

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS

PART 1

Introduction and Overview

If you would train your children rightly...

- I. Train them in the way they should go, and not in the way they would. (p. 3)
- II. Train up your child with all tenderness, affection, and patience. (p. 4)
- III. Train your children with an abiding persuasion on your mind that much depends upon you. (p. 6)
- IV. Train with this thought continually before your eyes — that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered. (p. 8)
- V. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible. (p. 9)
- VI. Train them to a habit of prayer. (p. 10)
- VII. Train them to habits of diligence, and regularity about public means of grace. (p. 13)
- VIII. Train them to a habit of faith. (p. 15)
- IX. Train them to a habit of obedience. (p. 17)
- X. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth. (p. 19)
- XI. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time. (p. 20)
- XII. Train them to a constant fear of over-indulgence. (p. 22)
- XIII. Train them remembering continually how God trains His children. (p. 25)
- XIV. Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example. (p. 27)
- XV. Train them remembering continually the power of sin. (p. 29)
- XVI. Train them remembering continually the promises of Scripture. (p. 30)
- XVII. Train them with continual prayer for a blessing on all you do. (p. 31)

The Biblical Goal of Parenting (Ecc 12:13; Col 1:16)

"If we would educate children for God, we must do all that we do for them from right motives. Almost the only motive that the Scriptures allow to be right is a regard for the glory of God and a disinterested [i.e., free from any self-interest] desire to promote it... In all our cares, labors, and sufferings for them, a regard to the divine glory must be the main spring that moves us." - Edward Payson, *A Theology of the Family*, 279

Principle I - Train them in the way they should go, and not in the way they would.

“Remember, children are born with a decided bias towards evil, and therefore if you let them choose for themselves, they are certain to choose wrong.”

- Psalm 51:5 — Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.
- Psalm 58:3 — The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.
- Proverbs 22:15 — Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.
- Proverbs 29:15 — The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.
- God has given parents to children for training in wisdom (Proverbs 1:8ff; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1-4, 10, 20-21; 5:1; 6:1-3, 20-21; 7:1-3)

“Our hearts are like the earth on which we tread; let it alone, and it is sure to bear weeds. If then, you would deal wisely with your child, you must not leave him to the guidance of his own will. Think for him, judge for him, act for him, just as you would for one weak and blind; but for pity’s sake, give him not up to his own wayward tastes and inclinations. It must not be his likings and wishes that are consulted. He knows not yet what is good for his mind and soul, any more than what is good for his body. You do not let him decide what he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and how he shall be clothed. Be consistent, and deal with his mind in the like manner. Train him in the way that is scriptural and right, and not in the way that he fancies.”

Principle II - Train up your child with all tenderness, affection, and patience.

“I do not mean that you are to spoil him, but I do mean that you should let him see that you love him. Love should be the silver thread that runs through all your conduct. Kindness, gentleness, long-suffering, patience, forbearance, sympathy, a willingness to enter into childish troubles, a readiness to take part in childish joys — these are the cords by which a child may be led most easily — these are the clues you must follow if you would find the way to his heart.”

- Ephesians 6:4 — Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- Colossians 3:21 — Fathers, do not exasperate your children so that they will not lose heart

Principle IV - Train with this thought continually before your eyes — that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.

“Soul love is the soul of all love. To pet and pamper and indulge your child, as if this world was all he had to look to, and this life the only season for happiness — to do this is not true love, but cruelty. It is treating him like some beast of the earth, which has but one world to look to, and nothing after death. It is hiding from him that grand truth, which he ought to be made to learn from his very infancy — that the chief end of his life is the salvation of his soul. A true Christian must be no slave to fashion if he would train his child for heaven. He must not be content to do things merely because they are the custom of the world; to teach them and instruct them in certain ways, merely because it is usual; to allow them to read books of questionable sort, merely because everybody else reads them; to let them form habits of the day. He must train with an eye to his children’s souls. He must not be ashamed to hear his training called singular and strange. What if it is? The time is short, the fashion of this world passeth away. He that has trained his children for heaven rather than for earth, for God, rather than man — he is the parent that will be called wise at last.”

Principle V - Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.

“You cannot make your child love the Bible, I allow. None but the Holy Ghost can give us a heart to delight in the Word. But you can make your children acquainted with the Bible; and be sure they cannot be acquainted with that blessed book too soon, or too well. A thorough knowledge of the Bible is the foundation of all clear views of religion. He that is well-grounded in it will not generally be found a waverer, and carried about by every wind of new doctrine. Any system of training which does not make a knowledge of Scripture the first thing is unsafe and unsound. . . Some are to be found. . . who honor a catechism more than the Bible, or fill the minds of their children with miserable little story-books, instead of the Scripture of truth. But if you love your children, let the simple Bible be everything in the training of their souls; and let all other books go down and take the second place. Care not so much for their being mighty in the catechism, as for their being mighty in the Scriptures. This is the training, believe me, that God will honor.”