

## ***"Train Up A Child"***

Vines grow the way they are trained. Children do too. Like the nurseryman who trains vines to grow on a trellis according to his design, parents are to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Prov. 20:6). Fathers are to bring up their children "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Vines and children trained improperly when they are young and tender, cannot easily be retrained after they have been stiffened with age. Godly parents will make a sincere and serious-minded effort to properly train their children by word and by example. Here are some practical tips for parents who are interested in having their children grow the way God wants them to grow in three important areas -- worship, morality and Bible knowledge.

### ***Tips For Training Children To Worship***

1. Attend every assembly possible (Heb. 10:25). The example parents set will have more effect on a child than anything parents say. When parents neglect assembling they are training their children to do likewise. If there is a discussion in the home each week about "whether or not we are going to church today", the child gets the message that worship is unimportant and optional.

2. Do not allow school age children to draw, play or sleep during a worship assembly. If they are expected to pay attention in school because "education is important", surely they should also pay attention during worship to Almighty God.

3. Encourage children to pray - at meal time, bed time or any time they have a problem.

4. Encourage children to sing - during worship assemblies, in the car - any time they are cheerful (James 5:13).

### ***Tips For Training Children To Make Moral Decisions***

1. Teach children to respect authority. Children who are allowed to be disrespectful to teachers and parents are not being trained to respect the God of heaven. A child who is allowed to constantly question authority will be an adult who questions God's authority. It is one thing to explain to a child the reason for something when he needs to know; it is quite another to indulge every "why?" question a child asks in defiance of plainly spoken commands. Children must learn that the proper response to expressed authority is simple obedience.

2. Do not allow children to engage in activities which God will consider immoral when they become adults. For instance, if parents allow their six year old daughter to wear a swimming suit in public, what are they training their child to do when she is eighteen years old? Following this advice may mean that a child will be looked upon as being different from other children. Children need to know that God's people are special to Him precisely because they are different from the world (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

3. Discuss with your children the moral training they receive from other sources. Children in public schools may often be shown standards of morality which are out of harmony with the Bible. For example, we are hearing of cases where elementary students have been told that there are certain circumstances under which it is alright to lie! Parents should make it their business to know what others are teaching their children.

### ***Tips For Training Children To Know The Bible***

1. Take children to every Bible class arranged by the church. It would be a shame for any parent to let such an excellent learning opportunity go to waste.

2. Make sure children get their Bible class lessons ahead of time, and that they do any memory work that has been assigned. It does little good to get "little Johnny" to Bible class if he is not prepared to learn when he gets there.

3. Study the Bible with your children. When they ask a question about God's will, about right and wrong, open a Bible and read together the verses which answer their questions. Setting aside time for Bible study can greatly benefit both you and your child.

In his book, *Good Homes in a Wicked World*, brother Irvin Lee wrote the following: "The child is like a mound of potter's clay. The potter can take the clay and fashion it into whatever form he chooses. He can then dry and temper it, and the form is set into its permanent shape. That is a

frightening thought. As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined. As the child is molded and shaped so the man will be. The challenge is very great when the parents realize that they have the power to shape the very eternal destiny of the soul that inhabits the body of their little child. How many parents will be lost because they failed in their duty to their children?"

- by **Steve Klein**

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### ***Did Jesus Use Carnal Methods to Attract People***

Many religious groups use a variety of carnal appeals to draw people to their assemblies. For instance, there are suppers and ice cream socials, ball games and entertainment events, etc. When asked to justify these activities they will commonly refer to the episodes where Jesus fed the multitudes. Some have said, "If you first feed a man's body, then you'll have a chance to feed his soul." Let's see if their reference to Jesus' activities will really support their practices.

There were two separate instances in which Jesus miraculously fed huge crowds of people with small quantities of food. One time there were 5000 men, plus women and children (Mt. 14:15-21; Mk. 6:30-44; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:1-14). On another occasion there were 4000 men, plus women and children (Mt. 15:32-38; Mk. 8:1-9).

In both instances, the people had followed Jesus to hear His marvelous teaching and to see His amazing miracles. There had never been a promise of food to draw them. In fact, both episodes show the people following long distances and for a long time before they were offered food. For example, in Matthew 15:32 we read: "Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Do you see it? The people were not lured to follow by an offer of food. The food came AFTERWARDS, as an act of compassion. The people had NOT come in anticipation of being fed.

We have one reference where Jesus suspected that the people did, indeed, come with a desire of receiving food (Jn. 6:22ff). On that occasion He DID NOT feed them!

Those who would use the example of Jesus feeding the multitudes to justify their carnal practices today are simply wrong!

- by **Greg Gwin**