

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS

PART 2

Review

Principles. 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)

Principle VII - Train them to a habit of faith.

- “I mean by this, you should train them up to believe what you say. You should try to make them feel confidence in your judgment, and respect your opinions, as better than their own. You should accustom them to think that, when *you* say it is good for them, it must be good; that your knowledge, in short, is better than their own, and that they may rely implicitly on your word. Teach them to feel that what they know not now, they will probably know hereafter, and to be satisfied there is a reason and needs-be for everything you require them to do.” (p. 15)
- “I have heard it said by some, that you should require nothing of children which they cannot understand: that you should explain and give a reason for everything you desire of them to do. I warn you solemnly against such a notion. I tell you plainly, I think it is an unsound and rotten principle. No doubt it is absurd to make a mystery of everything you do, and there are many things which it is well to explain to children, in order that they may see that they are reasonable and wise. But to bring them up with the idea that they must take nothing on trust, that they, with their weak and imperfect understanding, must have the “why” and the “wherefore” made clear to them at every step they take, this is indeed a fearful mistake, and likely to have the worst effect on their minds.” (p. 16)
- “Tell your children... a day will come when they will see the wisdom of all your training. But in the meantime if you say a thing is right, it must be enough for them. They must believe you, and be content.” (p. 17)

Principle IX - Train them to a habit of obedience.

- “Parents, determine to make your children obey you, though it may cost you much trouble, and cost them many tears. Let there be no questioning, and reasoning, and disputing, and delaying, and answering again. When you give them a command, let them see plainly that you will have it done. Obedience is the only reality. It is faith visible, faith acting, and faith incarnate. . . . It ought to be the mark of well-trained children, that they do whatsoever their parents command them. Where, indeed, is the honor which the fifth commandment enjoins, if fathers and mothers are not obeyed cheerfully, willingly, and at once?” (p.17)
- “Children cannot learn too soon that this is a world in which we are not all intended to rule, and that we are never in our right place until we know how to obey our betters. Teach them to obey while young, or else they will be fretting against God all their lives long, and wear themselves out with the vain idea of being independent of His control.” (p. 18)

General principles:

1. Do not incentivize obedience
 - “If you . . . then I’ll let you have . . .”
2. Do not threaten discipline or punishment
 - “If you do that again, then it’s time for discipline.”
 - “Do you want to get disciplined?”
3. Do not guilt children into obedience
 - “After all I’ve done for you . . .”
 - “I am so disappointed in you.”
 - This doesn’t promote obedience for God’s sake, but seeks to motivate obedience based on the parents’ honor and worthiness and goodness
4. Still require obedience to what was commanded even after discipline (a “do over”); discipline is not finished until the command has been obeyed
5. Teach a helpful way to seek forgiveness (Pro. 28:13; Lk. 15:21)
 - a. “I sinned against God . . .”
 - b. “And against you . . .”
 - c. “By [name the sin using biblical language].”
 - d. “Will you please forgive me?”
6. Consistently apply the rod
7. Add instruction to discipline, but don’t substitute instruction for the discipline
8. Only discipline for disobedience
 - Do not discipline for inconveniences, mere childishness/immaturity, or ignorance
9. Do not give them “grace” instead of discipline (Pro. 3:11-12; Heb. 12:7-11)
 - Problems with this view: (1) misunderstands grace as withholding discipline, (2) misunderstands discipline as withholding grace, (3) accuses discipline as being ungracious, and (4) distorts the gospel by failing to provide a substitute for sin

Principle XIV - Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example.

- “Instruction, and advice, and commands will profit little unless they are backed up by the pattern of your own life. Your children will never believe you are in the earnest, and really wish them to obey you, so long as your actions contradict your counsel. . . . Be an example of reverence for the Word of God, reverence in prayer, reverence for means of grace, reverence for the Lord’s day. Be an example in words, in temper, in diligence, in temperance, in faith, in charity, in kindness, in humility. Think not your children will practice what they do not see you do. You are their model picture, and they will copy what you are. Your reasoning and your lecturing, your wise commands and your good advice; all this they may not understand, but they can understand your life.” (p. 28)
- “He that preaches to his children what he does not practice, is working a work that never goes forward. It is like the fabled web of Penelope of old, who wove all day, and unwove all night. Even so, the parent who tries to train without seeing a good example is building with one hand, and pulling down with the other.” (p. 29)

Principle XVII - Train them with continual prayer for a blessing on all you do.

- “Without the blessing of the Lord, your best endeavors will do no good. . . . The Lord is far more willing to hear that we to pray; far more ready to give blessings than we to ask them; but He loves to be entreated for them. And I set this matter of prayer before you, as the topstone and seal of all you do. I suspect the child of many prayers is seldom case away.” (p. 31-32)
- “You cannot name their names before the mercy-seat too often.” (p. 32)