

## ***Training Children with Instruction, Restraint and Punishment***

We cannot leave our children's training to chance, and hope for the best. "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame (Proverbs 29:15)." There is a definite direction - a specific way in which we should train our children. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)." Among other things, this training involves instruction, restraint and punishment.

### **Instruction**

We really don't have a choice about what we teach our children. Proverbs 22:6 and Ephesians 6:4 show that we should teach them the way that they should go and we should instruct (admonish) them with the doctrines that are of the Lord. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The way that we should teach them to go, and the admonition that is of the Lord, is found in the scriptures (II Timothy 3:16-17).

Paul said of Timothy that "from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures(II Timothy 3:15)." We should start early and "indoctrinate" our children in the scriptures, so that they will be "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

### **Restraint**

Jeremiah said, "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps (Jeremiah 10:23)." We ought to enforce the ways of the Lord on our children. God commended Abraham because He knew that he would "command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord (Genesis 18:19)." God knew that Abraham would give charge and order his household in the way of the Lord.

Eli was condemned because he did not enforce the ways of the Lord on his children. God said of Eli that "I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not (I Sam 3:13)." Proverbs 22:15 says, "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." So another way that we can train our children is to restrain them from doing what they want, and correct them back to the ways of the Lord.

### **Punishment**

Society may frown on punishing a child, but God said, "he that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes (often) (Proverbs 13:24)." Do you hate your child, or do you love him? If you love him, then "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 sheol (Proverbs 23:14)." The scriptures give wisdom (II Timothy 3:15), but so does the "rod and reproof (Proverbs 29:15)."

As parents we need to be good teachers of God's word. That is, we need to "rightly divide the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15);" we need to be skillful in the word of righteousness (Hebrews 5:12-13); we need to have a "knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18);" and we need to teach God's commandments diligently unto our children (Deuteronomy 6:7). Having taught them, we should enforce the ways of the Lord upon them, and chasten them when they disobey.

**- by Brent Siota**

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## ***Permissive Parents***

Children can influence their parents just as parents can influence their children. The following story about an imaginary couple may have been duplicated in the lives of many of our readers.

George and Mary were a wonderful couple as they began their life together. Throughout their youth they had received strong teaching concerning worldliness, and their conduct showed the effects of that teaching.

They had been taught faithfulness in attendance, and they never missed a service for "anything." In character and conviction, they were blameless.

This young couple failed, however, to instill into the hearts of their children these same convictions. Consequently, as the children reached their teens, they began to put pressure on their parents to let them do what all the other young people were doing. Gradually the will of the parents was broken down, and they began to permit their children to do things they never dreamed their children would do.

Rationalization came easy for George and Mary. "After all, the Bible is not specific in these matters," they thought. "The Bible says 'modest apparel,' but it doesn't define modesty." "And, they're only planning to go to the dance; they aren't planning to dance." "We can't say 'no' to everything," they said. When Junior began to show unusual athletic ability, the question of attending services became a problem. At first they took Junior out of games and brought him to midweek services, but then the team began to depend more and more on him. The play-offs came, and the team's only hope in the play-offs was for Junior to play. George and Mary gave in. And once they had given in, they had no more argument for the future. Junior never missed another game to "go to church."

George and Mary often found themselves on the defensive in Bible classes. They began to argue for their children's behavior. And, the more accustomed they became to their children's actions, the more innocent their actions seemed to be. Eventually, their own conduct became affected. They reached the point where they thought nothing of missing on Friday night during a meeting to see Junior play ball. Mary even adopted some of the daughter's dress habits, although remaining sufficiently "discreet" to stay in the good graces of the brethren. Yes, George and Mary are still in good standing in the church, and their change has been so gradual that many fail to realize that they are not the strong Christians they formerly were. What happened to George and Mary? Instead of bringing their children "up" in the nurture and admonition of the "Lord," their children brought them "down" in the nurture and admonition of the "devil."

Our children may do wrong, but they must not do wrong with our permission! We do not seek anger, but repentance. Parents, would your names fit in the place of "George" and "Mary" in the above story?

- by **Bill Hall**

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## ***The Spirit Works Through The Word***

As one studies the work of the Holy Spirit, he quickly discovers that the Spirit does His work through the inspired Word of God. In fact, the Word is called "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). Notice the following list, which shows actions attributed to the Holy Spirit, and then observe that the same things are ascribed to the written Word of God. Clearly, the Spirit accomplishes His work through the Word of God.

<b><i>The Spirit</i></b>		<b><i>The Word</i></b>
John 15:26	Testifies	John 5:39
Titus 3:5	Saves	James 1:21
Gal. 5:22	Gives faith	Rom. 10:17
1 Cor. 2:13	Teaches	2 Tim. 3:16-17
John 3:5	New Birth	1 Pet. 1:23
Rom. 15:13	Power	Rom. 1:16
John 16:8	Reproves	2 Tim. 4:2
John 16:13	Leads	Psa. 43:3
Acts 9:31	Comforts	1 Thess. 4:18
1 Cor. 6:11	Justifies	Gal. 2:16
Eph. 5:18,19	Dwells	Col. 3:16
Rom. 8:16	Witnesses	1 Jn. 5:6,13
1 Cor. 6:11	Sanctifies	John 17:13,17

- by **Greg Gwin**

