

**“TRAIN UP A CHILD”**  
**Teachings from Proverbs**  
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INTRODUCTION

True or false: “Children are basically good.” Therefore, let them “do their own thing and find their own way in life”!

But, the fact is that children are obviously lost and frustrated and are seeking meaning in life, or trying to escape the apparent meaninglessness of life with alcohol, drugs, sex, pleasure, entertainment, video games, etc.

Proverbs 23:12 tells us to apply our hearts to “discipline” and our ears to “words of knowledge.” But, these words may be intended for the parent who is training his children—see vv. 13-14.

**PROPER DISCIPLINE IS ESSENTIAL FOR BOTH THE PARENT AND FOR THE CHILD.**

In Proverbs we see the *Need* for parental training and discipline, *Examples* of such, *Description* of such parental training, and the *Results* of proper training.

I. THE NEED FOR PARENTAL TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE

A. The Lack of Discipline brings Shame (29:15)

Make up your mind—either the child’s will or the parent’s heart will be broken.

B. Proper Discipline Evidences Love—not Hate (13:24)

The parent must be concerned about what is best for the child; sparing the rod is not a sign of love.

1. Diligence is required.

2. Neglect of discipline is an evidence of hatred for the child. See Hebrews 12:5-11.

3. The aim of discipline is *subjection of the child’s will* to God’s will as mediated through the parent, and the *purification of the child’s heart*.

4. Such discipline begins with the parent’s **self-discipline** .

C. Biblical Discipline Prevents the Child’s Death (19:18).

1. Must begin early—while there is hope! The child is still pliable.

2. Failure to discipline—even when difficult and when the child pleads for leniency—is really to contribute to the spiritual death and even physical death of a child. [KJV translation is based on a verb not used here].

3. What is better: a child to cry under healthy correction, or parents later to cry because of bitter results of their lenient policy?

We can make excuses such as:

- “Children will be children.”
- “It is just a passing fancy.”
- “It is a stage he must pass through.”

Satan has us deceived! A child’s waywardness is never trifling!

Don’t wink at small sins.

## II. EXAMPLES OF PARENTAL TRAINING

- A. By father and mother—"instruction" and "teaching"; 6:20—"commandment" and "law"
- B. Father—4:1-4 (**read**)
- C. Mother (31:1-2)

## III. DESCRIPTION OF PARENTAL TRAINING

### A. Fatherly Leadership (4:4; 27:8)

1. He teaches his child—trains his heart (4:4). [cf. David with Solomon—I K. 2:2-4] God expects the father's leadership—see Gen. 18:19; Dt. 6:7.

2. His departure from his 'nest' is unnatural and unwelcome (27:8)

But, what about those who voluntarily wander from home?

- Have not learned contentment (I Tim. 6:6) or to remain in their allotted calling (I Cor. 7:24).
- They lack fixed principles of life—want something different.
- To depart without solid biblical reason is to depart from God.
- God's grace is sufficient. **Stay In your place!**

### B. Timely (13:24; 19:18)

13:24--One who loves his child disciplines (lit. "seeks") him "early" or "diligently".

The idea is to train the child early in life while he is capable of being influenced properly.

*Satan begins while the baby is still in our arms* (Ps. 58:3).

*Every vice begins in the nursery!*

**It is easier to bend a twig than an oak tree!**

19:18—"Discipline your son for there is yet hope." Thus, carry out training with rigor and exactness.

*Later sharp discipline may fail where mild discipline could have succeeded early on.*

### C. Sound (4:2; 22:6)

4:2—Sound is literally "good" teaching.

"I give"—perfect tense, for what is fixed and complete though being still done in the present.

Our teaching needs to be *solid, reliable, and consistent*.

Unfortunately, for many, teaching is preferred that is *speculative* (II Tim. 4:3-4), *exciting* (Ezek. 33:31-32), *compromising* (Is. 30:10; Jer. 5:31), *self-righteous and self-exalting* (Gal. 1:6-7).

**Good teaching humbles the soul, manifests the free grace of the Gospel, melts the will, consecrates the heart, and develops a sacrificial spirit of the cross. AND IF WE ARE TO TEACH SUCH, WE MUST MODEL THOSE VALUES!**

**Such is not attractive to the flesh—but is what the parents must teach the child!**

[Next time we look at 22:6! We finish the description of parental training, and look at the results.]

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