

Parenting in the Lord

Part I

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6 *“Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

Introduction:

I took a piece of plastic clay

And idly fashioned it one day,

And as my fingers pressed it still,

It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past --

The bit of clay was hard at last;

The form I gave it, it still bore,

But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay

And gently formed it day by day,

And molded with my power and art

A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone --

It was a man I looked upon;

He still that early impress wore,

And I could change him nevermore. --Author unknown

Transitional Statement:

Church, our children are a great responsibility that God has given to us. Just looking around, He has blessed us with so many young children. It is my proposition today that we work harder to fulfill God's desire concerning them. It's been said they don't come with instruction manuals. But they do....the bible.

Scroll through pictures of church kids to see the reasons why this is important.

I. First of all children are a gift from God.

A. Read with me Psalms 127:3 *“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.”* NASB

1. Let’s talk about gifts.....Why do we give gifts?
 - a. Usually it is to help someone with a need.
 - b. Or simply to bring joy to their lives.
2. Here we understand that children are a gift from God.
 - a. Yes, that means that God has thought about us and considered our needs and what can brings joy to our life.
 - b. And God has sent what no one else could bring to us....a child !
3. The word *“gift”* also is connected to the idea of an inheritance.
 - a. You see, the point is that, children have been handed down to us by God.
4. The text also says that they are a reward.
 - a. Children are not just given to anybody
 - b. But it is God who opens the womb or keeps it closed as Jacob reminds Rachael in Genesis 30:2

II. The second thing is that children need a mother and a father.

A. Now this would seem to go without saying

B. But all the children that have ever lived on this earth have one thing in common.....

1. They all have had a mother and a father.
2. You know that is the way God designed it.
 - a. Children need both.....a mother and a father.
 - 1). The father brings things to the table that the can’t
 - 2) And the mother brings things the father can’t
 - b. Anyone that is a single parent can and will confirm this to you.
 - c. Even children living with only one parent can tell you that something is missing.

- C. Teenagers contemplating sexual relationships outside of marriage should first of all be reminded that God says it is wrong,
1. 1 Corinthians 6:13 "...the body is not for immorality (fornication), but for the Lord,..."
 2. Sexual relationships outside of marriage brings babies into the world, babies that most of the time can neither be cared foror even kept.
 - a. I wonder what the Lord thinks of a person who places their own desires so far ahead of His will that they are willing to deny a child a godly balanced home.
 - b. Teenagers, here my words today....as a servant of the living God, I charge you this day to keep yourselves pure for God and for your future spouse.
- D. And parents should be working with all their hearts to preserve their marriages so as to give their children what God has ordained that they need....a mother and father.
1. Setting an example that your children may learn to walk in it.
 2. Working out your differences in love
 3. Not willing to give up

III. Then one of the most important things in regard to our children is to continually have them before God's throne of grace praying for them

- A. Prayer is very powerful
1. Prayer is the ability to approach the throne of God...Hebrews 4:16
 2. Acts 4:31 says *"And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness."*
 3. James 5:16 "...The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."
- B. We find godly people throughout the whole of scripture bringing their children before God.
1. Hannah talking to God about Samuel before he was even born
 2. Also I think about Abraham praying for Ishmael.
 3. Job 1:5 *"When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.*

- C. Let's just stop right now and pray for all of our kids as a community of believers. I have put some scripture together to form a prayer and would like to share it with you as we pray.

Lord God of heaven, we give you honor in this hour of worship. We lift your name high and all that you are...

Father we ask you to hear our prayer for our children:

Lord watch over our children, keep them from harm, watch over their lives, watch their coming and going both now and forevermore Psalms 121:5-8

Lord please fulfill your purpose for our children...your love, Lord endures forever, please do not abandoned the work of your hands. Psalms 138:8

Where can our children go from your Spirit? Where can they flee from your presence: If they go up to heaven, you are there, if they make their bed in the depths, you are there. If they rise on the wings of the dawn, if they settle on the far side of the sea, even there may your hand guide them, ...please let your hand hold them fast. Psalm 139:7-10

May they fear you and hate evil; may they hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Proverbs 8:13

Father help them to be your people and be their God. Give them one heart and one way, that they may fear you always for their own good and of their children after them. Jer 32:38-39

Father please give them a united heart and protect their hearts from becoming hardened like stones. Help them to follow your decrees and keep your laws. Eze 11:19-20

Lord please watch over them as a shepherd, search for them when they wonder off, correct them with your rod and rescue them when they find themselves in a day of clouds and darkness. Eze 34:11-12

Be gracious to them and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love Joel 2:12-13

May they love you with all their hearts, with all their souls and with all their minds. Matt. 22:37

May you direct them in the truth and make them free. John 8:32

Lord, open their eyes so that they may turn away from darkness to the light in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those sanctified in faith. Acts 26:18

Lord help them not to be ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes Romans 1:16

Father please create a desire in them to come out from among the men of this world and be sanctified. 2 Cor 6:17-18

Please give them the spirit of wisdom and guide them in your truth Eph 1:17

May they submit themselves to you, resisting the devil James 4:7

Father on our behalf:

We ask that you guide our steps in raising our children, help us to lead them in your ways. Convict our hearts when we fail. AMEN !

D. James 4:2 "...You do not have because you do not ask."

1. We should wear out our knees in regard to our children.

Conclusion:

Simply, how have you treated the lump of clay that God has placed within your hands.