the principles for surviving in Canaan when they sat around in their homes as well as when they walked or went to bed or got up in the morning to start the day.
  - b. No religious lectures. Just sharing through the natural flow of life in the home. What a perfect setting -- the home, at mealtimes; what a neat time for training. The olive plants are there. . . each one a different size and shape, but all involved in discussing and laughing and sharing (and even complaining on occasion). (See Psa. 127 and 128.)
  - c. Parents must be the living example of all the character traits of righteous living we want to see in our children.
  - d. Children will parent as adults largely as we have parented. Our weaknesses will become their weaknesses, our failures will become theirs.

## The Image of Your Child

**Your child is made in the image of God.** The *image of God* is what makes him different from the animals, and uniquely man. (Gen. 1:26-27)

This term (made in God's image) is heavy-laden theologically.

- An image is a *reflection* of what something looks like.
- The image of me (or you) has the same hair, the same eyes, and the same nose, etc. So what does it mean to be made in God's image?

### A. Here is a suggestive list:

1. **God is the eternal I AM;** man is a self-conscious being. We have consciousness of self, this is a reflection of God. Our children give expression to their self-consciousness when they begin to talk. Words such as *me, mine, or my* are favorites at that point.
2. **God is the eternal *logos*;** the **Word**; man is a rational being. Word speaks of the structure of thought. Man has mind and can think.
3. **God can communicate His thoughts to men, another side of the *Word*.**  
Men can also communicate, both with God and with other men. Children soon learn to communicate their thoughts and desires by making sounds. It's done by gestures, pointing, then by speaking and writing.
4. **God is the Creator;** man has creative ability given of God. Only God can create, but men takes existing materials and places them into new relationships. People have creativity given of God.
5. **God is sovereign and possesses all authority;** man exercises dominion over the earth, given by God. As image-bearers even children with their pets manifest this reflection given by God by control over the animal kingdom.
6. **God is altogether righteous;** man is a moral being responsible for his actions. Man cannot escape the force of conscience alternately accusing or else defending him. Children are moral beings who can and must learn right from wrong.
7. **God is eternal and omnipresent;** man is bound to time and space. Or is he?  
What about the gift of imagination? And what about his eternal soul?

**Children are indeed wonderful gifts from God;** they are little image-bearers created by Him for His own glory. We receive them from His hand as His reward. How well do we really *know* them? **Also consider the following:**

**B. But man fell as God's image-bearer, as vice-regent, and as righteous man.**

Cain was made in Adam's image... a sinner, murderer! (Gen. 3; Eph. 2:1-3)

1. Man's **self-consciousness** is twisted into pride, selfishness, and prejudice.
2. Man's **reason**, instead of being used to receive God's revelation, is often used to plot mischief, sin, and hurt against others and to get them into trouble.
3. **Communication** of speech is corrupted: to curse, to lie, to abuse, etc.
4. **Creativity** is turned upside down to become destructive, tearing down, etc.
5. **Rule** is turned into tyranny. Children are often bullies, promoting self.
6. Even **imagination** is spoiled by the fall. Johnny uses his imagination to escape responsibility for his actions. **Children are fallen sinners!**

CHAPTER II

**The Foundation for Life . . . For ALL Who Are  
At Risk!**

- What I am going to write here may seem to some -- too simplistic, to some impossible, and to some out of date, and to yet others, too difficult.
- ***The question is:***

Is God's Word powerful?      Can God's Word change lives?  
Can God's Word produce righteous children?    If so , how?  
Are the parents neglecting to apply the Bible in the life and in the home?

- ***Our excuse and thoughts are:***

"We can't come into the heart of the child and make them do right."

"We can't expect people to be in the Word of God that much."

"Well, what you are teaching is a bit extreme, and this is a different age."

"You expect me to take all the fun out of life."

"What you are going to teach here is not only antiquated, but it won't work."

- ***Hold on . . . stay with me as we tackle a seemingly difficult subject!***

We are touching the most critical aspect (or key) that will virtually guarantee that our children will turn out right.

We are going to consider the ***divine directive, not man's idea, but God's sure truth.***

We are going to consider the *secret of children turning out right -- living a genuinely godly, spiritual Christian life.*

**I. GOD'S DIRECTIVE. . . for us, Day and Night!**

**A. God commanded Joshua . . . this applies to us today. (Joshua 1:8)**

1. The instruction was to ***meditate*** in the Word.
  - a. Meditate means to *reflect upon and think upon.*
  - b. Meditate means to read and consider with the intent of thought about how to apply the Word of God to the life.
2. This meditation was to take place -- day and night.
  - a. The charge to Joshua implies being in the Word of God at least twice daily. (We know the text, so we can meditate upon it.)

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- b. **Day to day** practice would mean to be in the Scriptures twice daily, morning and evening.
  - c. This is intended for adults, teens, children, for all of us.
3. This charge was for a purpose:
- a. **That or literally “so that”** he would observe **to do** all that is written therein.
  - b. So he would live out, do, **observe** or **perform** what it says.
4. So what will help our children - to mold them and to train them?
- a. The Word of God hidden in the heart. (Psalm 119:9-11)
  - b. Consider what our youth face:
    - The devil cleverly lays traps for our youth,
    - the world has an agenda for them, and pulls them into its clutches,
    - and the sinful, wicked heart (our flesh or sinful nature) of man desires to fulfill its lusts (sinful appetites and wants).

**B. God directs us to hide His Word in the inner man!**

- 1. We are to so fill our minds with God's Word --
  - a. that it soaks down into our hearts and
  - b. begins to affect every decision we make.
- 2. The result is that ***we will not sin against God. WE will DO what pleases the Lord.***

**II. GOD'S PROMISE . . . of Success and Prosperity! (Joshua 1:8)**

- The promise was that IF he would meditate in the Word day and night he would **then** make his way **prosperous** and then he would have good **success**.
- Parent, does this sound good? Does God lie? Is His promise for you and yours? Was this only for Joshua?

**A. God wants you and your children to have success -- spiritual prosperity.**

- 1. God honors those who honor Him. Consider Psalm 1:1-3.
- 2. God wants us to **get out of the world** (Psalm 1:1) and **get into the Word**. (Psalm 1:2,3)
- 3. We must **delight** in the Law of the Lord, (i.e. His Word) and **meditate** in it **day and night**. ***This is the person God blesses!***
- 4. We will become straight, stalwart, stable, consistent because we meditate in the Word of God -- day and night. (Think of children.)

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- a. Like a tree (analogy), for the tree is a thing of strength and stability.
  - b. Like a tree for it has longevity and purpose.
  - c. Not like brush, weeds, grass, etc. (Cf Isaiah 61:1-3)
  - d. Like a tree that is fruitful, flourishing, planted by a river, leaves that do not wither and bearing fruit.
  - e. The promise is prosperity, just what we want to see our children have.
5. IF we would help our children to *be in the Word of God day and night*, from the time they are little until they leave home, we will do for them ***immeasurable good***.
6. We, as adults, must model this practice ourselves, but often do not.
7. It is imperative that we begin at the earliest possible time to develop this practice in our children, if we want them to turn out right.

**B. God wants you and your children to walk undefiled.** (Psalm 119:1-3)

*“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.”*

1. Those who walk in the law of the Lord (meditate upon it, apply it, live it) will be undefiled.
2. This means those who walk in the law of the Lord (His Word) will not be ***defiled*** or ***corrupted*** by sin.
3. Here is God’s ***preventive principle***. To walk in the law of the Lord --
  - a. requires that the individual be in the Word, and
  - b. means he spends time reading, studying, meditating, applying.
  - c. It means ***keeping*** or obeying His Word, and ***seeking*** Him with the ***whole heart . . . they also do no iniquity!*** (See Psalm 119:9-11.)
    - iniquity means willful sinning,      • also it means rebellion
  - d. The ***biblical principle*** of a clean heart and life is very clearly given-- by hiding God’s Word in the heart.
    - So how can you have a child (youth) whose life is kept from the blight of sin?
    - So how can you have children who will live actively, righteously for the Lord? ***Does not God tell us how?***

**Note:** Are we going to believe God’s word, or the newest *pop psychology* of the day? Are we going to trust what God has said, act upon it, or deny it and reject

the clear directives?

Are we going to buy the newest so called religious book on rearing children which is based on humanism, secularism, new age or some other denial of the truth such as behavioral psychology?

Even writers such as *Dr. Dobson* and *Focus on the Family* are basically psychologists and you will hear very little if any Bible. Their teachings are not based on *thus saith the Lord but on the psychological tenets of the unsaved writers of our day.*

### III. GOD'S METHODOLOGY. . . Building Habits that Keep US!

- We are creatures of habit, so we are commanded to *put off and put on!* (See Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-14.)
- The good habits keep us and the sinful, wrong habits are what destroy us.
- We either walk in the flesh or the spirit by the habits we build in daily life. (See Romans 8:5-8 and Matthew 12:33-35.)
- Habits are repetitive actions (or thoughts) that are continued until they are a part of our life. *These habits become our inner treasure that build our actions!*

#### A. Building the habit of being in the Word of God daily.

1. We must insert this habit into the life (ours and theirs).
  - a. Like the habit of brushing teeth, taking baths,
  - b. Like the habit of studying for school, etc.
2. It is something ***we do on purpose***, deliberately, it must be developed.
3. Just telling them will never do:
  - a. But we must set up a program, a schedule, and
  - b. create incentives to continue, to be motivated.
4. It must become a given practice that is enforced day after day. . . month by month. . . year by year until it is an ***ingrained habit***.
5. **Too often the problem is that we do --**
  - a. what we ***feel*** like doing, what we ***want*** to do.
  - b. Some will say we ought to read the Bible because we want to, not because we have to.
  - c. Because of the world, the flesh, and the devil, we will have many days we won't feel like getting into the Word of God.
  - d. If we only do what we ***feel*** like doing -- we will ***fail***, the flesh will rule, and we will be ***very shallow spiritually***, at best.



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- e. We must be in the Word of God. . . because it is the ***right thing to do***, it is commanded by God, and it is a command with great blessings.

**Note:** What the flesh may feel like doing, or what we think about it all, as we give into feelings, is all irrelevant.

**What does God tell us to do? Do what is right.** What the flesh wants to do is folly. We must instill the attitude and philosophy into our children of ***doing right no matter what.***

The Word of God is like running water. The Scriptures will cleanse our children spiritually. (Psalm 119:9-11). It is like running water through a strainer. The water passes through it, but in so doing, it tends to cleanse it.

**B. Helping our children fulfill God's will in their lives.**

1. We must help our children to adopt a daily action, habit, plan, that will go with them the rest of their lives.
2. We must effectively help them build the habit of being in God's Word daily -- *night and day* -- a habit that is **so ingrained** they can never get away from it.
3. **Start early:**
  - a. Teach them the importance of God's Word when they are in kindergarten. (As they are starting to learn to read help them to understand that as they read the Word, God would help them and bless their lives.)
  - b. Explain to them that this is exciting, and a great joy.
  - c. Make a big deal of it!
4. **Plan their reading:**
  - a. Begin with simple, easy to read portions, such as I John, gospel of John.
  - b. Have them read one verse morning and evening when beginning.
  - c. Gradually... progressively more as they get into the grades, Illus:
  - d. By the time they are in 3 or 4th grade - reading a chapter a day.
  - e. By high school, reading three chapters each morning and evening.
5. **Provide positive incentives:**
  - a. incentive of stars, posters, etc.
  - b. incentive of parental examples,
  - c. incentive of enthusiasm, maybe even special treats.
6. **Enforce the plan:**
  - a. Asking the question, *Did you read your Bible today?*

- b. Help them, gently and firmly with reminders and enforcement, that they must stay with it... all their lives.

**7. Just do it . . . for it is right!**

- a. We must instill the principle that *"We will always do what we ought to do, because it is **right to do!**"*
- b. We must help them (and ourselves as well) to rise above the attitude of *"I don't feel like it,"* or *"I don't want to,"* or *"It's boring,"*  
**If it is right to do, then we do it, period!**
- c. Whether we want to or not is not the issue, but what is God's will for us?

**Consider:**

- One of the most fundamental practices we can ever instill in our children is the matter of going to the Word of God day and night throughout their formative years. God will honor this?
- No activity or practice you will ever come up with will compare to the benefit of instilling the habit of daily Bible reading in your children.
- *The Word of God is God's miraculous ingredient for training our children. **We had better believe this!***

## CHAPTER III

# The Basis for Change . . . For the *At Risk* Generation!

- Generations are at risk. . . not just the *now generation*, but also the parents and even the grand-parents. ***Futures, lives, and even truth is at risk!***
- When it comes to plants, gardens, trees, etc., does it matter what you do in planting, and caring for them? Are there right things to do, and wrong things to do? ***Are they at risk, like our children are at risk?***
- Some things that seem simplistic are actually profound! God's ways may seem overly simplistic or unworkable . . . but **they are right and they work.**
- If you were to read and study Psalm 127 and 128 and Isaiah 61:3 you would decide that God has the answers for each generation. We can be "*trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*"

### **I. BIBLICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS . . . the basis for change in us!**

- Biblical righteousness is a principle or concept that permeates much of the Word of God.
- *Righteousness, uprightness, just, justly, right, righteous* and such related words are used over 1,000 times in the Scriptures. (Note **print-out from Psalms and Proverbs.**)

#### **A. Christ is the Righteous One (as is the Father and Holy Spirit)**

1. He is referred to as *Jesus Christ, the righteous!* (Psalm 45:7)
2. He is the *righteous judge.* (Isaiah 11:4-5; I John 2:1; II Tim. 4:8)
3. Through out the Old Testament the Father is referred to as ***righteous.***
4. Numerous times the Scriptures are referred to as "*thy righteous commandments.*"

#### **B. In salvation we receive a *positional righteousness.***

1. This is an imputed righteousness, put to our account through the merits of the blood of Christ, shed for us. (See Romans 3:19-26, II Cor. 5:21)
2. In the New Testament the saved are referred to as ***righteous.*** This, being imputed to us, has the same meaning as ***justification.*** (Romans 5:1)
  - a. We are justified! (The word *just* is identical to the term *righteous.*)
  - b. It means to be ***declared righteous*** ~~ *positionally in Christ.*

**C. We are to live out a *practical righteousness in daily life.***

1. Being righteous or its derivations refers most frequently to **doing** what is ***right practically.***
2. We are to grow in *righteousness. Doing that which is ethically and morally right. This is called progressive sanctification!*
  - a. There is not one ethical or moral precept in the Bible that is mentioned more than righteousness.
  - b. Seemingly it is the *moral and ethical essence of Christian character.*
3. Righteousness in its most basic concept means ***obeying God.***
4. Since ***righteousness*** is so dominant as a principle in the Word of God, it must be extremely important.
  - a. It is the critical need in our lives and the lives of our children.
  - b. This is what is glaringly lacking in the lives of Christians today.

**Illustrations from Scriptures:**

- David prayed as his son, Solomon, was about to ascend the throne: *“I know also, my God that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness.”*
- David prayed elsewhere for himself: *“Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness.”* (Psalm 5:8) *“For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield.”* (Psalm 5:12) Consider the blessing to those who live righteously.
- Consider further blessings that come from righteousness: *“For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.”* (Psalm 11:7) God... a) loves righteousness, and b) watches over the upright, for God *“loveth righteousness and judgment.”* (Psalm 33:5)
- In Jeremiah 9:24 we read: *“That I am the LORD which exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”*
- Righteousness is the basis for answered prayer: *“The eyes of the LORD are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their cry.”* (Psalm 34:15; I Peter 3:12) Proverbs 15:8 tells us that, *“the prayer of the upright is his delight, and he heareth the prayer of the righteous.”* (Prov. 15:29)
- We are commanded in the New Testament: *“follow after righteousness”* and *“live unto righteousness.”*
- Consider the word **righteousness.** . . . from the New Testament!

**D. We must lead our children to live a righteous life!**

1. All of this must be ***applied*** in the ***training*** of children  
(See Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 11:18-22)

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

2. When they learn this principle and establish it in their lives, most other areas of training and spiritual development will follow easily.
3. We must ***implant*** in our children (youth) the ***principle*** of righteousness.
4. So, we must ***instill*** in them the ***habit of always doing what is right!***
  - a. ***Doing right*** only comes about by repetitive action.
  - b. It must be ***practiced*** until it becomes ***character!*** (See Ephesians 6:1)
    - It is right to do right!
    - It is right to read the Bible!
    - It is right to honor and obey mother and father!
    - It is right to be respectful!
    - It is right to quickly obey and fulfill duty!
    - It is right to be kind!
    - It is right to forgive!
    - It is right to be morally pure!

**E. We must go a step further. . . determine to instill righteousness:**

- It must be the intent of the parents to instill the concept of righteousness into the very *fabric of the child's life*.
- Righteous living must become the **habit of life**, the very ***character*** of the person. ***Why are lives at risk? Because righteousness is not lived!***

1. Parents -- ***Teach righteousness as a precept!***

- a. ***Teach, say, instill*** the thought regularly, consistently, -- "*We always do what is right!*"
  - They need to hear these words thousands of times,
  - and have them repeat the words, "*We always do what is right!*"
- b. Little by little the children need to get the idea *they must always do what is right*.
  - They need to be predisposed to this by ***conviction***. And convictions are only built over time.
  - Parents must **be** the **example** of ***doing right!***
- c. In daily devotions teach the Scriptures that deal with righteousness .
  - Talk about God's promises to those who do right.
  - "*For thou LORD wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*" (Psalms 5:12)
  - Consider the many verses in Proverbs about doing right... daily discuss some verse (s) about the blessings of doing right.

- Remember: **Repetition is the mother of all learning.**

Children, by their very nature, tend to do what they do because they *want to or do not want to*. They tend to be motivated by what is *fun* or *what is not fun*. That is natural because of the sin nature we were born with. We need to instill in them a higher and more spiritual motive.

One of the deterrents to godliness in our age is a ***fun morality!*** *Doing what we do because it is fun and not doing what we should do -- because it is not fun!* If we all lived for only what is fun. . . the old sinful, wicked nature of ours would lead us into every kind of excess and sinful actions.

Teens are doing a lot of things they call fun -- illicit sex, drinking, drugs, etc., all because they embrace a worldly philosophy of doing what is fun.

- d. Our children must learn the commands, the directives from the Word of God about living righteously ***early in life.***

2. Parents -- ***You must apply the principle of righteousness.***

- a. They must see the practical outworking of living righteously.
- b. It must be applied to the *nitty-gritty of life, on a daily basis. LIKE:*
  - Rock music is not right!                      • It is right to tell the truth!
  - Smoking is not only bad, it is not right.
  - It is not right to lie!                              • It is right to tell the truth!
  - Evolution teaching is not right! • It is right to read the Bible!
  - It is right to treat your sister kindly. • Cheating is not right!
  - It is right to pray!                                      • It is not right to steal!
  - It is not right to have a bad attitude. • Selfishness is not right!
- c. Convictions based on the Word of God must be taught constantly.

3. Parents -- ***You must teach righteousness by your example!*** The generation of youth are at risk at the hand of parents' neglect!

- a. Training is more "*caught than taught!*"
- b. "*Our talk walks, and our walk talks; but our walk talks louder than our talk talks.*" Or our example is stronger than our words!
- c. What we do speaks louder than what we say.
- d. A consistent example will do more to reinforce what we say than about anything else we can ever do.

4. Parents -- ***you must teach righteous living "early and long"!***

### ***Are Your Children At Risk?***

The child must hear early in life what it means to do right. Much of the molding of a child's life is done by the time they are seven.

- a. Soon as they understand speech. . . instill the Word of God.
- b. Illus: family who taught their children many memory verses by the time they were 5.
- c. Wisdom and righteousness are concepts in Scripture that are tied together. (See Proverbs 8:1-6)
  - When we do what is **right**, we have done what is **wise**.
  - When we do *what is not right*, we have done that which is *not wise*.
  - Wisdom and righteousness are so closely interrelated that they are almost one and the same.
  - *To be wise is to do what is right and to do what is right is to be wise.* (See Proverbs 4:5-7.)

#### **Conclusions:**

- God has promised to bless the righteous. Blessing for our children is what we want, so how can we neglect what God commands?
- Could it be that we have allowed ***strongholds of sin*** to so ***control*** us that we find it impossible to *hold the line of right for our children? What a risk!*
- Could it be that we have neglected the Word of God to such an extent that we don't have the inner spiritual fortitude to teach our children? If so, we must have victory; we must change. **Are your own at risk?**
- **Righteousness must become a habit. . . a life-style lived out of a habitual practice of thinking Biblically as we then live Biblically in action, in doing.**

## CHAPTER IV

### **The Neglected Element . . . In the Lives At Risk!**

- Probably the lack of self-discipline is the greatest deterrent to spiritual growth, and is the parents' chief failure in the home.
- Undisciplined parents mean undisciplined children who are open to almost any kind of sin. ***The neglect of self-discipline brings great failure!***
- If a child succeeds in becoming self-disciplined, he will find it so much easier to obey those in authority -- parents, God, teachers, etc.
- Hudson Taylor, the great missionary once said, "*An undisciplined person will never amount to anything in God's work,*" An undisciplined person will likely never amount to much in any area of life.

#### **I. WHAT DOES DISCIPLINE MEAN . . . to you?**

##### **A. To many the term *discipline* has a very negative connotation.**

1. To them it implies severity, strictness, and punitive actions.
2. To them it implies negativeness, harshness, demanding, and possibly all they remember from home was anger and hardness.
3. Possibly to you, discipline always represented reprisal, correcting, trying to get someone to do right.

##### **B. What discipline ought to mean to us:**

1. Discipline is a ***positive word*** denoting "*actively doing*" what is right.
2. Discipline is a ***positive action*** whereby the person takes charge of his or her life for good, this is self-discipline.
3. Discipline brings the inner joy and fulfillment of right doing!
  - a. It brings great satisfaction of right thinking, right living, and
  - b. therefore, as a result experiencing wonderful, long-term results.
4. Discipline thus is connected with all that is ***good, godly, and Christ-honoring***. Therefore it is fully positive in its results in the life.

##### **C. What self-discipline does for us:**

1. It is the key to success in virtually all areas of our lives.
2. Only by self-discipline will we stay in the Word of God and prayer.



***Are Your Children At Risk?***

3. Self-discipline makes possible the building of Christian character.
4. Only by self-discipline does a person enter fully into the opportunities of education.
  - a. The discipline of the mind is the secret to ongoing education.
  - b. The embracing of right behavior makes possible attentiveness.
5. Self-discipline makes possible proper behavior so attention and obedience will be practiced.
6. Self-discipline is the key to punctuality. Only thus will we be organized and maintain neatness.
7. It will expand productivity in the work place.
8. It is the major ingredient in emotional strength and stability.

**D. What our self-discipline does for others. . . our children:**

1. We tend to pass on to our children the degree of self-discipline (or lack of it) we have achieved in our lives.
2. We live our habits of life before others who then embrace those habits.
3. We will reap the harvest of our doings. (Galatians 6:7-9) We do implant in our children (youth) the example of our own lives.
4. We must train our children in self-discipline from the time they are very young, when their hearts are tender. . . if later. . . we may be too late.

**II. IS IT A LACK OF DISCIPLINE. . . or psychological disorders?**

**A. Is it a psychological problem?**

1. Again and again, we are convinced that the modern psychologist attributes most problems children (youth) have as *"psychological disorders."*
2. They are constantly inventing new titles for disorders which in many cases are nothing but children acting as they act because they are undisciplined.
3. These psychologists and social workers diagnose these children as *hyperactive, having attention deficit disorder and learning disabled.*
  - a. Most of the time the truth is the children have come from homes where they were never taught self-discipline.
  - b. And in many cases the children are not fed properly and are on diets rich in sugar, chocolate and caffeine.

**A. What is the need?**

1. The need is that those in leadership insist upon discipline and attention.
2. Self-discipline must be instilled in a child, it isn't inborn in any child.
3. Discipline must be added to their lives; it is not a part of the sin nature.
4. Parents are the primary agents God intended to instill discipline in the lives of their children.
5. Children basically will respond to what is expected of them. . .
  - a. provided they know the adult *means what he says, and says what he means.* . .
  - b. and the adult **demand**s attention and obedience.

**C. What is the problem?**

Illustration:

1. Every child is born with a sin nature, inherited from Adam.
2. The Bible refers to this as the *flesh, the carnal nature.*
3. Flesh is often described in terms of *lust.*
  - a. The Greek word translated "**lust**" has the broader sense of **desires, or wants or likes.**
  - b. The old nature is not only selfish by nature, it also is "**want and self-oriented.**"
  - c. The child will pursue its own desires because of the control of the flesh or sin nature. (Consider Galatians 5:16, and 24.)
  - d. So every person, controlled by the sin nature will live for
    - self-interest      • self-desire      • self-gratification
  - e. Though the child is saved, unless he, by training, learns how to walk in the new nature and deny the sin nature (lusts), he will basically live a sinful life.
    - The old nature will seek what is self-gratifying.
    - In most instances the old nature has its own corrupt fashion and controls much life before the person gets saved
    - Unless the young child, though saved early in life, is trained unto self-discipline, self-control, and all that goes with it, he can be as self-willed and sinful as any other child.
4. If the child is undisciplined he will be:
  - a. lazy, following the path of least resistance,

- b. live to entertain self, looking for what is *fun*,
  - c. follow the things the world puts before him.
5. What is God's will and plan?
- a. God created us to serve Him, that means work.
  - b. He created us to glorify Him, to do what is right, that means doing what I ought above what the sinful nature would want.

**D. What will self-discipline create in me?**

- 1. Discipline impels us to do what we ought, whether we feel like it or not.
- 2. Discipline provides the foundation and framework of doing what needs to be done, even though we want to do something else.
- 3. The more discipline I am, the easier it will be to do what I ought to do and be what I ought to be.
- 4. Consider illustrations of how this applies:
- 5. The principle of the practice of self-discipline must begin in childhood and then extend throughout life.

**IV. WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT DISCIPLINE?**

**A. The teaching cloaked in various words.**

- 1. The word "*discipline*" is not found in the English Bible, although there are a number of words that denote that in the Greek and Hebrew.
- 2. We are commanded to be *temperate* in all things. ( I Corinthians 9:24-27)
  - a. A person in a race needed to be temperate, or *disciplined* if he were to excel.
  - b. Those in ministry are admonished to be *temperate* in Titus 1:8, and the fruit of the Spirit is *temperance* (Galatians 5:23). (self-control)
  - c. We are to add to our faith, *temperance*, or essentially to be self-disciplined as found in II Peter 1:5-6.
- 3. To bring up a *child in the nurture of the Lord* (Ephesians 6:4) means to bring the child up in discipline.
- 4. The child is to be curbed from lusts (selfish desires) and from surrendering to the wants, desires, and sinful drive within. (Rom. 6:16-17)
- 5. In the following verses we find the subject of *diligence*. This, too, is closely related to discipline.
  - a. Proverbs 21:5

b. Proverbs. 22:29

c. II Peter 3:14

d. **Diligence**, which derives from a disciplined life, is something the Word of God teaches and is a virtue to instill into our children.

**B. The walk in the Spirit will bring a disciplined life:**  
(Galatians 2:20; 5:16-17)

1. True spirituality is something that comes from:

a. A life in the Word of God -- read, studied, meditate upon, and

b. a life of prayer and yieldedness to the new nature within.

2. This **necessitates** a disciplined life.

a. What will keep you in the Word of God? A combination of:

- schedule, habit, and genuine desire, and
- a willingness to do right, no matter what.

b. All excuses must be put away, we must build obedience within.

3. A walk in the Spirit is a *walk daily, hourly, of surrender to Him.*

a. Knowing that ***I am crucified with Christ.*** (Romans 6:6; Gal. 2:20)

b. Reckoning myself ***dead indeed unto sin.*** (Romans 6:11)

c. Yielding my ***members as instruments unto righteousness.***  
(Romans 6:13 for sin shall not have dominion, vs. 14.)

**C. The walk in the flesh will bring destructive living!**  
(Galatians 5:19-21)

1. The lack of self-discipline (control by God) can bring any and every kind of sin known to mankind. (*Talk about lives at risk!*)

a. This portion paints an ugly picture,

b. for anyone can and may well walk in every kind of wickedness.

2. Our children will walk in the flesh and its doings (and thinking) unless we have brought them to a God-controlled life.

a. The **spirit** must control the **mind** and the **mind disciplined** in the Word of God will then control the **body**.

b. They will not have a God-controlled life if the body and all its sinful appetites are yielded to, and mind is controlled by and incited by the these appetites. *Then the spiritual life is greatly hindered!*

***We have generations at risk to sin's degradation, corruption, rebellion, wrath, hostilities, and every kind of sin that destroys relationships. The sorrows of life that so many face is because self-discipline by the power of the Holy Spirit, and by the application of the Word of God has not taken place!***

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## **Nineteen Principles For Training Children**

Below we have nineteen principles to be applied in Training Children designed to keep the child in the will of God. If you are both committed parents, then it will be that much easier for you to apply these principles.

- 1. Dedicate Your Child to God.** (I Samuel 1:27-28)
- 2. Raise the Child in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.** (Eph. 6:4)
- 3. Teach an Alertness to God's Spirit.**
  - a. Teach about God's peace. (Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:7) He needs to recognize when the peace of God is removed due to unconfessed sin, disobedience, etc.
  - b. Teach him not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30). Grieving comes about by moral weakness and concerns sins of commission. Also teach him not to quench the Holy Spirit. Alert him to sins of omission that quench His leadership. (I Thess. 5:19)
  - c. Teach him how to be filled with the Spirit, to be yielded to Him. Eph. 5:18
- 4. Teach a Sensitivity to Your Spirit.** (Eph. 6:1-3) Be sure to show your grief and hurt when your children disappoint you. Not to manipulate them, but to show them that when they commit an offense it hurts you deeply.
- 5. Develop in Your Child a Hunger for God's Word.** (Deut. 6:6-9; Prov. 22:6)  
Teach him to memorize Scripture. Impress the child with the importance of the Word of God. (Psa. 1:1-3)
- 6. Develop a Healthy Fear of God in Him.** (Prov. 1:7) By fear we mean an awareness of the power and the presence of God. Love must be taught, but within the whole character of God -- the omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience and sovereignty of His power. A fear of God is an awesome respect for His holiness and power.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

- 7. Give Your Child a Sense of Destiny.** (Eph. 1:15-21) Change his life-style by making him aware that he is a child of the King and has a heritage that is higher than the non-Christian. He has a power within him from the Holy Spirit that enables him to achieve what would be impossible without it.
- 8. Teach Your Child the Value of the Permanent versus the Passing.** (I Jh 2:15-17; Matt. 6:19-21, 33)
- 9. Train Him to Discern the Character of Others.** (Book of Proverbs)
- 10. Teach Him to be Loyal.**
- 11. Support Him in Fervent Prayer.** (Jam. 5:16)
- 12. Teach Your Child to Stand Alone.** (Gen. 37-50 story of Joseph; Daniel 6)
- 13. Saturate Your Child's Mind With Scripture.** (Read Psalm 119 often)
- 14. Show Your Child the Consequences of Evil.** (Prov. 7:20-27; Psa. 73)
- 15. Teach Your Child to Share His Faith.** (Phil. 2:15; Matt. 5:16; I Pet. 3:15)
- 16. Teach Your Child to Edify Others.** (Rom. 14:19; 15:2)
- 17. Teach Him the Relationship Between Answered Prayer and Obedience.**(I Jh 3:22)
- 18. When He Fails, Restore Him.** (Gal. 6:1)
- 19. Teach Him to Love Wisdom.** (Prov.)

## **Giving Unconditional Love. . . to the *At Risk* Generation!**

**Scriptural Texts:** Eph. 3:16-19; 13:1; Jh 15:9; 13:34-35; 17:24;  
I Jh 3, 4; Jude 20-21;

- God's love is a love without conditions.
- Biblical love is an unconditional love, it should not be measured by the responses we get, for we basically respond to others who respond to us.
- Most often the giving of love is based on performance, or on that which pleases, or is most attractive.

### **What are the prerequisites of good child rearing?**

- First and foremost is the home and the relationships of the home.
- The child's security is largely dependent upon the quality of the marital bond.

### **I. THE EXPRESSION OF LOVE IN THE HOME:** (Jh 13:1; 17:26; I Jh 3:11, 15, 23)

#### **A. Love must be communicated even if it is difficult for some.**

1. That is not the easiest thing for everyone to do.
2. We may feel the love within, but find it very hard to express that love.
3. Men communicate primarily on an intellectual (cognitive) level and like to deal mainly with factual data. (Illustration)
  - a. These people find it difficult to be warm, supportive of their spouses and their children.
  - b. These find it difficult to share emotional, feeling oriented conversation.

#### **B. Women, particularly, desire to share feelings, especially to their spouses.**

1. They are more concerned about the emotions that involve divisions, anger, resentments, etc.
2. Women usually are more concerned about the atmosphere of tensions between husband and wife.

#### **C. There is a great need of expressed love between parents.**

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

1. The husband must take the responsibility to initiate love in the home.
2. Husbands who have found the secret of giving love are to be envied, for a wife will amplify it many fold and reflect it back to him and the children.

**D. Honeymoon love (unconditional love) must continue.**

1. What is true of honeymoon love? I Cor. 13:4-7
2. It is not, "*If you loved me, you'd \_\_\_\_\_!*" What is in it for me? -- seems to be the concern of most!
3. Unconditional love is not conditional. . . or based on:
  - a. performance
  - b. age
  - c. weight
  - d. mistakes
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_?
4. Children need to see love -- between parents, unconditional love, and atmosphere of loving, mutual ministering to one another.

**II. EXPRESSION OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TO OUR CHILDREN:**

- The foundation of a solid relationship with our child is unconditional love.
- Real, biblical love is unconditional. Only that kind of love can assure a child of growth in every way and help him to come to his full potential.
- Only God's kind of love can prevent problems such as feelings of resentment bitterness, being unloved, rejection, fears, or insecurity.

**A. What is Unconditional Love as shown to a child?**

1. It is loving a child -- *no matter what*.
  - a. No matter what the child looks like -- size, shape, etc.
  - b. No matter his assets, liabilities, or handicaps.
2. We must love the child, while at the same time we may thoroughly dislike his behavior at that point.

***I must remind myself:***

- They are my children;
- They will act like children;
- Much childish behavior will be unpleasant.
- I will love in spite of behavior.
- If I love them only when they please me -- they will never feel genuinely loved.
- If I love, unconditionally, they will turn their anxieties into maturity



and become mature in handling them.

- If I only love them when they meet my requirements all they get is negativism -- and they will be insecure.

**B. How do children respond?? -- *by and in their feelings!***

1. Where do you find them on the chart? Way over on the left, why?
2. A child comes into their world with an amazing ability to perceive emotionally.
3. The child is so sensitive to the feelings of his mother and those close to him.
4. Consider a child at birth:
  - a. Their communication with the world is solely on feelings.
  - b. They are extremely sensitive emotionally.
  - c. Their first impressions with the world are through their feelings.
  - d. This is wonderful, and yet frightening.
  - e. A child's emotional being determines how he sees his world -- his parents -- his home -- himself.
  - f. Does he see his world -- rejecting, unloving, uncaring, hostile, etc.
    - If it is the above -- then his greatest enemy is anxiety,
    - Then he can even be harmed in speech ability, behavior, ability to relate and to learn.
5. A child is continually asking, by his behavior?
  - a. Do you love me?
  - b. He often asks by his actions, and we answer the same way.
  - c. Do we understand his need?

**C. Children reflect love, they do not at first give love.**

1. They are mirrors; they reflect love; they do not initiate it.
2. If much love is given, much love will be returned.
3. Unconditional love is reflected unconditionally, and conditional love is reflected conditionally.

**III. HOW TO SHOW UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TO YOUR CHILDREN:**

- Remember that children are emotional beings who communicate emotionally.
- They use behavior to translate their feelings to us. . . and it is easy to tell how a child is feeling and the frame of mind he is in simply by watching him.
- Children have an uncanny ability also to recognize our feelings by our tone of voice, or facial expression and our actions or behavior. Most people lose this ability by the time they reach adulthood.

**A. Eye contact -- a means of showing unconditional love:**

Psa. 34:15; 32:8; 33:18;

1. Give eye contact every time you speak to them, if at all possible.
2. God sees us... illustration... keeps His eyes on us because of His love.
3. Wrong type of eye contact:
  - a. in anger, hate, rage, resentments etc.
  - b. disapproval and dislike, too often we only look at the child when we want to show disapproval.
4. Eye contact is a body language all its own --
  - a. It is a form of communication --
  - b. use your eyes to show love, approval, acceptance, etc., even though you may also be applying discipline.

**B. Physical contact of love:**

1. Carefully given,
2. purposefully given,
3. consider age, etc.

**C. Focused Attention -- unhurried attention:**

1. quantity of time
2. quality of time,
3. sacrifice of time
4. Child senses being loved, desired, accepted.
5. Made to feel special, a valued part of the family, as a team, unit.
6. Keep the doors of communication open -- you must win and keep the hearts.

**D. Focused Listening -- listening with the heart.**

1. To practice giving: eye contact, physical contact and focused attention, one will need to give focused attention.
2. Really listen to your child (youth) when he is communicating.
3. In practicing this, the parent must control his emotions.
  - a. The parents' worst enemy in raising his child is his own

uncontrolled feelings, especially anger.

- b. Parental anger will instill increasing disrespect for the parents and kindling a child's own anger and growing resentment.
- c. It may be the parent finds is especially hard to control feelings --
  - when depressed,
  - when not physically well,
  - when fatigued mentally or physically,
  - when spiritually down and out of fellowship with the Lord.

#### **IV. UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOVE AND DISCIPLINE!**

##### **A. The child feeling loved is the most important part of good discipline.**

1. You will not have the child's heart unless you consistently give unconditional love.
2. Giving the kind of love we have described is more important than the elements of discipline.
3. Too often parents misunderstand --
  - a. the relationship between love and discipline, and
  - b. the meaning of discipline, (They are not two separate entities)
  - c. that discipline does not necessarily mean punishment.
  - d. Punishment is a very small part of discipline.

##### **B. What is discipline . . . as it relates to unconditional love?**

1. In the realm of child rearing, **discipline is:** *training a child in mind and character to enable him to become a self-controlled, constructive member of society, living for God's glory and honor.*
2. Discipline then includes training through every type of communication.
  - a. guidance
  - b. modeling
  - c. verbal instruction
  - d. written instruction
  - e. verbal requests
  - f. written requests
  - g. teaching, providing learning and fun experiences. (Biblical truth)
3. Guidance toward right thought and action is far superior to punishment for wrong action.
4. Discipline is immeasurably easier when the child feels genuinely loved.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

- a. This is because he naturally wants to identify with the parents,
  - b. and he is able to do so only if he knows he is truly loved and accepted.
  - c. Then, he is able to accept his parents' guidance without hostility and obstructiveness.
5. When the child does not receive unconditional love he is far less likely to identify with his parents and their values.
6. Without a strong, healthy love-bond with his parents, a child usually reacts to parental guidance with anger, hostility, and resentment.

**C. Caution about the over-use of the rod, or punishment.**

1. There are times that punishment or discipline by the rod must be used.
2. Remember: Anyone can beat a child with a rod as the primary way of controlling his behavior, that requires:
  - a. no judgment,
  - b. no sensitivity to their needs,
  - c. no understanding and no talent.
3. The better a child is disciplined (all that means as ***training***) the less punishment will be required.
4. Consider that too much punishment, or use of the rod without a great amount of love can produce very poor results:
  - a. ***These children may appear to be:***
    - passive,    • compliant,    • very quiet,    • withdrawn,
    - and easily controlled when they were young.
  - b. But, ***they often lacked:***
    - a strong, healthy love-attachment to their parents, and
    - **gradually become** defiant, and
    - resentful,    • difficult to control,
    - self-centered,    • non giving,    • non affectionate,
    - insensitive,    • non forgiving,    • noncompassionate,
    - resistant to authority and unkind as adolescents.
5. A child or youth can learn (or be trained well) **only if:**
  - a. he is happy,    b. feels safe,    c. content,
  - d. confident,    e. accepted, and    f. loved.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

6. If corporal punishment is instituted with enough frequency and severity, there will **not be sufficient guilt provocation to enable to child to develop an adequate conscience.**
  - a. The child must have time to face his wrongs, giving thought and considering to them.
  - b. The child must recognized the need to correct his behavior by the choice of his own decision or will.
  - c. Guilt can be side-stepped if the child is swiftly punished, scolded, spanked, etc.
  
7. Another tragedy of the over-use of the rod *is identification with the aggressor:*
  - a. The child also becomes aggressive and punitive.
  - b. The child practices aggression and anger with his peers.
  - c. As he grows up, has children, he is apt to treat them as he was treated.
  - d. Could it be that the frightening extent in which we witness child abuse in our country is partly due to way children have been handled?
  
8. We need to have the most positive, pleasant, loving relationship we can possibly have with a child.
  - a. Desiring the child to develop self-control,
  - b. and ***to do right as we do not demean or hurt his self-concept.***

***Loving discipline will bring the results that force will never achieve.***

## CHAPTER VI

### **The Basics of Discipline . . . For Those At Risk!**

Discipline means many things as we have noted in another chapter in this material.

**Biblical discipline will include the following:**

1. **Preventive discipline** that comes from building a righteous life as convictions for life are instilled in the heart of the child.
2. **Corrective discipline** that comes from the child (or an adult) correcting their own sin or wrong -- by repentance, resisting sin, restoration and change.
3. **Punitive discipline** which is the application of Bible truth about chastening or physically applied corrective discipline.  
(See Proverbs and Hebrews 12)

***Purpose of this chapter:***

Now we want to consider, *How do we instill discipline into the lives of our children?* What are the methods in the nitty-gritty process of doing just that?

- Too often we desire the end result, a child living right, but we do not fully enter into the process to make it so.
- Maybe we feel it is too difficult, or we as parents are too undisciplined ourselves,
- or there are inherit sin weaknesses in our own lives that keep us from developing our children in biblical discipline.
- The process of molding a child's life is not easy. It demands our consistency and willingness to obey biblical principles and commands.

#### **I. THREE BASIC RULES WE MUST APPLY:**

***General statements:***

- These are major absolutes which must be adhered to without equivocation.
- These must be taught early, enforced consistently and vigorously.
- You can't tolerate deviation from these rules for it takes time (possibly years) to develop the child's habits so that these habits become character.
- Each of these rules ***is based on biblical precept*** and each ***goes to the very heart of doing right.***

## ***Are Your Children At Risk?***

- The process of learning discipline is neither short or any easy process.
- Discipline begins with the application of external restraints.
- Rules tend to restrain the old nature and the old nature does not like it.

Consequently people often grumble and buck rules, especially children and adolescents. One purpose, however, of discipline is to train ourselves to rise above the desires and whims of the old nature.

- In beginning to train discipline into our children, there must be rules.

Rules need to be wise. They need to be just. They need to be simple and they need to be enforced. They must be absolute and the children need to know they will be enforced.

### **I. WE ALWAYS OBEY:**

#### **A. This is the most fundamental of all commands.**

(See Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20; Exod. 22:12)

1. Give clear commands, and positively, always expect obedience.
2. A child is ***trained*** to obey just as a hunting dog or a good horse is trained to obey.
  - a. If the dog is unruly, disobedient, undisciplined, then who is at fault, the dog or me?
  - b. Training a dog takes a great deal of time and patience.
3. We must positively demand the child obeys.
4. If they do not obey, there must be immediate and consistent consequences. Every time... every single time.

#### **B. Obedience is critically important!**

1. It has profound spiritual implications.
2. One of the most basic obligations that a Christian has is to obey God.
3. God has a perfect will for each child of God. His will is to be known and obeyed.
  - a. If children are accustomed to disobeying their parents, they will also adopt the same attitude toward God's word and will.
  - b. The key to the victorious Christian life is to obey God's Word.
4. Romans 6:16 teaches us how obedience leads unto righteousness.
  - a. Obeying God is always right.
  - b. Learning the principles of obedience and learning to obey will be a great spiritual favor for your children.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

- c. You will be establishing a precedence in their lives for them to obey God as they mature and become independent.
- 5. Expect the child at times to resist obeying.
  - a. The old sin nature is never interested in obeying.
  - b. The sin nature is full of self-will and all that goes with it.
  - c. Their wills must be subordinate to the standards of right and wrong and the will of God is for them to be submissive to authority.
- 6. There must be consistency.
  - a. No “ifs,” “ands,” or “buts.”
  - b. Obedience must be one of the absolute ground rules of a home.

Illustrations:

**II. WE NEVER LIE:**

**A. This must be an absolute -- we will not tolerate lying.**

- 1. Satan’s chief character trait is ***that he is a liar.***
- 2. Do we want our children to be like the wicked one, the adversary, who seeks to devour, and uses his darts and wiles to defeat us?
- 3. Satan is the father of lies, and as such he seeks to encourage lying on the part of every Christian. (See John 8:44 and Jeremiah 17:9)
  - a. Over and over again the Bible describes Satan as a deceiver!
  - b. He *“beguiled”* Eve and that word essentially means to deceive.
- 4. If we want to keep our children from developing a pattern of life like unto Satan, ***then we must restrain the natural tendency to lie.***
  - a. Consider Psalm 58:3; 51:5-6.

**B. If you please, “we must *brain wash them about not lying!*”**

**III. WE ALWAYS RESPECT OUR PARENTS:**

**A. Disrespect, defiance, sassing or any other form of overt rebellion toward parents . . . must not be tolerated.**

- 1. Few things, if any should bring swifter judgment than for a child to be heard sassing a parent or those in authority..
- 2. Children should know ahead of time that defiance or disrespect would not be allowed, period!
- 3. Satan has always been an instigator of rebellion.



4. He inspired the rebellion against God in ages past causing a multitude of angels to become fallen angels. In Jude 8, the Bible says that these, “*despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*”
5. Defiance and disrespect are Satanic behavior.
6. Satan came to Eve and essentially sought to instill in her a rebellious spirit in the Garden of Eden.
7. God states that “*rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. . .*” (I Samuel 15:23) It is satanic in its origins.
  - a. Rebellion often begins with a smart mouth.
  - b. Attitudes in the lives of children are extremely important. The question is: Do children see in us disrespect and related attitudes?

**B. Children must see an example of honor and respect given by parents!**

1. Children are born with a rebellious, sassy spirit. That means we as parents possibly still exhibit some of this spirit?
2. As adults we must not tolerate these things in our own lives.
3. We must apply the Word of God and exercise ourselves unto godliness, righteousness. (Consider a former chapter.)
4. The way we speak of law enforcement officers, and others in authority may well pave the way for our children’s sinful words.

***Consider:***

- A home can be a warm, fun loving, sweet environment and still maintain the kind of rules we have shared here.
- If parents will enforce these three basics, then other things tend to fall in the place over the years as additional rules are applied to various needs during their maturing years.
- Rebellion and defiance can grow like an ugly, malignant cancer. The earlier it is dealt with the better.
- The things that make for conflict -- disobedience, lying and disrespect can be pretty well eradicated by the time children go to school.

**IV. BASIC ENFORCEMENT OF THE RULES:**

**There are some important principles to be remembered when enforcing the rules.**

**A. They must be *immediately enforced!***

1. Procrastination is counter-productive.

2. Parents are training children to be disobedient.
3. Parents contribute to a child's delinquency.
4. When children follow their desires and parents know the children are getting their way but they do little about it -- there is a lot of friction and anger.
5. You had better win the **battle** and the **war**, or the day will come when your child will be unmanageable.

**B. They must be *consistently enforced!***

1. If it wrong to do one day -- it is wrong the next day.
2. Consistency is a value jewel in the crown of parental leadership.
3. Inconsistency is a major factor in provoking adolescent rebellion later in life.

**C. They must be *fairly and wisely enforced.***

1. We need to be just and fair in dealing with our children.
2. Being authoritarian and unbending is not the answer, for children do forget, or in the childish immaturity they will make mistakes.
3. Rarely should children be punished for breaking something or spilling their milk or food. Child are immature. With age comes better judgment and coordination.

***Consider:***

- *Disrespect, lying, and disobeying* are character and spiritual issues.
- Be very sensitive to the difference between childish foolishness and overt wrong.
- Be longsuffering toward accidents and genuine mistakes, but act swiftly when it is *disrespect, lying, or direct disobedience*.

**V. GIVING POSITIVE ENFORCEMENT:**

***Consider:***

- The goal of instilling discipline is far more than just producing the desired behavior. As a parent, our goal can actually be selfish. We may want the right behavior so we won't look bad, or so we will have personal peace.
  - a. Our goal should be the glory of God in our lives and in the child's life.
  - b. Our goal should be to *do right thus fulfilling God's will*.
  - c. The goal should be to produce a disciplined life so the child as a youth or adult will be found living for the Lord.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

- Desired behavior is a fringe benefit of training. The main purpose is to have a godly child living for God's honor. (Malachi 2:11-16)

**A. Give love that molds the life:**

Homes lacking in love turn out children who spiritually, emotionally, and mentally are distorted. History records that Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Sadam Hussein came from homes where there was little love.

1. We must work at giving unconditional love. God created us with the tendency to love our children, but we must be sure we actually do.
2. A home that is all authoritarian likely will produce children who eventually become rebels.
3. Also it is true that a home that is all love and little discipline tends to produce children that go from being brats to delinquents.

*Never fall victim to the pathetic philosophy that says, "I love my children too much to spank or correct them."*

4. Share love verbally, in deeds of kindness and in physical embrace. The child needs to *know he is loved* with **no question** in his mind.
5. Balance discipline and love, always showering your child with love as you carry out discipline. Fathers, as the authority figure in the home, you may need to work at showing love in no uncertain terms. (Matt. 24:12) *Personal sin will freeze out love.*

*Consider the kind of home you came from. Consider if you are following a poor example of love.*

6. Love is even more crucial during the teenage years. ***Be sure you give them love that is pure, real, vital, experienced, and that molds them.***

**B. Always teach the rules or policies ahead of time:**

Doing this will be a positive enforcement of the discipline you desire to achieve in the life.

1. If the children are old enough to understand the reasons or principles behind the rules, seek to explain them.
2. It is far better to sit down ahead of time and share the guidelines of the home. (rules)
3. Try to think ahead and stay one step ahead of your children as they develop.
4. The undergirding concept of all this is the ***principle of righteousness.***
5. Base your rules on what is right. Firmly lay the foundation of, *We always do what's right.*
6. *Teach the principles and rules before the problems crop out.*

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

7. ***Doing what is right*** should become the ***motivating factor*** of what is done and the rules that are applied.
8. If you teach the ***reasons for your rule*** you will be able to simply deal with the disobedience rather than debating the merits of the rule.

**C. Use incentives to achieve the desired behavior.**

1. Use a system of stars on a chart each day for their daily Bible reading.
2. As they grow older, and you assign given household chores, make another chart, placing stars for the fulfillment of respective chores. Once a week or every two weeks, give them some reward.
3. Regularly praise the child for doing well. Proudly display good school papers. Praise them when they clean their room well. They should be praised for practicing the piano well, etc.
4. At every occasion when your child has done well -- give them praise for doing right.
5. Acknowledge and even reward them for doing that which is right. Use positive encouragement whenever you possibly can.
6. Instilling discipline of life is more than penalizing when wrong is done. It is rewarding them for doing that which is right. *Think up ways of giving reward!*

**D. Provide positive direction by your example!**

**VI. GIVING NEGATIVE ENFORCEMENT:**

Remember for every positive there is an equal and corresponding negative. There are many positives in the Word of God, but also there are many warnings of penalties of doing wrong. (See Deuteronomy. 30:14-20; Malachi. 3:8-12; Galatians 6:7-9.)

Punishment must always exceed the pleasure or enjoyment of the wrong doing. If punishing our children is going to be of much effect, it must be sufficient in degree to deter them from doing the wrong again.

**A. Spanking as God Commands:**

Illustrations of the world's teachings:

1. Spanking is not child abuse.
2. **Definition:** In fact spanking, biblically, is a controlled, unemotional, dispassionate application of brief pain to a portion of the body where no lasting injury is inflicted. It is effective if properly utilized.
3. But, many Christian parents think that God is out of step with modern times. He is just an old meany and does not know as much as the smart experts of today.

***Are Your Children At Risk?***

4. The endless violence and crime we daily witness all across the land are the results of a generation that was brought up without, among other things, a proper spanking, and a breaking of the will to obey authority.
5. **What does God say?**
  - a. Prov. 19:18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Prov. 22:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Prov. 23:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Prov. 29:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Heb. 12:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Heb. 12:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. As parents, will we obey God or disobey Him? Do we think we know more about child training and molding a child than the One who created us?
7. Isn't the issue our obedience as much as the child's obedience to us?

**B. Practical suggestions concerning spanking.**

1. Establish ahead of time the basis for spanking your children.
  - a. predictable rules,
  - b. consistent policies as to when you will spank, known to the child.
  - c. Direct disobedience, lying and disrespect ought to bring swift, immediate, and predictable spanking.
  - d. Retribution at home if there was disciplinary action at school.
2. Establish standard implementation of the spankings.
  - a. Don't use your hands. Why?
  - b. Use some item with which to spank. Suggestions:
  - c. Possibly have the child go out to get the switch.
3. Establish the place you will administer the spanking.
  - a. Use a neutral place. Keep their room as home and place of refuge.
  - b. Probably a bath room is the best place.
  - c. A stick left on the back of the commode becomes a daily reminder.
4. Establish standard spanking policies:

**My suggestions:**

- a. Tell them number of swats they will receive and for what.
  - b. If the child fought, double the amount given.
  - c. Never spank when you are angry.
  - d. Never should the child perceive he is being spanked because he made the parent mad.
  - e. The child should always know why they are being spanked.
  - f. Never should it be vindictive. Check your thoughts about the reason why you are spanking!
5. Always seek to be self-controlled.
- a. Try to remain cool, calm, and collected.
  - b. Try to be dispassionate, avoid any emotions showing on your part.
  - c. Realize a spanking is to build character. Focus on **why!**
6. Spank soon after the offense.
- a. Small children have a short memory and short attention span.
  - b. Refrain from spanking in public places.
  - c. They should relate the spanking to what they have done.
7. **Don't reject your children; love them.**
- a. The aftermath of the spanking experience is extremely important.
  - b. How did you end it? Angry, wrathful, upset,? How did he respond?
  - c. The session should end in a loving and forgiving time.
  - d. Spanking is a means to a greater end -- the end being the instilling of discipline into the life of the child.  
  
It is not an end itself, but a means to an end.
  - e. Spanking should be practiced consistently, carefully, in a controlled fashion and with much love. It will then be effective.

***May God help the Parent to Apply the Word of God!***

# Three Kinds Of Discipline

(extra materials)

## I. PREVENTIVE DISCIPLINE:

- Discipline must be recognized as being much more than spanking, or corporal punishment.
- There is so much more taught in Scripture. In fact the impact of the Word of God in the life ought to be first and foremost that which builds character and molds the life.
- See Prov. 1:2-9; 2:1-11; 3:1-4; 21-23;  
4:1-5; 10-14; 20-23; 6:20-23; 7:1-3; 13:1,13; 15:32-33

### A. Before the fact of sin, before the failure -- mold with the Word of God:

1. We could spare ourselves and our child much grief, sorrow, failure, and heartache if we would teach the Word of God in such a way as to change the life of our child (s).
2. We should so teach, instruct, and perfect the child that he or she would be spared much sin and wrong.

### B. Give Instruction: (Consider the lives of Joseph, Moses, Samson, Daniel)

1. Train up in the *admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6:4
2. *Bring them up to live the Word of God.* Consider Psalm 78:1-8.

### C. Build convictions in the child's life.

1. Before the time of temptation comes.
2. Before *peer pressures are experienced in the life.*
3. Before they are in school.

### D. Bring about inner resolves to do right.

1. By parental example in daily life,
2. By daily application of the Scriptures,
3. By teaching a prayer life and by Scripture memory.

## II. CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE:

- The Word of God was given for: *doctrine, reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness.* II Tim. 3:15-16
- Here we are considering **corrective discipline** whereby the Word of God is taught in such a way that the child desires to correct his or her life.

- Consider Prov. 15: 5, 32; 29:15, 17; Jer. 17:9; Isa 53:5-6; Psa. 119:9-11

**A. Because of the sin nature the child must learn to correct their lives.**

1. By repentance, confession and forsaking sin. Prov. 28:13; I Jh 1:6-2:2
2. By personally judging their own sins, asking for forgiveness,
  - a. getting right with others, and
  - b. making decisions to bring personal change. I Cor. 11:31-32
3. By helping the child to bring about *personal resolve to do right* --
  - a. by our instruction, teaching, and living the Word of God ourselves,
  - b. by our daily praying with them, helping them to actually apply the principles and truths of the Word of God to their selves, daily.
    - by reproof, rebuking, exhorting the child with the Word of God.
    - II Tim. 3:15-16; Rom. 12:1-2; Titus 2:11-14; Rom. 6:16-17

Illustration of a child... house... fruit on table:

**III. PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE:**

- When it comes to corporal punishment spanking is what God tells us to do.
- There are other forms of punishment that the parent may well use, but spanking is God's directive given to the parent.
- God knows how we are made. While parents have a reason to carry out various means of punishment -- God does not direct us to send them to bed without a meal, or set them in a corner, etc., but to carry out the use of the rod.

**A. Spanking will work:**

1. We often hear parents say, "*But spanking does not work.*"
  - a. I think the problems is that did not do in the Scriptural way,
  - b. or they did not spank hard enough to get results.
2. Spanking will work, for God says so; He promises that it will work.
  - a. Who are we to say God is not right?
  - b. Have we embraced the ideas, teaching, philosophy of Dr. Spock and others like him?

**B. Spanking confronts self-will:**



## *Are Your Children At Risk?*

1. Prov. 22:15 -- Here we are taught that **foolishness** (self-will, desire to rule, desire to be number one) **is bound up in the heart of the child**, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.  
See Prov. 20:30; 23:22; 19:17.
2. When should we use spanking?
  - a. When we are faced with **self-will** or rebellion.
  - b. When we are faced with **defiance**, and **deliberate disobedience**.
  - c. When the child is responding with a **bad attitude**, disrespect for authority, sassing, etc.
3. When should we forego spanking?
  - a. When the child is just being a child.
  - b. When it is obviously a childish behavior -- forgetting, dropping things, neglecting, etc.
  - c. When they are manifesting an inability because they are yet children.

*We must be able to correctly discern when it is deliberate disobedience and when it is just a normal child's behavior.*

*Spanking should primarily confront self-will and bad attitudes.*

### **C. Spanking should match the wrong:** Prov. 19:18; 28:25; 16:32

1. We must "*chasten while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*"
2. They will learn to turn on the tears, to cry early and loud, hoping that you are persuaded before you even decide what to do, or before you had planned to quit.
3. Do not quit the spanking too soon or you will only arouse their anger and not break the will.
4. It must far *outweigh* the pleasure from self-willed wrong doing.
5. Don't spank for every little thing.

### **D. Spanking should be applied on the proper place:**

1. Not slapping in the face, etc.
2. Not hitting, but spanking on the *seat of learning*.
3. Spanking on the reserved good place God has given.
4. Spank with something other than your hand.

5. If you do it in the wrong way, or unjustly, or angrily, YOU WILL --
  - a. stir up rebellion and resentment, and
  - b. cause a child to be hateful, spiteful, (if not at least discouraged and remorseful).
6. To hit in the mouth is more the action of a fighter than a loving parent.
7. Never spank a moving object -- you can easily break a hand, etc.

**E. Spanking ought to have a proper order:**

1. An order of where, and how.
2. An order or process of what you do.
3. A set of rules that have to do with their cooperation.

**F. Spanking expresses parental love --**

1. Prov. 13:24 -- A common ***cop-out*** among parents is : *"I don't want to spank my child, I love him (her) too much to hurt him."*
2. Girls have self-will just as boy do, and what applies to one applies to the other. Sometimes moms have a wrong belief system especially about girls.
3. *Discipline is an express of love.*
  - a. A disciplined child is a well-adjusted child -- he knows someone cares about him.
  - b. He knows that someone will make him obey, and he knows that somebody ***loves him enough*** to make him obey.

Illustration -- words of Brooks, 1850 --

*It is far easier to discipline when the child is young, and to bend and break the will, than to break the child with thrashings when the child is nearly grown and out of control. In fact then most parents give up, or feel that spankings will not avail. Also then they may fear the state and what they teach about child-abuse.*

*We must mold the life for God.... most of it ought to be done by the time the child is seven.*

**Conclusions:**

1. The rod and reproof give wisdom (Prov. 29:15) for reproof is explaining, and rebuking sin.
2. We must explain what is wrong, why it is wrong, and then seek to bring about *preventive discipline*.
  - a. This is done by teaching, rebuking, and

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- b. exhorting, and seeking to prevent further sinning and wrong.
- 3. These two should be *joined together* -- *rod and reproof* -- these will give wisdom, but a child left to himself will bring shame to the parents.
- 4. Either the child will cry now, or you will cry later. That is exactly what the Word of God is saying.
- 5. Leave the child to his own indulgent way and some day you will be brought to grief and shame. The child living his self-willed life will bring damage, despair, frustration and anguish of heart.
- 6. Disciplined children will generally endeavor to take care of Dad and Mom, but most often indulged children will put them some where and forget about them.
- 7. The child will soon discover whether you are disposed to yield or to rule in your home.
- 8. Without wise and firm control the parent is miserable and the child is ruined.

## Chapter VII

# Why Rebellion Among the . . . At Risk Generation?

**Foundation Biblical Portions to Consider:** Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21;  
Prov. 23:10-26

### **Introduction:**

1. Some would make Ephesians 6:4 mean: *“Provoke not your children to wrath, don’t discipline them for this will make them angry, so don’t do it.”*
2. Many rebels at heart, among the youth of our land, became rebels because of the way they were treated as children and during early adolescence.
3. Sometimes children feel provoked when we discipline them, but that may be because of the way we carry out discipline.
  - In Colossians 3:21 we read, *“Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”*
  - God is warning us not to discipline in such a way that we will provoke our child to wrath on one hand,
  - or that we discourage them, and break their spirit on the other hand.
  - To not provoke to wrath is a real, God-given, vital warning.

### ***How do we provoke children to wrath?***

Prov. 25:28; 16:32; 22:24

## **I. DISCIPLINE IN ANGER PROVOKES !**

1. What happens when someone flies at you in anger?
  - a. Does an angry spirit immediately rise within you?
  - b. Does wrath or anger beget anger?
  - c. When you discipline in anger or wrath and display such, your children will react the same way.
    - When they get older they may be wrathful, revengeful, angry.
    - Probably they will treat you with disrespect and dishonor.

## **B. What is the purpose of discipline, why do it?**

### 1. Poor, *sinful* reasons:

- a. Is it because in our selfishness, we want freedom, release from being bothered?
- b. Is it because we are exasperated, and have had enough?

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- c. Is it because we are tired ourselves, or had a bad day?
- d. Is it because we are prone to impatience and anger?

If done because you are exasperated, maybe you get exasperated too much, or maybe not enough?

2. *Biblical, good reasons:*

- a. Because we want to build character.
- b. Because we want to teach self-control, patience.
- c. Because we want to teach obedience, respect, and honor.
- d. Because if they don't obey us, they won't obey God either.

You ought to have certain rules in your house, to teach character, to teach honestly, promptness, dependability, to finish the job, (Basic character traits.)

You discipline because certain rules, laws of the home you set up, have been broken and punishment must be meted out.

Carry out discipline because of a problem in the child's life (youth) not on the basis of your temper.

**II. DISCIPLINE WITHOUT PRAISE PROVOKES:**

(I Thess. 2:6-7; I Cor. 13:1-8; Jh 13:34-35; Heb. 12:5-15; Rom. 13:7-8; 12:10, 15)

Some of our children live in homes where -- *If they do something wrong -- they will get it, but if they do something right, they are pretty sure that no one will even notice it.*" That is wrong.

Illustration of woman with show-dogs:

**A. Much praise ought to be given for what is good, right.**

- 1. Maybe you will have to really look for the praise-worthy things.
- 2. Praise will often get good results, while ridicule, scorn, etc., will bring sad results in the child's life.
- 3. Praise lifts the spirit, creates a desire to improve, excel, to receive more praise.

**B. Giving admiration, and appreciation will often bring a change of heart in the recipient.**

- 1. thanklessness, lack of appreciation, etc., can cause the child to give up, to be discouraged, remorseful, if not angry and rebellious.
- 2. It takes a heap of patience, and ability to have the long viewpoint!
- 3. So praise them for their efforts, and accomplishments.

**III DISCIPLINE WITHOUT CONSISTENCY PROVOKES:**

James 1:5-8 (inconsistency, hypocrisy and changeableness provokes)

Illustration of a school band-master:

**A. We vary in our moods - Phil. 4:8-9; Deut. 6:4-9**

1. Some times we punish too hard, feel guilty --
  - a. so then we try to make up for this by leniency,
  - b. then, we don't like the result from this reaction so we swing back to harshness, hardness, etc.
2. Sometimes we are tired, we allow ourselves to over-react.
  - a. We use a sledge hammer on a *thumb tack issue*,
  - b. We blow up, or maybe try ignoring, etc.
3. Sometimes company comes and we react inconsistently
  - a. depending how we think the company might react,
  - b. what relatives, friends might think, etc.

**B. We vary as parents in how we deal with things:**

1. Children learn who is the *light touch*,
  - a. *who they can control, or*
  - b. *manipulate*
2. Maybe one parent seldom disciplines, but when they do -- they do it furiously.
3. The other parent, who is weak, (has a poor idea of love)
  - a. may sympathize with the child,
  - b. feels the child has been treated too harshly,
  - c. sides with the child. (You will produce warped children)
4. Parents, you must:
  - a. agree, work out things when you disagree, but do it when children are not in ear-shot.
  - b. Discuss, pray over, come to a united agreement, support one another.
  - c. Explain to the children together -- the family rules, the game plan, so they know **what** to expect, and then be unitedly consistent.

- d. MOM-- you had better agree with dad, even you don't agree. . . give a united front.

**C. Write down your rules -- post them -- don't have too many.**

1. Write them, decide what they will be, keep them.
2. The child needs to know the boundaries.
3. Build a good routine as a family.

**IV. PARENTS "EMOTIONALLY OUT OF CONTROL" PROVOKE:**

Col. 3:8-12; Eph. 4:30-32; 5:1-2;

**We have:**  
fighting, scrapping,  
back-biting, screaming,  
criticizing, arguing,  
cutting up one another,  
gripping, scorn, contempt,  
wrath, anger, unforgiveness,  
resentments, etc.

**We need :** (Eph. 4:31- 5:2)  
A Removal of that which Destroys a home: 4:31  
A Restoration of that which Blesses a home: 4:32  
An Imitation of that which Hallows a home: 5:1-2

1. Children become very discouraged, resentful, worried, rebellious, and many of them *give up*.
2. They see no answer; they wish they could help their parents, and often they feel accountable for parents separation and divorce.
3. Don't forget to admit when you are wrong and ask them for forgiveness.
  - a. Confess personal sin that effects them.
  - b. Be quick to make amends,  
James 5:16; Lk 17:3-4; Prov. 28:13; 16:2; 21:2

**V. NOT FORGIVING PROVOKES:**

Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-14; ( See special study on forgiveness)

**VI. A CRITICAL SPIRIT PROVOKES:**

II Tim. 2:3-6;

**A. Reactions we allow in our lives:**

1. We readily degrade, belittle them when correcting them. Matt 18:1-14
2. We are prone to be abusive, talk down to them.

**B. The selective memory we have at the time.**

1. We ask more of them than they are able to give.
2. We forget they are only children and we have a tendency to talk of our own childhood with glowing words of our well doing.
3. We make it appear as if we were better than our own child.

**VII. CHANGING RULES, STANDARDS WITHOUT REASON PROVOKES:**

**A. We need to remember the rules we are applying.**

If we must change the rules, explain why, etc.

**B. We must be consistent.**

**C. We need to help them succeed.**

a. *Say what we mean and mean what you say.*

b. Don't fail to help them know what you want or expect.

Prov. 1:8; 6:20-23

**VIII. EXPECTING PERFECTION PROVOKES:**

**A. Expect your child (teen) to make mistakes.**

1. Give them right to fail.

a. With that teach personal accountability. Gal. 6:7-9

b. Teach: *"Your choice will always have results . . . you can make your choices, but you can't choose the results or consequences that may go with your choice."*

2. Help them correct themselves when they fail. (II Tim. 3:16-17)

*Corrective discipline* is the child or youth coming to the place of correcting their own lives... by repentance, restitution, and restoration.

**B. You must accept them for what they are -- your children.**

We tend to fail to give them acceptance or give them time for maturity and growth.

***Things we need to do:***

- Allow them to share their hearts, their burdens, concerns and frustrations.
- Give them compassion, a listening heart, and enter into their hurts.
- Do take time to meet their needs. Recognize their interests, burdens, and concerns are as real to them as yours are to you.



***A Few Principles in Requiring Obedience in the Home!***

1. You can teach your child to obey the first time spoke to. . . without building rebellion.
2. You are training the child to obey or to disobey.
3. You are teaching obedience or disobedience.
4. Make it a rule -- *if you have to say it twice*, (after very carefully telling the child) there will be punishment the *third time that you say it*.
5. Teach, training must be done with consistency. . . that is the way you --
  - build their consistent habits,
  - build their consistent thoughts about expectations,
  - build their consistent expectations if they deliberately disobey.

Chapter VIII

**The Biblical View of the Heart. . . of a  
Generation At Risk!**

- Why are people's lives at risk? Why the horrible impact of sin and its degradation? ***Why do people need correction and discipline?***
- All training and molding is done from the perspective of our understanding about the need of a child's (youth's) heart.
- If you do not agree with what God says about our hearts then you will naturally approach discipline from the world's viewpoint rather than God's.
- What do we hear parents or grandparents say about newborns? What do we truly understand as to the condition of the heart of the newborn?
- Solomon spoke very clearly about the need of his son: (Prov. 2:1-11; 3:1-4, 21-23; 4:1-6, 10-13, 20-23; 6:21-23)
- Parents' duties are basically two-fold -- *discipline and admonition*. (Eph. 6:4)

**I. THE STATE OF A CHILD'S (youth's) HEART:**

Jere. 17:9; Rom. 7:18; 8:5-8; Psa. 58:3; 51:5; 19: 139:23-24

Illustration of what people say about newborns:

**A. The Humanistic viewpoint:**

1. The child is inherently so good, so pure, --
  - a. that if we just shelter him from the evil influences of this world, and
  - b. give him the right environment he will be certain to turn out well.
2. If we just give the child the right experiences --
  - a. he will become all that we see in the initial sweetness, etc.
  - b. He just needs to be given all the **rights** he deserves.
3. The child is so sweet, pure, unassuming, etc., we just need--
  - a. to allow the child to express himself, so the good on the inside can come out.
  - b. *"My, it will be lovely, for he is so pure and innocent."*  
These are cherished fallacies of humanism and of modern education.

**B. The Biblical Viewpoint:**

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1. Foolishness is *bound up in the heart of a child*. Prov. 22:15
  - a. Does not mean some practical jokes, or fun.
  - b. Means in the Hebrew: *“the desire to be first; to be chief; to control others, to have my own way.”*
  - c. This is the self-will of a child; it is in conflict with the will of the parent, and that self-will is in conflict with the will of God.
  - d. When a child is born there is a universal defect -- a sin nature: Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 7:18; Jere. 17:9
  - e. So the child without instruction, will lie, hate, be selfish, stubborn, for these things are *bound up in the heart of a child*.
2. How you handle a child, depends upon:
  - a. Whether you hold to the humanistic viewpoint, or the biblical.
  - b. When you accept spiritual truth or disagree with the state of your child’s heart, and your own for that matter.
  - c. IF you agree with God, then you will realize that the very foundation of discipline will be dependent upon your viewpoint of the heart.

**C. The Parent’s responsibility:**

1. Our discipline is to help the child bring correction into his life.
  - a. Prov. 22:15 *“But the rod of correction, will drive it (foolishness) far from him.”*
  - b. Parental discipline is to be a help to purify the child’s nature; help him curb sin.
  - c. Parental discipline is to mold the will of the child--
    - help drive self-will from the child
    - that his will comes under the control of those in authority.
  - d. Discipline is expected by God to drive the *foolishness far from the child*.
    - That the *foolishness* won’t be a curse to him all his days.
    - That he will be broken about lies, disobedience, etc.
    - We can expect these things to be in the heart unless curbed from the beginning of the child’s life:
      - self-will, -- self-determination outside God’s will and best;
      - rebellion, -- stubbornness, -- disobedience,
      - temper, -- hatred, etc.
2. Parent’s discipline must begin early: Prov. 19:18

- a. The will of the parent is to supervise the will of the child (youth).
  - b. The child's will is pitted against the parents at a very early age, (6 weeks)
  - c. The purpose is to drive out the effect of the sin nature;
    - to drive out of the heart the unrestricted manifestation of the self-will of the child.
    - to bring a molding of the will to submissiveness.
3. The parent's purpose must be clear:
- Prov. 16:32; 25:28; Col. 4:2; Eph. 5:17; 6:6; Col. 1:9; Psa. 127:3,4

## **II. PRINCIPLES, IDEAS ABOUT DISCIPLINE OF A CHILD:**

### **A. Let the child know you represent GOD in the execution of discipline.**

1. The parent is the *minister of God to execute His judgment*.
2. God requires you to punish the child, carry out discipline; to have him do right.
3. That you, as the parent, are under higher authority than your own to have the child obey and do right.
  - Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3
  - Who is accountable to train the child? Parents, you are!
4. If, as a parent, you do not mold the child to obey you -- you are disobeying God yourself; you are rebelling against God.

### **B. Build a blessed, close relationship with the child:**

1. That the worse part of spanking, or correction ought to be:
  - a. the broken fellowship between the parent and the child,
  - b. the sense of loss of being in the good graces of the parent.
2. The child should dread displeasing the parent.
3. The child should dread the spanking as well.
4. The fellowship ought to be so sweet, so tender, so precious and so happy that the severance of it is terrible punishment for the child to endure.

### **C. The punishment should be greater than the pleasure enjoyed by the child when doing wrong.**

The child ought to sense that he is always the loser -- that the discomfort will be so multiplied that soon he will have forgotten the pleasure derived from doing wrong.

## **Chapter IX**

## **Some Ingredients Lacking. . . Among Those At Risk!**

Psa. 127: 3-4; Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1; Exod. 20

- We do not live in a disciplined age! In fact since the *burn-in's, set-in's, and love-in's of the hippy days* we have witnessed a rejection of authority and a break down of discipline in every area of our culture in America.
- What does God want in child discipline? Consider that as God disciplines His children we are to discipline ours.
- What does the Bible teach about discipling a child? How should we handle our children and youth?
- We want to look further at this vast subject as we look at principles, ideals, and aspects not considered in the other lessons.

### **I. CONSIDERING WHAT DISCIPLINE IS:**

#### **A. It is “*training*” --**

1. *“which corrects, molds, perfects, strengthens the person.”*
2. *“which brings about self-control and obedience to given standards.”*

#### **B. It is a learned pattern --**

1. The child learns his pattern of obedience to God from the pattern of obedience to his parents.
2. If he is not taught to obey parents it will very hard from him to obey God or any other authority in his life.

#### **C. It is leadership under authority --**

1. for the parents are under higher authority than their own.
2. for discipline to be effective it must have authority behind it and God has given parents authority.
  - a. The authority of the Word of God should be the authority with which parents lead.
  - b. Remember, parent, God is behind you; and more specifically the authority is *in you*, for He dwells in the saved.
3. The authority and power of the Lord should come through the --
  - a. voice and actions of the parents.
  - b. The dignity and poise of God should rest upon you in a way that

commands obedience. ***You are His messenger and leader!***

4. "God has not given us (the parents) the spirit of fear, but of power (His authority, and of love (His love) and of a sound mind (His wisdom to administer the authority and love" II Tim. 1:7.
5. Discipline is not just to punish the child for stepping out of line, but especially to teach the child the way he ought to go.

## **II. CONSIDERING WHAT DISCIPLINE INVOLVES:**

### **A. Discipline involves *knowledge*:** The child must **KNOW!**

1. Commands and directions must be clear.
  - a. Be sure the child understands and that your commands or directions are based upon Bible principles.
  - b. Disrespect, disobedience to direct commands and stubbornness are serious.
  - c. Do not have too many commands, rules, or limitations. Make the child **keep** what you do set. **Keep your word.**
2. Guiding children implies a purpose and a goal.
  - a. Comprehend God's will and know what pleases Him. That comes from much time in the Word of God. Eph. 5:17; 6:6; Col. 4:12; Psa 37:23
  - b. Know what molds the life of children. Understand them and the process of learning.
  - c. Children who live in an ***atmosphere of loving effort*** can survive many technical mistakes.
    - Parenthood is a matter of feelings, dedication, loving concern,
    - firm discipline, and enjoyment of the children.
    - Forgiveness and openness are also so very important.

### **B. Discipline involves *adult conviction*:** The child must **FEEL!**

Prov. 29:15; 29:17; Rev. 3:19; Romans, chapter 14

1. Convictions that are founded on the Word of God.
  - a. Because our purpose is to build character, our convictions must be founded on the Word of God.
  - b. Convictions are those things we would die for, we will not compromise for we are willing to pay any price necessary to hold them.
2. Convictions about:
  - a. godliness
  - b. honesty
  - c. dependability
  - d. thrift

- e. God      f. sin, repentance      g. prayer      h. dedication, etc.
- 3. Convictions we are willing to stand for: Eph. 6:10-14
  - a. We must be careful that we are not soft, and give in.
  - b. A child has the right to expect the parents know better than he and that they will lead the way.
  - c. He should expect the parents to have convictions strong enough to carry him along.
- 4. Convictions that come from the heart.
  - a. Actions and methods should arise internally.
  - b. What you do and the way you do it are a compound of your knowledge, your values, and your inner strengths.

**C. Discipline involves *supervision*:** The child must **DO!**  
Phil. 2:13; 1:6; I Thess. 5:24;

- 1. As God supervises our lives, so the parent is to supervise the child's (or youth's) life.
- 2. Training must be enacted by the parent, supervision must be performed.
- 3. Reasoning and telling only will not substitute for the supervision that must take place.

**D. Discipline involves *limits*:** The child must **SENSE!**  
I Thess. 5:22; Col. 3:17; I Cor. 10:31-32

- 1. There are necessary boundaries that God gives us for our well-being.
- 2. The parent must set boundaries for the child's well-being.
- 3. Specific limits -- that are reasonable, enforceable, and God-honoring must be set and applied.

**E. Discipline involves *help*:** The child must **RECEIVE!**

- 1. Help the child to understand the drive of the sin nature.
- 2. They must understand the way of salvation and of personal victory.
- 3. They must be taught all about temptation and how to overcome it.
- 4. They must learn how to pray, to walk with the Lord, and how to read the Word of God to feed their own soul.

**F. Discipline involves *pressure*:** The child must **RESPOND!**

- 1. As God puts pressure on us often as we hear sermons, study the Word of God, so we must put pressure on the child, as led by the Holy Spirit.

2. Guiding children (youth) involves dealing with resistance.
  - a. Many times the inclinations of a child or young person is not in his best interests.
  - b. There must be godly, loving pressure toward the right, pressure that is as strong and yet as gentle as necessary.
3. Pressure is everything outside the individual that influences or directs him --
  - a. in what he **does, thinks, and feels.**
  - b. This is a constructive force that leads him to a knowledge of right and wrong.
  - c. There are many pressures of the wrong kind in the public school among peers of the child or youth.
  - d. These must be counteracted with the right kind of pressures brought about in the right way.
  - e. These must be based on the **common good, and the will of God.**

**Conclusions:**

- We desperately need personal discipline! We live in an undisciplined age and the attitudes that reject authority seem to permeate all of society and the culture of our country.
- We live in a very soft age and people desire to be free from all pressures outside of personal self-willed living.
- ***Parents need first of all to be personally disciplined people who allow the Holy Spirit to control their lives so that they will manifest the fruits of the spirit.***
- The things we shared here are closely related to the previous chapters. When we consider discipline, we also must keep the principles in mind we have looked at in this chapter.



Chapter X

**Principles to Practice. . . Toward Building a  
God-Honoring Home!**

**Introduction:**

- Do we appeal to Scripture for virtually every aspect of training of our children?
- Most Bible believing Christians accept God's Word as sufficient for not only ***faith*** (*which pertains to doctrine*) but also for ***practice*** (*which has to do with day to day living*).
- While we may give mental accent to the above statement, I am afraid that a large percentage of believers look to modern psychology for answers in training children.
- A few generations ago people did not have behavioral psychology to tell them what to do. Neither did we have the rejection of authority, the breakdown of the school systems, the wickedness among the populous, nor the loss of integrity among the leaders as we have today. Is there not a parallel?
- What does modern psychology say about children rearing?
- **The issues are spiritual!** So the need for guidance and authority is also a spiritual issue and problem. (Consider II Tim. 3:15-17.) The application of this portion is for family life as much as any other aspect of need.

**I. THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS:**

**A. This concept is taught throughout the Word of God.**

1. I Timothy 4:7-8 tells us that godliness is profitable unto all things.
2. In I Timothy 6:11, Paul urged Timothy to pursue not only righteousness, but also godliness, along with other spiritual virtues.
3. Then in II Peter 1:6 we are told to add godliness in the development of our Christian life.
4. Paul wrote to Titus and told him to live in a godly fashion in this present world. This is for every saved person. (Titus 2:12)

**B. The goal in child training is building godliness in children's lives.**

1. Not are they good, but are they godly?
2. Maybe they are good as far as the world's standards go, but are they living a godly life? Are they being molded to be godly? (Titus 2:11-14)

## II. THE PRACTICE OF FAITHFULNESS:

### A. A profound principle must be applied -- *faithfulness to the things of God!*

1. An entire family faithful to the things of God will have a profound impact on how children develop spiritually.
2. A father and mother, over the years, *living a faithful life*, in the reading the Word of God, in church attendance, in serving the Lord, in love to the Lord, will have an great effect on youth in the home.

### B. God has much to say about *faithfulness*.

1. The message to the church at Smyrna urged them to: *"Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."* (Rev. 2:10)
2. God's stated blessing in Proverbs 28:20 is: *"A faithful man shall abound with blessings." And we do make time for what we want to do!*
3. If a father is blessed because of his life and actions, the whole family will be recipients of this blessing. (See Psalm 89.)
4. God says: *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."* (Matt. 6:33) How do we seek first His kingdom? What will this mean in church attendance for example? (See Hebrews 10:25.) Faithful families, who are always in attendance, are in God's will, are you?
5. How faithful? How many times would a spouse have to commit adultery to be considered unfaithful?
6. Will your children be found in the will of God? Consider in contrast the life of Eli and his sons as found in I Samuel 2:12-17, and 22-27, then compare this with 2:35, *"And I will raise me up a faithful priest. . ."*
7. Unfaithfulness is a form of spiritual inconsistency and it will breed rebellion in the lives of your children. ***Will your children be a lovely testimony of Jesus Christ and His grace?*** (See I Sam. 2:30.)

## III. THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTIONS:

Materials shared from our book. *Tools for the Christian Family*.

### A. We are commanded to *teach diligently*. (Deut 6:7, 11:19)

1. When we set down, rise up, by the wayside, etc.
2. The concept is molding children daily with God's Word.

### B. Have a purpose in family devotions

1. Teach God's will
2. Teach Christian life principles.
3. Teach a prayer life
4. Teach how to be saved, disciple them.

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5. Instill Christian character -- righteousness, godliness!
6. A time to memorize the Word -- learn how, hide it, use it, apply it
7. Teach relationships -- and their outworking.
8. Teach how to win others... have a family plan of impact toward the lost.

**C. Have a plan of action.**

1. Have a plan for reading, praying, etc.
2. Have a time, and a procedure,
3. Focus on applying truth to the life, not just unrelated facts.

**D. Keep it simple, yet vital.**

1. The law of learning is repetition. So don't make it long, make it simple, maybe only read 1-5 verses, talk about what they mean.
2. The most important thing is the area of reading -- read those portions from which you can teach and build character training, doctrine, etc.
3. Reiterating a principle over and over during the years lends to positive reinforcement.

**IV. THE PRACTICE OF LOVE:**

**A. God commands us to *love one another*.** (John 15:12)

**B. Love must overcome our self-centered, self-seeking life as adults.**

**C. Love must be expressed.** (See foregoing lesson on unconditional love.)