

## *How do we build a Biblical faith in our children?*

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**Introduction:** The fervent prayer of every parent is that their children may go to heaven.

A. Today a large percentage of our young people raised by Christians have either never obeyed the gospel or are falling away.

1. A good number of parents follow their children in departing from the Lord.
2. Still there are those Christians who raise all of their children to be faithful Christians. What makes the difference?
3. How we do our work in the home is crucial to the future of the church.

**(Judges 2:10 KJV)** And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose **another generation** after them, **which knew not the LORD**, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

B. There are few griefs greater than seeing one's child forsake the Lord and His way.

1. **(Prov 10:1; 17:21, 25; 19:13)** - This is a pain that does not go away.
2. For those who have lost their children to the world, do not let this material serve to put you on a **“guilt trip”** or be seen as a way of accusing you of things of which you are not guilty! The goal of this material is to gain the wisdom from the scriptures on how to raise godly children.
  - a. No one can change the past.
  - b. Let us learn from our mistakes (ALL parents will make them) and move on to the issues of today.
  - c. Let us learn and **encourage those parents** who have children in the home.

C. There are few joys greater than seeing our children become strong servants of God.

1. **(Prov 23:24-25)** - We need to make this our determined goal!
2. **(Prov 22:6)** - We must believe that this goal is possible.
3. After setting this lofty goal, what kind of commitment is necessary to see it accomplished? **(Luke 14:28-30)**
4. How do we find the strength to accomplish this? **(1 John 5:4-5)**

### *I. Some things parents must become.*

A. **You must be a Christian with a strong faith. (2 Tim 1:5)**

1. You cannot instill in a child that which you do not live!
2. Many Christians have deceived themselves into accepting a worldly lifestyle while viewing themselves as faithful. **Your children will see the difference** and be discouraged. **(2 Cor 13:5)**
3. In order to have a biblical faith, your faith must cost you dearly. **(Luke 14:33)**  
In some cases it may be the parent has never become a Christian.
4. The goal of a parent is to teach their children about the God who loves them and for Whom we ourselves should lay our lives down. **(Rev 2:10)**

B. **You must be knowledgeable in what is right and wrong.**

1. **(Heb 5:12-14)** - If we have a strong faith, we will grow to be able to see

the deceitful traps of Satan.

- a. We must understand that not everything is spelled out in black and white. We must make wise decisions. **(Gal 5:21)**
- b. This requires a daily effort to discern and prove what is right. **(Rom 12:1-2; 1 Thess 5:21)**
2. The weak Christian cannot clearly see the pitfalls of sin for their lives nor for their children.
  - a. Sadly, some will view strong Christians as unduly limiting their children. Some will even go to the point of expressing gossip and criticism towards those parents who try to warn them.
  - b. In other cases, the weak may actually encourage their children in those things which are wrong.
3. In matters of right and wrong we will be tested severely. We need to fight the battles of what the Bible teaches **before** the emotional times of pressing personal decisions. **(Dan 1:8; Josh 24:15)**
  - a. While we need to keep a heart open to the word of God so we may correct any beliefs held that are wrong. We must not be constantly vacillating on where we stand.
  - b. Our children will see this and our influence will be negated.
  - c. Let us be consistent. When we are not we should openly confess when we are wrong.

**C. You must have a will to stand firm and exercise discipline.**

1. This discipline is an outgrowth of God's love. **(Heb 10:5-11)**
  - a. We must be willing to speak the truth and discipline when it is not easy. **(Mark 10:21-22)**
  - b. We must never be blind to our child's faults! If we do, who will be the loser?
2. We must communicate in discipline. **(Eph 6:4)**
  - a. We need wisdom to know how to work with our child at different age levels.
  - b. Do not discipline your child when you are not in control! **(Eph 4:26-27)**
  - c. Make sure you have communicated to the child the lesson to be learned.
3. The parent is to raise the child, not the opposite! **(Prov 29:15; 3:12)**

**D. You must be committed to practicing God's will in your relationship to your mate.**

1. When a home functions as God wills there is a great strength and confidence developed within every member! **(Eph 5:25-33)**
2. Your relationship with your mate will have a large impact upon your child.
3. This is why issues such as uncontrolled anger and other forms of selfishness are devastating to the children. **(Eph 4:31-32)**

**E. You must be committed to being a good teacher. (Deut 6:4-9; Eph 6:4)**

1. You will be a teacher! Be the best you can be.
2. Prepare yourself far ahead of the birth of the child to teach.

**F. You must put away the schemes of Satan. (James 3:13-15)**

1. If you become a professional critic you will embitter your children towards Christians. Do not be surprised when they take your spirit to its logical conclusion.
2. (James 3:17-18) - However the one who shows the wisdom of God will provide a great example to the child on how to handle the hurts of life.

**G. You must be a couple who will stand united on these things.**

**(Luke 1:6; 1 Peter 3:7)**

1. This would mean marrying a Christian.
2. With proper communication the parents would avoid allowing the child to pit one parent against the other.

**II. The wisdom we must seek in our parenting.**

**A. Discipline and communication. (James 1:5)**

1. We should draw on the experience of those wiser and more experienced. (Titus 2:3-5)
2. Take advantage of good material written by faithful brethren.

**B. In the way we teach.**

1. Did the nation of Israel teach their kids? What **kind** of teaching did they do?
2. Do we teach our children like the denominations do with a catechism, that is give both the question and the answer for memorization?
3. Consider the experiment of the college sociologist upon his class. The question: "Does tooth brushing **cause** tooth decay?"
4. Our teaching must be interesting, repetitive and emphasized. We should teach our children how to **think and find the truth!**
5. Many want a teaching process that is as effortless as possible.
6. The problem of apostasy in the history of God's people lie here. Satan changes the name of error and brethren fall for it because they cannot discern. (Example: The missionary society, instrumental music)

**C. In the provisions for good associates of our children.**

1. How we use our homes will make a difference in how my child chooses friends! (3 John 4-8)
2. Those that have opened their homes to Christian young people in a substantial way will see their Children with Christian friends.

**D. In the problems of our child making faith their own.**

1. Most children of Christians will ask: "Do I believe what I do just because of how I was raised, or am I really following what is true?"
2. We must not be afraid of questions nor be alarmed when our child is searching.
3. Do not teach him to bury his questions but rather teach him how to think!
4. Again, we cannot teach our children that which we do not do ourselves.

5. Many have noted that the third generation is very likely to fall away.

**E. In being consistent**

**III. What should we do then?**

- A. Make the time commitment required for the job. You will not regret it.
- B. Be the best kind of teacher possible.
- C. Let us make our bible classes at church the best they can be.
- D. Let us humbly go to God on a daily basis for wisdom and help.

**Conclusion:** What are the important things in life? (**Prov 22:6; 23:24-25**)

**Children's Influence Upon Parents**

**Bill Hall**

Children can influence their parents just as parents can influence their children. The following story about an imaginary couple may have been duplicated in the lives of many of our readers.

George and Mary were a wonderful couple as they began their life together. Throughout their youth they had received strong teaching concerning worldliness, and their conduct showed the effects of that teaching. They had been taught faithfulness in attendance, and they never missed a service for "anything." In character and conviction, they were blameless.

This young couple failed, however, to instill into the hearts of their children these same convictions. Consequently, as the children reached their teens, they began to put pressure on their parents to let them do what all the other young people were doing. Gradually the will of the parents was broken down, and they began to permit their children to do things they never dreamed their children would ever do.

Rationalization came easy for George and Mary. "After all, the Bible is not specific in these matters," they thought. "The Bible says 'modest apparel', but it doesn't define modesty." "And, they're only planning to go to the dance; they aren't planning to dance." "We can't say 'no' to everything," they said. When Junior began to show unusual athletic ability, the question of attending services became a problem. At first they took Junior out of games and brought him to midweek services, but then the team began to depend more and more on him. The play-offs came, and the team's only hope in the play-offs was for Junior to play. George and Mary gave in. And once they had given in, they had no more argument for the future. Junior never missed another game to "go to church."

George and Mary often found themselves on the defensive in Bible classes. They began to argue for their children's behavior. And, the more accustomed they became to their children's actions, the more innocent their actions seemed to be. Eventually, their own conduct became affected. They reached the point where they thought nothing of missing on Friday night during a meeting to see Junior play ball. Mary even adopted some of the daughter's dress habits, although remaining sufficiently "discreet" to stay in the good graces of the brethren. Yes, George and Mary are still in good standing in the church, and their change has been so gradual that many fail to realize that they are not the strong Christians they formerly were. What happened to George and Mary? Instead of bringing their children "up" in the nurture and admonition of the "Lord", their children brought them "down" in the nurture and admonition of the devil. "

Our children may do wrong, but they must not do wrong with our permission. We do not seek anger, but repentance. Parents, would your names fit in the place of "George" and "Mary" in the above story?

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