

## **Parenthood: God's Classroom**

Every parent has days when the kids are driving you crazy. And yet there is nothing more rewarding, more thrilling, more heartwarming, and more touching than raising children! Parenthood is a different kind of classroom, one without walls and always in session.

### **Three Nuggets of Wisdom About Raising Kids:**

#### **1. \_\_\_\_\_(Train) Your Child.**

- a. *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6.* The Hebrew word for “train” (*chanak*) means “to put something in your mouth for tasting”. It was used of 1) a midwife stimulating the palate of a baby and creating a sucking response; and 2) a rope placed in the mouth of a horse which was used to break it.
- b. A good parent will stimulate a thirst within their child for what is pleasing to God, and they will rein in their child when they're defiant. Jesus is our model. *“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” I Peter 2:21.*
- c. Jesus is full of grace and truth (John 1:14) and so is God the Father (Deuteronomy 10:17-19; 30:19). In Matthew 7:13-27, Jesus portrays life as a binary choice (two gates, two roads, two prophets, two trees, two fruits, two builders, two foundations, and two houses). Every child needs to know that Jesus is the only way to heaven (John 14:6)!

#### **2. Raise Them \_\_\_\_\_(According to Their Bent)**

- a. Hebrew scholar Franz Delitzsch says a better translation is *“Give to the child instruction conformable to his way.”* The Hebrew word for “his way” (*derek*) refers to the makeup of a child, their unique characteristics and mannerisms. Cain and Abel, the first two sons of Adam and Eve, are very different, as are Esau and Jacob, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekkah (Genesis 4 and 25).
- b. Your kids have different personality types and different gifts and talents. A wise parent will work in accordance with the personality and giftedness of their children. They will avoid the mistakes of 1) raising kids the way they were raised; and 2) comparing one kid to another, especially their siblings.

#### **3. Work With God in Forming A Child's \_\_\_\_\_(Conscience)**

- a. A person's conscience is developed in childhood and goes with them the rest of their life. A conscience is “a sense of right and wrong; an inner feeling or voice that acts as a guide.” Ideally, parents will work with God in developing a child's conscience by bringing them up *“in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4.*

- b. A conscience is more than a checklist of do's and don'ts. Rather it is an awareness of God's presence that is calibrated just right to sense good and evil. Ideally, they will cherish the things that God cherishes and steer away from the things that grieve God's heart.
- c. *"The requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them."* Romans 2:15.
- d. Rebellion will be everywhere as the end times approach. *"In later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron."* I Timothy 4:1-2.

**Proverbs 22:6 is one of hundreds of proverbs given in Scripture. It's a wise saying that is generally true, like Galatians 6:7, "A man reaps what he sows." It's generally true. Training your child well is not a guarantee they will make it to heaven.**

**When a parent works in harmony with God to form a child's conscience, their conscience will speak to them until they take their last breath. Parenthood is a daunting responsibility, an awesome privilege, and a supreme joy! Parents, will you invest deeply in your children? Heartland family, will you cheer our parents on?**