

The Role of Parents: Serving

- God made husband and wife one in marriage, giving the family an unshakeable foundation.
- God joined: glued, cemented, bound, made one.
- *But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, Mal 2:15*
- God created the family, binding husband and wife as one to give them children in order to receive godly offspring.
- Children are a gift and a stewardship.

God Seeks Godly Offspring

- What God seeks must be our goal as stewards.
- *it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 1Cor. 4:2*
- Parents are stewards of what belongs to God.
- As with all stewards they must give an account.
- *called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' Lk. 19:15*

Foundation for the Next Generation

- A sacred trust between parents and God.
- Every infant is “*created in the image and likeness of God.*” Gen 1: 26-28
- Parenting is our investment in the future
- Strong home is the foundation of a strong church
- We must take a blank mind of an infant child and lead them step by step to God as *godly offspring*

God's Expectations

- *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Pr. 22:6*
- This is the goal of all parents.
- A universal truth.
- Language, reading, writing, math, sports, hobbies, skills, and career all based on it.
- Where worldly minded parents put efforts.
- Like a relay race, they seek to give their children a head start. They know that early training will impact the rest of their lives.
- Fathers and mothers passing on their skills.

Also the Spiritual Goal

- *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Pr. 22:6*
- A conditional promise: A beacon of hope
- This hope brings desire and expectation to all devout parents.
- God seeks godly offspring and we have the ability and opportunity to bring them to Him.
- Yet conditional promises are not absolute.
- Other factors: freewill & evil companionship.
- Yet in spite of all obstacles it is still **possible**.

Must meet conditions of the Promise

- *For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.” Gen. 18:19*
- *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher Lk. 6:40*
- Not all Abraham’s children were faithful
- Judas was trained but did not stay faithful.

A Conditional Promise is a Promise

- The conditions of the Promise:
- **Train** up a child in the way he should go.
- everyone who is **perfectly trained** will be like his teacher
- This is the condition and the goal of all Parents.
- To train and perfectly train. That is all God expects of stewards is that we do what He asked
- The goal of “*perfectly training*” children in the “*way they should go*” must take first priority.
- Qualifications of elders also prove it is within the power of parents to accomplish the goal.

Goal is “Perfectly Training”

- Promise given so parents can plow in hope.
- We have the ability and the opportunity:
- *bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Eph. 6:4*
- The Two Greatest Factors:
- Learning all God has to say about training and putting into practice as quickly as possible.
- Early mistakes have great consequences.
- Never forgetting the grave and greatest peril:
- *Be not deceived: Evil companions corrupt good morals. 1Cor 15:33*

Evil Companions Lurk Everywhere

- A teacher in public school
- A friend from school or the church.
- Remote companions created from books, TV, video games or television.
- Spiritual training undermined and ruined:
- *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; Heb 12:15-16*
- Only constant vigilance can avert terrible damage such a person or event can do.

Serving Others requires Sacrifice

- *in lowliness of mind let each **esteem others better than himself**. 4 Let each of you **look out not only for his own interests**, but also **for the interests of others**. Phil 2:3-4*
- Applies to parents with their children.
- Training requires time, effort and sacrifice.

Full and True Training of our Children

- *"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut 6:6-9*

The Downfall of Many Parents

- It is time consuming and often tiring to:
- *talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.*
- Yet if we don't we did not do all we could to fulfill the conditions of our stewardship.
- If we make it a dialogue, can get a good sense of what our children are thinking.
- *preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; 2 Tim 4:2*
- *“out of season”* preaching lay the foundation

When we see Need for Applications

- “*in season*” preaching.
- Character flaws, expressed doubts, dangers in school and among friends.
- When a threat arises don’t do anything different except change topic. All preparations are already made when a crisis arises.
- Daunting and time consuming task.
- Gets harder as they take more responsibility for their choices.
- Joshua, at the age of 110 had enough influence: “*but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*” (Josh. 24:15).

Training leads to Sharpening

- Serving parents never forget:
- *As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. Pr. 27:17*
- applies to our children and grandchildren as long as we live.
- *Only **take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself**, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And **teach them to your children and your grandchildren.** Deut. 4:9-10*

Critical Considerations

- Children can sense insincerity in the faith
- Can't pass on a "*sincere faith*" to our children that we don't have.
- Beauty of these instructions: They force us to grow in order to pass them on to our children.
- What Paul told Timothy, applies to parents:
- *give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you."* 1Tim. 4:15-16

No Guarantees

- Should not create discouragement but zeal.
- If it can be done we must do all in our power to fulfill the conditions.
- Yet “*roots of bitterness*” can arise and destroy all our efforts. If we don’t know can’t intervene
- We plow in hope, with desire and expectation but with a keen realization that we don’t have total control.
- Opportunity doesn’t equal control.
- *Give diligence to present yourself approved unto God* 2 Tim 2:15