

## Bringing up Children

TEXT: Proverbs 23:13-14

THESIS: To address biblical and practical aspects of bringing up children.

### INTRODUCTION:

1. If you do not have the books: Jesus Christ The Hope of the Home and Christ in the Home, both written by brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr., you should order them and study these great books.
2. When we are referring to the home, you can be certain, there are obstacles to bringing up children.
  - a. But, there are also rewards in bringing up children.
3. Today, we live in a largely undisciplined society; church discipline is not often practiced like it should be; and many times discipline is sadly lacking in the home.
  - a. Yet, parents have a God ordained obligation to exercise discipline in the home over children.
  - b. Prov. 23:13-14, “Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.”
4. I would like to observe:
  - a. The mission of bringing up children.
  - b. The responsibilities of bringing up children.
  - c. The negative side of bringing up children.
  - d. The positive side of bringing up children.
  - e. Tools for bringing up children.

### DISCUSSION:

- I. MISSION OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN
  - A. The old TV series “Mission Impossible” began with the familiar line: “Your mission, Jim, should you decide to accept it ...”
    1. Sometimes it may seem that bringing up children is an impossible mission and we may wonder if we will ever survive, but I assure you that we can survive and can accomplish the mission.
    2. For, every parent has opted to accept the mission of bringing up children by his or her voluntary participation in sexual intercourse without the use of contraception.
      - a. It is true, though, that parents may not REALIZE the mission they have espoused by their actions or may be ill-suited for the task.
    3. Nevertheless, there is no turning back from the mission of bringing up children for the faithful child of God from the point of conception onward.
  - B. Now, the mission of bringing up children is not unlike the overall mission of the church.
    1. Benevolence, evangelism and edification must also begin at home.

2. And, our children must be impressed foremost with spiritual values.
    - a. To fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13-14)
    - b. To, seek ye first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33).
  3. Thus, our children must not only learn how to make a living, but more importantly how to live spiritually.
  4. And, our children must be taught to seek spiritual maturity in adulthood.
    - a. “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:12-14)
    - b. Newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word (1 Pet. 2:2).
  5. And, our children must be taught SPIRITUAL PRODUCTIVITY.
    - a. Because, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. (We don’t want to see our children burned, do we?) If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples” (John 15:6-8)
- C. Children need to be groomed for spiritual service.
1. Children should be instructed and then shown how to be good mothers and how to be good fathers.
    - a. “I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak” about you that brings dishonor and disgrace (1 Tim. 5:14)
    - b. “The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” (Titus 2:3-5)
  2. Children should be instructed and shown how to be good Christians.
    - a. “. . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,” (Rom. 12:1-2)
    - b. Giving yourselves first to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:5).
  3. And, our children should be groomed for future teachers, elders, deacons, preachers and wives of elders, deacons, and preachers.
- D. The mission of bringing up children is too important to take lightly or to fail.

1. Our children must be taught to be true to the Bible, including salvation, worship, service and Christian living.
2. In whatever other areas of bringing up our children we may succeed, if we fail to instill in them the spiritual values they need, we fail in our bringing up children mission.

## II. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN

- A. Obviously, there are PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES involved in bringing up children.
  1. These responsibilities include physical care and providing for his home (1 Tim. 5:8).
  2. These responsibilities also include spiritual care by bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4)
  3. However, parental responsibility ceases where the child's responsibility begins (Ezek. 18:20).
- B. This means that children must cooperate in their own bringing up in order for it to be biblically successful.
  1. Children must learn and practice obedience to parents.
    - a. Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right (Eph. 6:1).
    - b. Children obey your parents in ALL THINGS, for this is well pleasing in the Lord (Col. 3:20).
    - c. Being disobedient to parents is the same as being unthankful and unholy and lovers of yourselves (2 Tim. 3:2).
    - d. Listen here children, in the Old Testament, you may not know of what they did to unruly children, "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, that will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother . . . then . . . his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place . . . And all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee . . ." (Deut. 21:18-21).
  2. Children are forbidden to strike their parents (Exod. 21:15).
  3. Children are obligated to show respect to their parents (Exod. 20:12; Eph. 6:2).
    - a. And, this manifests itself later in life by the children's taking care of their parents (1 Tim. 5:4).
    - b. And very importantly, children must obey the Gospel for themselves, your parents cannot do it for you.
- C. Now, the temperament of children also plays a significant role in childrearing.
  1. Every child is different, even in the same family.
  2. And, young children are biblically innocent, without sin and not responsible for themselves (Ezek. 28:15; Matt. 18:3).
    - a. But, children have pliable minds (Prov. 22:6).

- b. And, children are accountable because they have freewill (Ezek. 18:20).

### III. THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN

#### A. There are several obstacles to bringing up children.

1. The fact that each child is different presents a theoretical problem; just when parents begin to figure out how to bring up one child, another child comes along who does not respond to your newly acquired parental skills.
2. Parental imperfection is bound to lead to mistakes in bringing up children; probably most of us wish we could undo something in our lives that has potentially affected our children adversely.
3. Parental lack of experience, which largely only disappears after a substantial amount of OJT (on the job training), is a certain obstacle.
4. And then, the ungodly world is earnestly trying to pull our children into the depths of sin.
  - a. The Bible tells us though, “Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” (1 John 2:15-17).
  - b. The pleasures of sin call our children while we are at the same time trying to teach them about righteousness (Heb. 11:25).
  - c. And in fact, some sins that are characterized as “youthful lusts” threaten to undo everything for which godly parents work and pray (2 Tim. 2:22).
5. Now there is another obstacle and that is erring Christians and their children can greatly detract from successful child bringing up by thinking: “Everybody’s doing it,” “Brother so-n-so’s children are allowed to do it.”
6. Sadly, Christians will use secular advice and books that can often render more harm than good in bringing up children because oftentimes, its advice conflicts with the Bible, and that must be avoided.
7. Sometimes, deficiencies in parents bringing up children can be traced back to abuses or deficiencies in the child bringing up of the parents; though hard to overcome such, it can and must be done.

#### B. But now, bringing up children faces several additional contemporary threats.

1. Hedonism (the pursuit of pleasure), entertainment and especially TV pose serious threats to Christian living and bringing up children.
  - a. What is going in to the minds of our children?
  - b. Sex, bad language and crude talk, extreme violence and such like, and we believe this is good entertainment for the minds and hearts of our precious children.

- c. Do you not know, “That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thess. 2:12)?
  - d. “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth” (1 Tim. 5:6)
  - e. And, the Bible talks about, “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (2 Tim. 3:4)
  - f. “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another.” (Tit. 3:3).
2. And, peer pressure dare not be under emphasized.
    - a. “. . . Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33).
    - b. “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil . . .” (Exod. 23:2).
  3. Another threat is humanism, self-centered, anti-God, secular religion has infiltrated government, education, and religion.
  4. Materialism causes both the young and old to forget God (Prov. 30:8-9).
  5. Apathy or the lack of emotion and enthusiasm can render parental attempts at bringing up children futile; sometimes children learn apathy from parents though, who are indifferent toward the church (Rev. 3:15-16).
  6. False teachers, some of whom unfortunately may truly wear sheep’s clothing as they present themselves as professors in our Christian colleges, subtly threatening our children.
    - a. They are wolves disguised (Matt. 7:15) and there are many false prophets in the world (1 John 4:1).
  7. Despair is another serious threat to the well being of anyone, especially young people; unchecked, what to a young person is a crisis resulting in despair sometimes leads to suicide in its worst scenario.
    - a. Can we not see how important it is to put first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33-34)?
  8. And, our young people may also be threatened by sex and dating unless both parents and their children exercise caution in this area; while sexual feelings are natural, they must be properly restrained within the bounds of the Gospel.
    - a. “fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:3).
    - b. “*avoid* fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2).
- C. Now, there are danger signs that tell of developing problems.
1. Persistently unruly children indicate problems with parental guidance or children themselves or outside influences or a combination of these and special attention must be given to the problem areas.
  2. Another danger sign is when a child doesn’t like attending worship or Bible classes; this is equivalent to spiritual anorexia which may prove fatal.

- a. Newborn babes desire, they crave, they long for the milk of God (1 Pet. 2:2).
  - b. This is why we are not to miss services (Heb. 10:25).
  - c. And parents, we must be careful that our children do not learn a dislike for attending worship and Bible classes because they need them.
    - (1) Because, if they are not filling their minds with God, they are filling their lives with sin.
    - (2) And, that's a problem.
- D. There may be other areas in which parents will experience difficulties in bringing up children.
- 1. For instance, sometimes parents have difficulty adjusting the treatment of their children according to their maturity and age.
  - 2. Mothers and daughters may sometimes find themselves dragged into conflicts that appear similar to sibling arguments.
  - 3. A child may be babied to the point of serious weakening and feebleness.

#### IV. THE POSITIVE SIDE OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN

- A. Successful childrearing helps qualify parents for greater services in the kingdom.
  - 1. Especially elders who must bring up their children successfully (1 Tim. 3:4-5).
  - 2. Deacons also must demonstrate skills in bringing up children (1 Tim. 3:12).
  - 3. Preachers and teachers will be greatly hindered in their effectiveness in teaching the Gospel unless their children are credits rather than liabilities to their parents.
- B. And happily parents, there are rewards in bringing up children.
  - 1. Family love. This natural affection is a precious commodity, similar to the love God has for His children.
  - 2. And, one's dear children will also care for his aged parents.
- C. And, there are several positive signs that bolster the confidence of parents endeavoring their best to bringing up their children.
  - 1. And, how wonderful it is when people you don't know feel compelled to compliment you on the good public behavior of your children (e.g., restaurants, other congregations, and such).
  - 2. How wonderful and encouraging it must be to parents when they feel especially thankful for their own children when they see other people's unruly children.
  - 3. How wonderful and truly positive it is of bringing up children when children make it easier for parents to be good Christians.
  - 4. How wonderful and rejoicing it is when parents can rejoice when their children who obey and continue to obey the Gospel.
  - 5. How wonderful it is when both children and parents have grown and

succeeded when parents value the judgment of their children.

6. How wonderful and how positive it is of successful parenting when parents trust their children (not blindly, but based on evidence that the children have demonstrated their trustworthiness).

## V. TOOLS FOR BRINGING UP GOOD CHILDREN

### A. Tools that help us bring up our children include:

1. Parental patience in that it may very well be the product of several trials through which children put their parents (Jam. 1:2-4).
2. Time or duration has a way of giving parents the experience they once lacked and convincing children that their parents actually know something after all (Heb. 5:12).
3. Perhaps distasteful for both parent and child, corporal punishment is biblical and sometimes absolutely necessary (Prov. 23:13-14) (Beat = strike, spank.)
4. Sometimes chastisements are sufficient correction of children (Heb. 12:5-11).
5. Additionally, REWARDS for compliance with parental instruction reinforces successful bringing up of children.
6. Praise, parents don't forget praise for it underscores successes in bringing up children.
7. And, all children need special attention from their parents for their self-esteem and proper development.
  - a. Don't beat them down all the time for their mistakes.
  - b. Encourage them in the right direction.

### B. Now, there are some helpful "rules of thumb" for bringing up children that you may want to consider:

1. By and large, from infancy dress children modestly; this will avoid conflicts later when parents otherwise try to have the child start practicing modesty (1 Tim. 2:9).
  - a. There is no call for mini skirts and short-shorts.
2. Parents must endeavor to practice even-handedness with a child; children need to know what to expect from their parents, even as we know what God expects of us and how God reacts to different situations (Jam. 1:8).
3. Parents must be careful not to show partiality between their children (Rom. 2:11).
  - a. Don't favor one over the other.
  - b. It will hurt them and you.
4. Parents need to remember they are responsible for controlling their dependent children and that children should not be allowed to run rough shod over their parents. (The tail must never wag the dog.)
5. Finally, all things go better with the Gospel; echoing with a soft authoritative voice, "The Gospel is it!"

- a. Let the God's Word be your guide.

CONCLUSION:

1. Admittedly, parenting is somewhat of an imperfect science.
  - a. However, it is a mission that godly parents cannot afford to neglect.
2. Yes, there are difficulties associated with bringing up children.
  - a. However, the rewards, both on earth and in heaven, for both parents and children, far outweigh all the pains of parenting.