

TRAINING CHILDREN IN A

~~BIBLICAL ADVICE ABOUT CHILD TRAINING.~~

CHRISTIAN HOME.

TRAIN UP A CHILD ACCORDING TO HIS WAY, AND EVEN WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.

WITHOLD NOT CORRECTION FROM THE CHILD: IF THOU BEAT HIM WITH THE ROD HE SHALL NOT DIE. THOU SHALT BEAT HIM WITH THE ROD AND SHALT BELIEVE HIS SOUL FROM DESTRUCTION.

Proverbs 22:6. 23: 13,14

Biblical advice about child training provides us with two features. First, the need of a method in bringing up the young. Secondly, the way of administering the method suggested.

In the first text we deal with an external principle, which applies and must apply as long as human beings endure, a principle which is even emphasized by the demands of the Christian faith. It does not matter how long the world exist, or how much knowledge is accumulated. Our scientific training, does not cancel out the fact - that as long as human beings are born into the world as babies - the need for training is a necessity. We must be constantly reminded that training is necessary to life. When human beings are created like Adam - Eve fully grown training will be obsolete.

In the second text we have a principle which is modified and altered by the Christian spirit, and unless it is understood, as it often has been, it is misleading and harmful in a high degree. If we could trace out all the dark cruelties and injustice, the vindictiveness, the stupidity of parents, guardians, and teachers who have sheltered themselves behind a loose and glib interpretation of "Spare the rod and spoil the child," We could put an end to the brutality of child beating. We might - however - read into this text the stern application of the Master concerning the letter of the Scripture instead of coming to Him and learning of Him who is meek and lowly of heart... extending correction with meekness and lowliness of heart.

Meanwhile, our first duty is to understand the wholesome and eternally valid teaching that is here

given about the
the education of the child. " Train up a child
in the way he should go." We gain a great deal
in interpretation if we go back to the meaning
of the word which is rendered " train " It is
derived from the noun which signifies the palate
(tongue) the inner part of the mouth, its
literal meaning is " to put into the mouth. "
The metaphor suggested is that of feeding an
infant. Every parent recognises the necessity
of giving to the helpless new born baby suitable
food. At first the mother feeds the babe liquids
After the weaning or today - later - she still
feeds the child with foods chosen and especially
prepared. As the child grows older she changes
the food, but she does not relax her care. The
responsibility of procuring the necessary diet
does not cease until the child is fully grown,
fully formed and able to provide for himself.
A suitable analogy expressing the mental, moral
and spiritual training - food suitable a milk
of the word, later morsels suited to each age,
and then the strong meat of life. All of this
requires infinite care and forethought and wis-
dom. for there is a certain way of development,
a certain ideal which the child must realise,
and if the training be on the lines of that
development, according to " the way " when he is
old he will not depart from it."

In the face of every effort to do the utmost
within ones ability and care sometimes the child
does not seem to keep the way he is trained. No
matter how diligent parents are sometimes the
child does not become what parents desire. No
matter - training must not be left to chance.

From the first a clear aim must be keep in
view. This boy or girl shall become a true and
noble God fearing person serving his or her
day and generation befitting the highest ideals
of mankind.. It must be clearly understood that
parents are but human beings... and as human
beings are liable to mistakes...of judgement.

All the books and all the advice given about children and I might add human beings have not written or told all there is to tell. Mechanical schemes, cut and dried precepts are all quite insufficient. We can perceive that each child is alike but each is a separate study, and must be approached in a different way. One is sanguine and over-confident, and he must be constantly humbled; another is diffident and desponding, and must be encouraged with a word of sympathy, ~~xxxxx~~ spoken at the right moment. Another is a born sceptic - with constant doubts about life and would know the reason why; he must be met with patient and comprehending arguments according to his mental powers. Another has no speculative instincts, and questions have to be raised, doubts suggested in order to save him from drifting into the easy going acceptance of everything. One seems naturally inclined to be religious, and must be guided lest his sensitivities should become morbid, and a dominant thought should lead to mania, melancholy, or a possible rejection or reaction. Another seems to have no religious instincts and an opportunity must be sought to arouse the consciousness to religious ideals. I am certain we must agree - if we know children and have known more than one - all are different.

Secondly, training and trainers must be filled with Divine Love. No training of children in any area - home, church, school or the corner store of lunch counter can have a permanent effect which does not issue from that individual which is not guided by love. Love is the Divine Educator. It is this which accounts for the frequently observed advantage that children seem to have when we ~~xxxxx~~ attempt to provide inferior home advantages from inadequate homes. Sometimes the very inadequate are more successful than the adequate and the advantage - love makes the difference. Without love the wisest precepts only choke. If love is not there, all efforts will fail. Love is the

only atmosphere in which the spirits of little children can grow. It must be a large love, an inclusive love, such as God has place in each life. It is the kind of love that the world cannot give and parents can only find by knowing God for themselves.

It is within this atmosphere that the second text flourishes: "He that spareth the rod hated th his son, but he that loveth him, chaseneth him many times." The rod and reprof give wisdom, but a child left yo himself causeth shame to his mother. We are all aware that corporal punishment seems to the Christian and to common sense a by-product of the Christian spirit as degrading, brutalising, and esstential futile. It can only have a mininium of good wffett where it is inflicted by a loving hand and in a loving spirit. But even in the face of all modern and wise merciful punishments the rod and the stripes remain of permanent value. God chastens those he loves. Sometimes love becomes indulging an without the strong hand life demands. In the poor child's heart so much so much foolishness is bound up, so much wilfulness and temper, so much vanity and pride, so much sensuality and selfishness, so it is natural to the child to make pleasure the be-all and the end-all of life.

Th rod cannot open the eyes; it can but set the cunning intellect to work to find a way of escaping the rod. but the opening of the eyes at which all true punishment must aim at correction. It is the parents' solemn task - obligatien to bring home to his child's heart these truths which the child must know. Values must be inculcated in human lives by some means and we cannot escape this principle.

(P.M.K.)
The Chasening of the Almighty - when one has concerned - I say to my son - where did you go today, what did you do ? How do you feel ? etc. If in conversation I discover his answers are wrong - I attempt to correct his ideals.. When I failed to - in love e cor- rect. Do what you want to do - love is gone or going - When God fails to correct me - Love.