



HOW TO  
**RAISE GODLY**  
**CHILDREN**

ADRIAN ROGERS



Pastor, teacher, and author **Adrian Rogers** has introduced people all over the world to the love of Jesus Christ, and has impacted untold numbers of lives by presenting profound biblical truth with such simplicity that a 5-year-old can understand it, yet it still speaks to the heart of the 50-year-old.

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TRUTH WORTH SHARING ■ DISCIPLESHIP COLLECTION

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## TRUTH WORTH SHARING

Following Jesus' last words of earthly instruction to us in Matthew 28:19, Love Worth Finding's *Truth Worth Sharing* collections are designed to be used both in your own personal growth and, more importantly, in your assignment to "Go therefore and make disciples..."

“God can use you, with what you have, where you are. And He will supply your every need.”

ADRIAN ROGERS

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This booklet is taken from Adrian Rogers' message *How to Raise Godly Children* (#1714), available online at the link below.

[lwf.org/products/1714cd](https://lwf.org/products/1714cd)



# How to Raise Godly Children

Children are truly a blessing from God. Unfortunately, they don't come with a set of instructions. There are many places we can look to for advice on parenting, but none better than the Word of God. It teaches us about our heavenly Father who loves us and calls us His children. It contains great examples of godly parents. It gives us direct instructions on how to parent, and it is filled with many principles we can apply as we strive to be the best parents we can be.



# A Mother's Example

Let's start our discussion about raising godly children by looking at one of the examples found in the Bible.

In the first chapter of 1 Samuel, we read about Hannah who wanted a child desperately but was unable to conceive. She cried out to God begging Him for a child and promised that if He would grant her request, she would dedicate that child to God's service. God graciously answered her prayer and blessed her with a baby boy who would become the great prophet Samuel. Hannah had the right idea about parenting. From her example, we can learn some profound truths.

## **THE POWER OF PRIORITY**

Hannah knew that parenting is a high calling and that children are a blessing from God and are to be desired. Hannah desired a baby more than anything.

There's an alarming trend today of parents not wanting children. Children are often seen as an inconvenience, a source of trouble, or an unnecessary expense. We see this attitude manifested in several different ways: some parents choose not to have kids; others have them but do not invest the necessary time and energy in

parenting them; still others abuse or neglect their children; and finally, some go to the extreme measure of killing these unwanted babies in the womb. The safest places on this earth ought to be the mother's womb and in the home, but many times, these are the most dangerous places.

There is something basically wrong when we look upon children as burdens rather than blessings. We've forgotten the priority and blessing of being parents.

### **THE POWER OF PRAYER**

Hannah also knew she couldn't be a parent without God's help. Do you know when you begin to raise godly children? Before they're born. Before she conceived, Hannah was down on her knees praying, and her prayer was one of desperation. She begged God for a baby, and God answered her prayer. Samuel was born because of her prayer. We need more children who are born in answer to prayer, and we need more children who are raised through the power of prayer.

### **THE POWER OF PURPOSE**

Hannah recognized that God had a purpose for her and for her son. She told God if He would give her a child, she would dedicate it to Him, and she did.

Every child is a gift from God and, therefore, is a gift to be given back to God. Many parents are failing to raise godly children because they do not know the power of purpose. What is your purpose or ambition for your child? Is it for health, success, popularity, fame, or wealth? The greatest ambition comes straight from the Word of God: "**I have no**

**greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth**" (3 John 4). That our children would love the Lord Jesus, walk in His truth, and be used for His cause; that's a godly purpose for raising godly children.

## **THE POWER OF PERSISTENCE**

Hannah continued to pray. She didn't just pray once and never again. She persisted. She prayed so fervently that the priest thought she was drunk. She was a woman of prayer, and she knew how to wait upon God.

Many times, well-intentioned parents lose the battle because of weariness. There will be times when you're tired and think you've failed, but the Bible encourages us to persist. Isaiah 40:31a says, "**But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.**" And Psalm 37:7a exhorts us to, "**Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.**" There are no facts you can get and no techniques you can assimilate that will take the place of persistence. There's no cheap way, no easy way, and no lazy way to raise godly kids, but it is well worth it.

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## **THE POWER OF PERSUASION**

Finally, Hannah understood the importance of her influence on her son. Even though she gave Samuel back to God to serve Him, she took her role as a mother seriously. She loved and nurtured her child in his formative years because she knew that well begun is half done. This woman literally changed the course of history.

Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord, and it began in the heart of his mother. She stayed with him, rocked him, loved him, and sang to him. She did whatever she could to pour love on him, and she influenced this child for the Lord. We must never underestimate the influence we have on our children. God has placed you in your children's lives to influence and shape them.



## What About Now?

The story of Hannah and Samuel is given to us for an example. Samuel became a mighty prophet of God and was used mightily, but what about now? The family is in crisis in our country. It's time to stand up and be the godly parents God desires us to be.

We are paying a high price for not following the instructions found in God's Word regarding the family and specifically parenting. Our society is paying the price, our communities are paying the price, our families are paying the price, and unfortunately our children are paying the price. We look around and see children in trouble. It's tragic, but some of our children are in prison. Many of our children, if not most, live in broken homes. Countless children in America are in need of psychiatric help. Too many of our girls become pregnant, with many deciding to abort the baby. Drugs are rampant. The suicide rate among young people is staggering. It's depressing to read this, but two questions loom large: What is the cause? And what can we do about it?

There's plenty of blame to go around. We can point to the government, schools, churches, TV, movies, and all other kinds of influences. But to whom does God assign the primary duty of teaching His principles and precepts to your children? Not the church, not the school—but the parents.

**And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**  
(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

The breakdown in our society starts with a breakdown in the family. We have gotten away from God. We have fathers who have failed to provide stability, leadership, character, and strength for the family. We have dads who are preoccupied with business, sports, sex—everything except raising their children. But not only do we have failing fathers, we have misdirected and misguided mothers—mothers who have a different standard and a different priority than mothers used to have.

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The Bible clearly warns in Proverbs 29:15 that, **“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.”** And yet America’s children are being left to themselves at an alarming rate. Many have been left solely to the influence of their peers.

Now, I know this is difficult to take. It’s certainly a negative picture. The intention of this booklet is

not to bash parents and lay blame on them. It's not even to focus on the problems so much as to look for solutions.

I know that many parents are working hard to be good and godly parents, but it's challenging in a world full of dangerous influences and pitfalls. The rest of this booklet will be addressed to those parents who want to be God-honoring parents and are in the trenches. There are a lot of pressures on our kids today, and we had better be certain they have something on the inside. It's up to parents to keep loving, keep training, and keep fighting for our children.

Fortunately, God has given us some guidelines in His manual on the care and the nurture of children. We will take a look at these biblical insights, principles, and instructions.



# Gifts You Give to Your Children

Did you know your child can be a gifted child? We're going to talk about some gifts you can give your children—gifts, in fact, that you make for your children. Give them these four gifts constantly and consistently, and you will certainly have a gifted child.

## LOVE: THE GREATEST GIFT

It should go without saying that we are to love our children. As we saw in the example of Hannah, we should begin to love them before they are ever born, and the bond should only grow from there and never stop. Proverbs 4:1-4 says:

**Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.**

We need to have a tender love for our children, an absolutely unconditional love. When they know we love them, they will receive instruction and

guidance from us. Also, when children don't receive love, it's very hard for them to know how to give it. They have to be taught. We need a generation who will mentor those who have never had parents who gave them unconditional love. We need to break that cycle.

Unconditional love doesn't mean you give the child everything he wants. That's not really love at all. True love is not giving someone what they want but giving them what they need. There must be unconditional acceptance, regardless of the child's misbehavior. We may not accept what they do, but we must accept them. They need to know that even when they are in trouble, they can still come to us.

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Unconditional love goes much deeper than mere words though. It must be spoken, but it also must be shown. Our kids need physical affection. Unfortunately, we have a generation of kids today who associate physical touch with sexual intimacy. They need to see beyond this. They need to experience appropriate hugging and affection. If they do not, they won't feel your sense of true love. We need to hug our kids and hold them lovingly and tenderly, even playfully. Make it a natural part of their growing up. Your teenage boy may act like he's too big, but do it anyway. It's biblical. Luke

15:20 says when the prodigal son came home, his father saw him, fell on his neck, hugged him and kissed him. This story is not meant only to show the love of our heavenly Father toward us, but to be an example for us to follow in order to love our children unconditionally and demonstratively.

Love is the greatest gift you can give your children, but parenting is about more than just loving your children. Love should permeate everything we do as parents, but love leads us to do more for them, to give them other gifts as well.

## THE GIFT OF COMMUNICATION

Because we love our children, we should work hard to communicate with them. This may seem automatic, but it is something we need to be intentional about. Communicating with them is the best way to begin to train your child in the ways of the Lord.

### ■ BEGIN EARLY

The first thing to remember is to begin early. As soon as that child is born, start immediately bonding and communicating with him. It is virtually impossible to spoil a child the first year of life. That child must be loved and loved and loved some more. Communicate your love to him right from the start through words, and through physical bonding. Then, very soon, begin to communicate the love of God to him and begin training him.

### ■ EACH CHILD IS UNIQUE

Communicate with your child in a way that meets his unique needs. There's not another one like your child. When the Bible says in Proverbs 22:6 to, "**Train up a child in the way he should go: and**

**when he is old, he will not depart from it,”** the word *way* is a Hebrew word that literally roots back to the idea of bending a bow. The idea is that your child comes into this life with a bent or a proclivity, a disposition, a temperament. God put together your child’s genes and chromosomes in a unique way, so that child has a particular way he should go. The way you raise one child is not the way you would raise another child. Sometimes, what works for one child will not work for another one. We need to find out from each child the way he should go, and you’re the best one to do it. See your child as unique before God and learn to speak his language—communicate with that child creatively.

#### ■ **BE REAL**

When you communicate with your children, learn to be real. We all have many faults, but our kids need to know we’re real. We must be real enough to admit when we’ve made mistakes. Children do not demand perfection, but they hate hypocrisy. They can spot a phony a mile away. Communicate with them by teaching and training, but don’t be afraid to tell them when you’ve made a mistake, or maybe about a difficult time you’ve experienced, if it’s appropriate to their need. Being real will keep the lines of communication open.

#### ■ **ENCOURAGE THEM CONSTANTLY**

Listen to Proverbs 3:21-26:

**My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and**



**thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.**

Do you hear the encouragement here? Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, outside of the Lord Jesus, and he was blessing his son with encouragement.

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When you regularly encourage your child, you're giving him confidence. What you're really doing is blessing the child, and your child needs that blessing. Children need encouragement like a plant needs water. Somebody gave me a house plant a while back. I put it in my study. It was beautiful for about a week and a half, and then I looked over and it was wilted. I had forgotten to water it. After I watered it, in just a few hours, it came back to life. Encouragement is to a child what water is to a dehydrated plant.

Encourage them. Rather than trying to catch them doing something wrong, try to catch them doing something right. Don't always let your speech be negative; let it be positive.

## ■ HAVE A LISTENING EAR

Proverbs 18:13-15 says:

**He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear? The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.**

So much of communicating is listening. You have to be willing to listen when your child wants to talk. Many times they won't talk, especially when they're teenagers. You have to wait them out and be ready when the moment presents itself. It may be at an unexpected or even an inopportune time, but you must make the time when they choose to talk. Never be too busy to listen to your child.

## ■ BE SYMPATHETIC

This goes along with listening. Show love to your child by showing him how much you care. When he shares something that has hurt them or is a problem for him, sympathize. Cry with him when he hurts. Be concerned with what concerns him, no matter if it seems big or small.

## ■ GIVE THEM A HAPPY ENVIRONMENT

Listen to Proverbs 15:13-17:

**A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness. All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart**

**hath a continual feast. Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.**

He's saying a vegetable plate is better than a steak dinner if you have love, if you have joy, if you have happiness.

Let me tell you how to raise kids in a nutshell: be firm, be fair, and be fun. Don't be ashamed if you have a sense of humor. Psychologists tell us that a good sense of humor is one of the highest signs of intelligence. Laughter lubricates the home, so let your home ring with laughter. This verse talks about those who have a broken spirit. Don't let your child's spirit be broken. Keep the lines of communication open, and laughter can be an effective way of doing just that.

### **PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN**

- Take them on a date. Spend some one-on-one time with each child. Take them somewhere they will enjoy and just have fun together.
- Get involved in what they are involved in. Not only does this communicate your interest in them, it gives you a relaxed time to talk to them.
- As often as possible, sit around the table together at mealtime. It's a great time for conversation.
- Work together. Whether it's cooking, cleaning, building, yard work, or projects, working side by side is a great way to communicate with your children.

- Take them on a drive. Being alone in the car with them often affords the opportunity for them to talk and for you to listen.
- Just spend time together. It doesn't really matter what you're doing. Time is a good way to show your love and will allow ample communication.
- Share a hobby. Find something you can do together. Over a workbench or a craft table is a great place for a casual chat.
- Play games together. Laughter opens up the lines of communication.
- Find out what they think is "cool," whether it is styles of dress or the kind of music they like. Even if you don't care for it, at least try to understand. When deciding what to allow and what not to allow, try not to confuse your own personal taste with something that is truly offensive, spiritually degrading, or immoral.

In summary, get involved in the lives of your kids. Learn to talk. If your kids are uncommunicative by nature, do whatever you can do to tear down the barriers.

## THE GIFT OF CORRECTION

In addition to the gift of communication, we also need to give our children the gift of correction. Ephesians 6:4 says, "**And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.**" We are to steer our children by correcting them.

First, you can solve a lot of problems by setting clear boundaries. Make sure you are setting reasonable restrictions. We have a society today that believes that's wrong, but God had some

children in the Garden of Eden, and He gave them limitations. Limitations don't bind the child; really they set him free. When you give a child restrictions, he will push against them. If they give, that child will have no confidence whatsoever, and he will feel unloved. We, as parents, need to stop trying to win popularity contests and just simply say there are some restrictions. Now, don't make a lot of little rules. Make a few big ones and keep them. If the child gets out of the bounds, then it is time for correction.

Let me give you some very good reasons why you ought to discipline your child.

#### ■ BECAUSE YOU LOVE HIM

Proverbs 13:24 says, **“He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”** You might think you love your child too much to discipline him, but that's just not true. God calls discipline love. He says in Hebrews 12:6, **“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.”** Any father who loves his child is going to chastise him when he needs it.

#### ■ BECAUSE OF HUMAN NATURE

The Bible teaches that we are by nature children of wrath. The seed of rebellion is inherent in any child. Proverbs 22:15: **“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”** You may not believe that, but that's the Word of God. We don't have to teach children to sin; we have to teach them not to. You can look at any two-year-old and see that. Children need to understand that there is a moral power in life. They need to understand that they cannot have their own way every time. And if you do not restrain that child, his human nature is going to lead him

to be a rebel. That child must learn respect and legitimate fear. Just as a man has the fear of God in his heart and still loves God, a child ought to have a legitimate fear—I hesitate to use the word because of the connotation—but an awesome respect for authority. He who fears God the most, loves God the best. There's no competition between the fear of God and the love of God. That doesn't mean we quiver and quake in the sight of God nor should your children quiver and quake in your sight, but they need to be taught to respect and obey authority because it doesn't come naturally to us.

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#### **TO SPARE YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILD HEARTACHE AND DISGRACE**

Remember Proverbs 29:15 says, **“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.”** And Proverbs 29:17 adds, **“Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”** The first twelve years of a child's life, he can learn certain things through the seat of his pants that he will only learn later at the cost of great suffering and heartache. You need to have an eye on the future and love your child enough to correct him while you can.

## ■ TO LITERALLY SAVE THAT CHILD FROM HELL

Proverbs 23:13-14 is very plain:

**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.**

What does that mean? That means that the child who does not respect authority in the home is not going to respect authority in the school; he's not going to respect authority in the government; he's not going to respect authority in the pulpit; and he's not going to respect the authority of God's Word. The old King James English sounds so harsh, "beating a child with a rod." I want to be abundantly clear: I am not in favor of any sort of brutality or abuse, but children need to be disciplined lovingly and appropriately. God says if you teach that child there is a moral authority in this world, you've taken the first step to leading that child to salvation.

## ■ PRACTICAL WAYS TO DISCIPLINE

Those are some reasons we ought to correct our children. Let me give you some very practical guidelines for how to discipline.

- Start early. The Bible says, "**Chasten thy son when there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.**" When he is old enough to knowingly and willingly disobey, you need to begin correcting.
- Never use corporal punishment on a child for mistakes, and never spank a child for something over which he has no control. But when you see rebellion, and he will test you early, then there will come a time for discipline.

- Spanking is not the first act; it is the last resort. God says when He rebukes us, “**As many as I love I rebuke and chasten.**” The rebuke is before the chastisement. It may not be necessary for you to spank at all. There is a time for an explanation, there is a time for a warning, there are times for a second chance, a third chance, a fourth chance, but there finally comes a time when authority must be laid down.
- Do not make idle threats. Whatever you say, you must be prepared to enforce. Make certain to keep your word.
- If a spanking is due, administrate it promptly. The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 8:11, “**Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**” The punishment ought to follow as quickly as possible.
- Never chastise your child in front of other people if you can help it. Never humiliate or embarrass the child.
- When chastisement is necessary, let the husband and the wife present a united front. Let them both agree. Never argue about the child’s punishment in front of him.
- When you do administer corporal punishment, do a good job. Now, that doesn’t mean you cause physical harm, I want to make that clear. But do a good job. The Bible puts it this way, “**Let not thy soul spare for his cry.**” If you do a good job, your spanking days may be over very soon. After the spanking, then pick the child up, love the child, express your love to him, but never let the child get the idea that it was worth whatever he did because the spanking really didn’t amount to much anyway.



- Always discipline in love. When you chastise your child, remember it's for the purpose of correction and restoration, not revenge. We're to have ourselves in control. The Bible mentions chastising a child with a rod. That means, find an object and chastise the child with it. Don't strike a child with your hand. Let your hand be the object of love and caressing. Even going to get the object, may give you a chance to cool down.
- Spank only after an explanation. Explain clearly what he did that was wrong and that you have to follow through with what you said. Then with firmness but gentleness, in the right place, discipline in love and in patience.
- Remember to work for that child's repentance toward God. When a child disobeys his parents, he's really sinning against God. Be careful, you cannot be the Holy Spirit. You can pray for repentance in that child's heart, you can try to lead him to repentance, but remember the Holy Spirit must do that. But seek for him, pray for him, guide that child to repentance.

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## THE GIFT OF CONVERSION

The greatest thing you can do for your child is to lead him to the Lord Jesus Christ. That ought to be the solemn and holy goal and aim of your life.

### ■ START EARLY

Like the other two gifts, you must start leading them to Christ early. Training cannot begin too soon. God's Word says in Isaiah 28:9:

**Whom shall He [God] teach knowledge?  
and whom shall He make to understand  
doctrine? them that are weaned from the  
milk, and drawn from the breasts.**

God said give Me a child who is just being weaned from his mother's milk, and I'll teach him doctrine. And how is He going to do it? He goes on to say in verse ten, "**For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.**" Listen, train a child just with a tidbit here and a tidbit there, and the child will listen and absorb God's truth.

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What a wonderful time to teach when we have these little children. Their curiosity level is at an all-time high. Don't get exasperated when they keep asking "Why?" That's a God-given instinct; they are little intellectual sponges. What an opportunity because their curiosity factor and trust factor are so high.

Paul was talking to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:14-15: "**But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.**" Evidently Timothy was a great theologian. How did he learn these things and how was he assured of them?

**And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

He began learning them as a child.

You can't begin too soon. Tomorrow that baby won't be rocked, that toddler won't be asking why, that teenager will not need help with his homework. Begin early.

Your child does not have to have a Ph.D. in sin before he can be saved. Don't get the idea that little children cannot believe in Jesus Christ. They can; they should. The main thing to watch for is to see if the child is aware of the fact that he is a sinner—not just that he's done some bad things, but that he's aware of this terrible thing called sin, and he is aware that God is righteous and holy and punishes sin. Then it is so easy to point him to Jesus. Be careful that you do not push for a premature decision. You do not want to vaccinate your child with a mild form of Christianity so the real thing will not take. But when you see the Holy Spirit's conviction, ask your child if he would like to

receive Christ, and you as parents have the joy of leading your child to Christ. Your responsibility is not to block that child and not to shove that child, but to guide that child.

## ■ GIVE WISE INSTRUCTION

Notice in Proverbs 1:7-9:

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.**

He's not talking about an iron chain to drag you around with; he's talking about a gold chain that will be something beautiful.

Sadly, we have a generation of kids today who don't know right from wrong. Most don't even believe that an objective standard of truth exists, and that includes church kids. We haven't trained them. Many of us think it's a disgrace that our schools or government no longer post the Ten Commandments, but how many of us have them posted in our homes and teach them to our children? We think it's terrible that prayer is not allowed in schools, but do we pray at home? Do we teach our children to pray? Oh, our kids need to know the difference between right and wrong, but how are they going to learn it if we do not give them wise instruction? We have to train our children in the ways of God. Train them. Give them instruction. Line upon line, precept upon precept. The prime educational institution is the home.

## ■ BE POSITIVE

At the same time you teach your children rules of behavior and what not to do, remember to teach them the wonderful, positive truths about God as well. Teach them to hold on to God because He loves them. Teach them that nothing we will ever do is good enough to make God love us. He loves us by grace. There is nothing we can do to make God love us any less or any more. He loved us enough to send His only Son. Also, teach them that God does not love us because we are valuable; we are valuable because He loves us. He does not change us so He can love us, but He loves us so He can change us. Finally, tell them that He loves them just as they are, but He also loves them too much to let them stay that way.

## ■ TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY

People always ask me, “How do we have family worship? How do we teach our children?” I believe in family worship, but I don’t believe that family altar is the best time to teach your children. Let your family worship be brief. The Bible says the time to teach is when you rise up, when you lie down, when you walk in the way—basically in any situation and at any time, constantly throughout the day. Parents, it is our job to take every opportunity to point our children to God, to teach them diligently. That’s the way Jesus taught His disciples. Everything Jesus saw was an opportunity to teach. How many wonderful ways there are to teach your children. Be creative.

## ■ FAMILY WORSHIP

Don’t get me wrong. It is good to have a time of family worship. It’s good to start the day with the Word of God. Let me give you one of the simplest, easiest forms of family worship. Let somebody

choose a proverb. He can do it at random or choose a proverb for that particular day. Let that child explain what he thinks the proverb means. Then everybody else can talk about it for a few minutes. It is so simple, but when those children are learning the proverbs and having to think about what they mean, that is distilled wisdom.

## ■ LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Proverbs 20:7 says, “**The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.**” Your kids are going to learn more from your lifestyle than they’re going to learn from your words. You need to give to them a godly example. You don’t have to be perfect, but give your kids an example.

As a grown man, someone pointed out a word to me that I had been mispronouncing. I thought I was saying it right. It sounded right to me. I worked on it and learned to say it correctly. Then, I was with my elderly mother and heard her say that same word incorrectly. I had learned it from her and had heard it so many times, I thought it was correct.

Your example matters. In all likelihood, it counts more than your instruction. There are a lot of things your children can’t learn any other way—they can’t really learn in Sunday School, they can’t learn in public school; they have to be demonstrated. They’re not going to learn contentment anywhere else, or courage, courtesy, discernment, fairness, friendliness, generosity, gentleness, helpfulness, honesty, humility, kindness, obedience, orderliness, patience, persistence, self-control, tact, thankfulness, tidiness, or wisdom. Where are they going to learn these things? These things are not so much taught as they are caught. We owe our kids an example.

## **PRACTICAL WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD GROW TO LOVE GOD**

Again, let me give some practical ways to teach your children about God as you sit, walk, rise, and live your everyday life.

- Sing, talk, and read about God with your young children. Make sure your little ones have plenty of good music that praises and exalts the name of Jesus.
- Frame a copy of the Ten Commandments, and hang it in your home. Even have your children memorize them.
- Practice daily family worship.
- Keep your children supplied with an appropriate Bible for their age.
- As they get older, get them a book that gives them reasons to believe—proofs of the truth of Christianity.
- Help your children begin taking responsibility for their own spiritual lives. Encourage them to have a daily quiet time.
- Consider starting a “book of remembrance” for each child that highlights important moments in his spiritual lives such as his salvation and baptism.
- Be careful how you joke about God with your children.
- Make sure your children are in church regularly, beginning when they are young.
- Do everything you can to make Sunday a happy day—have music playing when the kids wake up, sing on your way to church, etc.
- Develop family traditions that make Sunday special, perhaps a special breakfast or a family treat after church.

- Teach your children how to be reverent without being rigid. Help them to see that worship is a heart issue, not an external one.
- Continue to help them develop the practice of regular giving on Sunday.
- Speak well of the church in front of your children.

You can have a gifted child if you will give your child these gifts, and I promise you on the authority of the Word of God, they will make a difference in your home. Make those your aim, and I believe you will be the parents of a happy child, and you will thank God that He gave them to you.

I thank God for Christian homes. I don't know of anything any better than a Christian home. Jesus is the greatest home builder, and Satan is the greatest home wrecker. We need to follow God's instructions and build our homes His way.





# A Closing Plea

My friend, have you given your life to the Lord? Do you have the assurance that if you were to die right now, you would go straight to heaven? If not, please let me tell you how you can be saved, on the authority of the Word of God.

## ■ ADMIT YOUR SIN

First, you must understand and admit that you are a sinner. The Bible says, “**There is none righteous, no, not one**” (Romans 3:10). “**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**” (Romans 3:23). Sin is an offense against God that carries a serious penalty. “**For the wages of sin is death** [eternal separation from the love and mercy of God] **but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (Romans 6:23).

## ■ ABANDON YOUR EFFORTS

Second, you must abandon any efforts to save yourself. If we could save ourselves, Jesus’ death would have been unnecessary! Even “getting religion” cannot get you to heaven. The Bible says it is “**Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His [God’s] mercy He saved us**” (Titus 3:5). Salvation is by God’s grace, “**...not of works, lest any man should boast**” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

## ■ ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST'S PAYMENT

Third, you must believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for your sins. **“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”** (Romans 5:8). That means He died in your place. Your sin debt has been paid by the blood of Jesus Christ, which **“cleanseth us from all sin”** (1 John 1:7).

## ■ ACCEPT CHRIST AS YOUR SAVIOR

Fourth, you must put your faith in Jesus Christ and Him alone for your salvation. **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”** (Acts 16:31). Salvation is God's gift to you! **“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”** (Romans 6:23). **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12).

Pray this simple prayer from your heart:

*Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I know that You love me and want to save me. I know I can't save myself. Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God, who died on the cross to pay for my sins. I believe God raised You from the dead. I now turn from my sin and, by faith, receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sins and save me, Lord Jesus. In Your name I pray, Amen.*

If you have prayed this prayer today, please contact us and let us know. Then go find and join a Christ-honoring, Bible-believing church near you!

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