

Child Training B

There is a story of a man who believed that children should not be taught religion, but should grow up and choose for themselves. One day he visited a friend who knew of his theory. Upon leaving he said to his friend, "I forgot to look at your flowers." His friend replied, "I decided not to plant any flowers this spring but wait till October and let the garden decide for itself whether it will grow flowers or weeds."

Alexander Pope, 200 years ago said, "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined." Over 2000 years ago Hosea said, "They have sown wind and they shall reap whirlwind." Messiah said, "Do not hinder the little children from coming to me." He knew that as the twig decides the fate of the tree, it is the child which decides the way the man is to become.

Eph 6:4 — Fathers do not provoke your children, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the lord. *Nurture* means to train, instruct, discipline. *Admonition* means instruction to give wisdom to. 2 Tim 1:5, 3:15 — We have the privilege and authority to tell our children about the kingdom of heaven (not mixed with fairy tails — for obvious reasons).

Loss of authority characterizes our times. Lawlessness has increased to the extent that observing the speed laws is considered as reckless driving and treated as such. Someone said that the reason that teenagers get involved in the cults and the occult is that they are looking for an authority figure which they do not find in their homes. They get in the occult because they prefer hell over heaven because, "Hell is more exciting than heaven." Satan is an authority figure that they need which they did not find at home in their father. They have found no authority in the Word of God or the God in their Evangelical and Catholic homes and religion.

They want someone they can cast themselves upon, someone more powerful and terrible than themselves. Someone to look to in a "Sham World." Youth are turning to Satan worship because they need a Father figure more than the "happy pastor" who never reproveth their folly, or their own leveled out father fears the Social Services if they were to separate them. Youth need a father figure and authority. They need and crave authority which the State is taking away today from us all. "Hell is more exiting than heaven" because who wants to die and go to a cloud and play a silly harp and be bored the rest of Eternity by a God who could care less and does not discipline for he has no authority, portrayed by the Christian Church today.

"Where there is no vision, no revelation, the people go unrestrained." (Pr 29:18) Unless we have the proper revelation of child training and the purpose for it, we, along with our children, will perish. What is the purpose of discipline? Why does the Lord discipline us? "NO discipline at the time seems pleasant; Yet those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness." (Heb 12:11) So if righteousness is what we're after in our discipline, we must know what righteousness is. What is it?

Abraham's FAITH was credited to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6). Faith is both hearing from the Lord and obeying. Not just hearing, not just obeying; but hearing and obeying. So this is how we are to train our children — to listen, hear, and then obey. That will lead them to faith, and faith will lead them to Salvation. We must catch hold of that vision, for the Lord has given that vision to the church. The grace is here; we can ask for it. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. That's why, "Hear, O Israel" is the first commandment. Our children must hear us, and we must hear from the Lord in every detail in order to properly train them (Dt 6:4).

The foundation for all child training is in Gen 18:19 (Abraham's seed) and in Mal 4:5-6 (spirit of Elijah restoring the hearts of the fathers to their children). When our children are fully trained, they won't need the rod anymore. They'll be sensitive to our heart, what we desire they will have

been trained to desire. When our children know this it gives them hope and vision to receive their discipline.

Jude 11:31-39 — Motherly instinct, like sexual instinct, is from God, but unless it is under government, it will destroy instead of help. This instinct will tend to cause us not to allow our children to go through stages of growth. When our standards for our children are too exacting and allowances are made for our fallen human nature, the weak and immature cannot see their own worth and value and there is self-condemnation. Therefore we must be patient. We force withdrawal if we don't allow time for growth. But with proper training it will be done. People must be properly trained in order to hear from Yahweh.

Dt 30:15-20, 30:6, 29:29 — It's the promise to us that our children will be saved if we train them up in the way they should go. We want to raise up a church without spot or wrinkle, that overcomes Satan by the word of their testimony.

Due Season

One of the greatest mistakes that people make in raising their children is that it hasn't been taken care of in its due season — that the mind has not been made obedient to discipline, and pliant to reason, when at first it is most tender, most easy to be bent. Parents by their natural inclinations are very apt to pamper the child. They love their little ones and it's their duty; but they often cherish their children's faults, too. They must not be crossed; they must be permitted to have their wills in all things; because they are still in infancy, not capable of great vices, their parents think they are excused to give in to their bad attitudes, and to call their obstinacy "cute" because they are so young. The little ones are taught to strike and call people names, must have what they cry for and do what they please. Later the parent wonders at the taste of the bitter water, when they themselves have poisoned the fountain. For when the children are grown up and these bad habits with them, when they are now too big to be *cute*, and their parents can no longer make use of them as playthings, *then* they complain that the brats are uncontrollable, disobedient, and perverse; and then, perhaps too late, would be glad to get out those weeds which have now taken too deep root to easily be pulled up. For he that is accustomed to having his own will in everything, as long as he was in diapers, why should we think it strange, that he should desire it and contend for it still, when he is in breeches? Indeed, as he grows more towards a man, age shows his faults more clearly, so that there are few parents that are so blind as not to see them, few so insensible as not to feel the ill effects of their own indulgence. He had the mastery of his parents ever since he could prattle; and why, now since he is grown up, is stronger and wiser than he was then, why now all of the sudden must he be restrained and curbed? Why must he at seven, fourteen, or twenty years old, lose the privilege, which his parents' indulgence until then so largely allowed him? Try it with a dog or a horse or any other creature, and see whether the destructive and stubborn tricks they have learned when young are so easy to change when they are older. Yet none of those creatures are half so willful and proud, or half so desirous to be master of themselves and others, as man. We are generally wise enough to begin with them when they are *very young*, and discipline those animals early enough so that they would be useful and good for something. It is only our own offspring that we neglect at this point; and having made them disobedient children, we foolishly expect they should be good men. For if the child must have whatever he desires, rather than make the poor baby cry or be uncomfortable; why when he is grown up, must he be satisfied too, even if his desires carry him to lying, cheating, stealing, drunkenness and immortality? He that is not used to submitting he will reason of others when he is young, will scarcely submit to his own reason when he is of an age to make use of it. And what kind of man such a one is likely to turn out to be is easy to foresee.

Vices such as violence, lying, vanity and lack of self-control are encouraged in very young children under the guise of playing with them. The parent make a jest of violence, revenge and cruelty, teaching these concepts to the very young. The covering of their bodies which are for modesty, warmth and defense, are by the folly or vice of parents recommended to their children for other uses. They get their child a new suit and brag about how beautiful he looks in it. Thus the little ones are taught to be proud of their clothes before they can put them on themselves. The parent puts excuses which are little different from lies into the mouths of the little ones, and commend him for it, if they are for the parents' advantage. They discourage self-control in their children by the temptation of their diet, or invitation to eat or drink more than enough. And if the young one is a little sick, the first question is, "What will my dear one eat? What shall I get for him?" Eating and drinking are instantly pressed. But it just might be that this lack of appetite, which nature has wisely ordered in the beginning of illness, is a defense against the increase of sickness; that being freed from ordinary labor of digesting any new load in the stomach, the illness may be corrected. In the same way fevers are useful to rid the body of unwanted germs or bacteria.

Denying Self

Virtue is what is to be sought. The principle of all virtue and excellency lies in a power of denying ourselves the satisfaction of our desires, where Yahweh does not authorize them. This power is to be gotten and improved by often doing it, it is made easy and familiar by an early practice. Children should be accustomed to submit their desires, and go without their longings, even from the cradle. The first thing they should know should be that they were not to have anything because it pleased them, but because it was thought fit for them. Children are not living for themselves; they are living for us. In the same way we are not living for ourselves, but for our Father in heaven. If children did not receive all the things they cried for, they would learn to be content without it. They would learn not to attempt to manipulate others by their "fits" and crying and demanding their own way. Children are more pleasant to them selves and others if *from the first* they are treated this way. If they never obtain their desire by the impatience they expressed for it, they would no more cry for another thing, than they would for the moon.

Whenever they crave what is not fit for them to have or do, they should not be permitted it just because they are little and desire it. I have seen children at a table, who, whatever was there, never asked for anything, but contentedly took what was given to them: and at another place, I have others cry for everything they saw; must be served out of every dish, and be the first served at that. What made this vast difference but this, that one was accustomed to have what they called or cried for, the other to go without it. The *younger* they are, the less I think are their unruly and disorderly appetites to be complied with; and the less reason they have of their own, the more they are to be under the absolute power and restraint of those in whose hands they are. And this is wisdom, that whatever once is denied them, they are certainly not to obtain by crying or demanding, unless one has a mind to teach them to be impatient and troublesome, by rewarding them for it when they do so.

Those therefore that intend ever to govern their children should begin it while they are *very little*, and look that they perfectly comply with the will of their parents. Would you have your son obedient to you when past a child? Be sure then to establish the authority of the father as soon as he is capable of submission, and can understand in whose power he is. If you would have him stand in awe and respect you, imprint it in his infancy; and as he approaches more to a man, admit him nearer to your familiarity; so shall you have him your obedient subject (as is fit) while he is a child, and your affectionate friend when he is a man. It is wrong when a parent is

indulgent and familiar when they are little, but sever to them, and keep at a distance, when they are grown up; for liberty and indulgence can do no good to *children*; their want of judgment makes them stand in need of restraint and discipline; but when one becomes a man this treatment is not necessary for they have reason of their own to guide them; unless you have a mind to make your children, when grown up, weary of you, and secretly to say within themselves, "When will you die, father?"

When children are little they should look upon their parents as their lords, their absolute governors, and as such stand in awe of them; and that when they come to riper year, they should look upon their parents as their best, as their proven friend, and as such love and revere them. If a strict hand is kept over children from the beginning, they will in that age be tractable (easy to handle), and quietly submit, having never known any other way; and as they grow up to the use of reason, the restraint of government will be gently relaxed, the father's brow more smoothed to them, and the distance by degrees will be diminished, his former restraints will increase their love, when they find it was only a kindness to them, and a care to make them capable to deserve the favor of their parents, and the esteem of everybody else.

Godly fear and awe ought to give you the first power over their minds, and love and friendship in later years should hold it; and then, if the love for you does not make them obedient and diligent, if the love of virtue does not keep them on the right path, if they did not develop a love for Yahweh and his purpose, nothing else could ever really hold him.

Praise or Disgrace

Children (perhaps earlier than we think) are very aware of praise and approval. They find a pleasure in being esteemed or valued, especially by their parents and those whom they depend on. If therefore the father caress and praise them when they do well, show disapproval to them when they are disobedient, and this accompanied by a similar response from the mother, and all others that are around then, it will in a little time, make them aware of the difference between disobedience and obedience. The rod should be used for disobedience, but if over used will lose its force. It is of little use at all if it is not accompanied by the shame of their behavior. This is brought to them by proper reproof. The apprehension of displeasure in the parents will come to be very insignificant to the child if that displeasure quickly ceases, and a few whacks fully atone for their wrong. The parent ought not too quickly restore their children to the former fellowship but wait until the child sees the seriousness of his action and they make good their repentance. If this is not done, the punishment will by familiarity become a mere thing of course, and lose all its influence; offending, being chastised, and then forgiven, will be thought as natural and necessary, as noon, night and morning following one another. Forgiveness should not be expected, but HOPED FOR and ASKED FOR. Yahshua did not *have* to forgive us. We do not *have* to forgive one another — it not an obligation. But when the proper atonement was made, Yahweh forgave us. So too with us — when the proper atonement is made, we should forgive our children. Because we've been freely forgiven, we should freely forgive them. Then the child will see that his obedience brings the approval of his parents and his disobedience and bad attitude bring shame and reproach from them. This should teach him modesty, shame, and respect. They should quickly come to hate that which made them slighted and neglected by everyone, and love that which gains approval of all. Not only the parents, but all others around him will support and reinforce the desires and wishes of his parents so that the child will know that he is up against a rock — the unity of Yahweh's people.

Self Esteem

It is very important to children that they are approved and held in high regard by those around them. We should be careful of always rebuking and correcting them in public because we can also talk to them in private and thus protect their dignity. But the commendations children deserve, they should receive before others. This doubles the reward, by spreading their praise; and keeping their faults private (as much as possible) will make the children set greater value on their own value (self worth), and teach them to be the more careful to preserve the good opinion of others: but when being exposed to shame by publicly announcing their faults, they think that their reputation is lost, and thus this check upon their behavior is taken off because they feel that their reputation with others is already blemished.

Rule Making

Avoid excessive rule making. If there be some action you would have done differently, whenever they forget, or do it awkwardly, make them do it over again until they are perfect, whereby you will get these two advantages. First, to see whether it is something that they are capable of doing. Sometimes children are told to do things which upon trying it, they are found not able to do, and had need to be taught and should mature further before that thing is recurred of them. For it is far easier to make a command than it is to spend the time and effort to properly teach a child. Secondly, another advantage is that by repeating the same action until it is habitual, the performance will not depend on memory or reflections, but will be natural in them. Thus listening attentively when someone is speaks to him, giving up his chair to an older person is by constant use as natural as breathing. Some parents heap so many rules on their children, that it was impossible for the poor little ones to remember a tenth part of them, much less obey them. If you burden him with many rules, the child will become exasperated (which we are exhorted not to do in Eph 6:4). Also one of these two things must necessarily follow: that either he must be disciplined, which will produce bad fruit by making it too frequent and familiar; or else you must let transgression of some of your rules go unpunished, whereby they will of course grow contemptible, and your authority becomes cheap to him. Neither of these will represent the character of Yahweh to the child. Make but few laws, but see that they be well observed when once made.

Personality

We must not hope wholly to change the child's original personality, nor make the loud one completely quiet, nor the active one sedate without spoiling them. God has stamped certain characteristics upon men's minds, which like their shapes, may perhaps be a little mended, but can hardly be totally altered and transformed into contrary. For in many cases, all that we can do, or should aim at, is to make the best of what nature has given, to prevent the vices and faults to which such a constitution is most inclined and give it all the advantages it is capable of. Everyone's natural genius should be carried as far as it could; but to attempt the putting another upon him, will be but labor in vain. Even plain and rough nature, left to itself is much better than trying to impose an artificial character upon someone by trying to be something that one is not. We should work toward discovering and developing the gifts within each person.

Manners

Manners, as they call it, about which children are so perplexed, and have so many goodly exhortations made to them by their elders, are rather to be learned by the example than rules. The children, if kept out of bad company, will take a pride to behave themselves properly after the fashion of others, seeing that because of this good behavior that they are well esteemed and praised. A great part of the roughness which sticks to the outside for want of better teaching, time and observation will rub off, as they grow up. But if the bad examples are set for them, all

the rules in world, all correction imaginable, will not be able to polish them. For you must take this for a certain truth, they may have all the instruction in the world, they may receive the greatest lectures about conduct every day, but that which will most influence their behavior will be the examples set before them. Children (and men, too) do most by example. We are all short of chameleon, that still take our tint from things near us; nor is it to be wondered at in children, who better understands what they see than what they hear. The children must be kept as much as may be in the company of their parents, and those to whose care they are committed. They should be in love with the company of their parents because they receive all their good things there and from their hands.

The one who wants his son to respect him must have respect for his son. You must do nothing before him, which you would not have him imitate. If you discipline him for what he sees you practice yourself, he will not think that severity comes forth from love, but rather from an unjust father who, without any grounds for it, would deny his son the liberty and pleasures he takes himself. What I say of the father's actions before his child, must extend itself to all those who have any authority over him, or whom would be due respect.

If our children come to love the Messiah, then they'll love their parents ruling over them, their teachers ruling them, and everyone ruling them. So what they be in light of them seeing their need to be under the rule of Yahshua because the need guidance. The need help. They must see their sin and call out for the help of the savior. They must be taught to see the superiority of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of the world. They must see how one day all the kingdoms of the earth will be under the rule and authority of Yahweh.

Teaching versus Training

1) Responsible action is necessary to train children; only knowledge is required to teach. A child cannot be taught unless he is first trained. 2) Children respond more to what they see than to what they hear. It must be our life going into them, not just telling them what to do. 3) A child must be treated as having worth, because he does. He is created in the image of Yahweh. Then he won't have to prove who he is by attention-getting actions. 4) there must be an absence of fear. Praise, encouragement and hope along with discipline. 5) Discipline, in order to be effective, must be consistent, controlled severity and applied early in life, and immediately after an offense (Pr 22:6). The church needs to be the training ground (Mt 7:28-29). Teaching with authority is training. The difference between training and teaching is that training changes us. If we merely teach and train, we allow children to live selfish lives. There's no use teaching the untrained. If people aren't disciplined, they are illegitimate children (Heb 12:8).

Proper training is essential from beginning. From ages 1-4 the basic personality is formed that will last until death. We can train our child to wait until we give a command twice, three times, threaten them, or scream before they will obey. Or we can train them to obey on the first command when we speak in a normal tone of voice. However we train them, that's how they will be. When one is properly trained, he won't depart from his first teaching if he hears another, different teaching. Train: Drill, prepare for contest, form to shape, instruct by exercise. Through the authority of Yahweh, a person learns something so deeply that he NEVER forgets it.

1 Sam 1:11,27; 2:12; Eph 6:4 — Hannah prayed for a son to give back to our God. She never doubted that her son would do anything except what he was told. Like Hannah and Sarah, we need to desire and pray for our children, that they would come into the world as wanted children (1 Sam 3:13). Eli taught them, but he didn't train them. He loved God, was sincere, a priest, but God cut off Eli's children because they weren't properly trained. How can we prevent our descendants from going into apostasy? Proper training (Pr 22:15, 13:24, 23:13-14, 19:28).

They must be disciplined early in life and early in offense. "No, no. I'll wait until he is older, then he'll understand more!" "If I discipline him, he'll rebel more." Does God really mean what he says? If we don't do it, we don't believe it (Ezra 9:8-9). We must have a peg of commitment in order to receive discipline.

This means that we shouldn't give anyone a command unless we see to it that he obeys. The rod must come wherever there is disobedience. Let's not ever use the rod unless it hurts. It should be that the child would never want another spanking. He won't want it to be repeated if it hurts. This is love. If there is no pain, he will not know that disobedience causes pain to his father. This is love. Superficial love wants another way, but real love comes at a great cost. Real caring hurts. We're raising up illegitimate children in an orphanage if we can't discipline our children. And what does God do after discipline? He comforts us and restores us.

When discipline is used consistently, it is never associated with anger because there is no stored-up wrath. Acts of disobedience are not gauged by degrees. It is the same discipline for every act of disobedience. The motive is not for us to have nice children that won't give grace to carry on. It is to bring them up into salvation. They must learn to live by their conscience. We teach them to obey their conscience by disciplining them when they disobey their conscience (do something that makes them feel "bad" inside).

The child is frustrated if he doesn't know the limits, which are set to him by discipline (Col 3:20-21). Lack of discipline is hate and this hate is subconsciously implanted in the child and he reacts with rebellion. This is why we have rebellious people today. No limits have been set for children because there is no love. We are to become like Yahshua and submit our will to his will, so we should bring the will of our child in submission to our will. As the child grows older, he transfers that submission to Messiah. It is a painful process to wait to long to discipline our children. Callused hearts are difficult to break (Jer 13:23). Can a leopard change his spots?