

CHRISTIAN AND PARENTAL OBLIGATIONS

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INTRODUCTION;

It is the nature of parents to love their children whether Christians or non-Christians. When children are small, parents diligently attend to their needs, giving them the best of care. They rejoice in their steady growth and happiness. When children become sick, responsible parents spare no efforts day or night to nurse them back to good health. Christians Parents delight to see their children achieve worthwhile objectives in life spiritually and physically. Food, academic development, clothing and every requirement for a child to grow are direct obligations of a responsible parents. All these and much more is the privilege and duty of parents toward their children.

1. DISPLAYING CHRISTIAN CHARACTERISTICS;

If parents are dedicated Christians, they abide by the Bible principles, they will live an exemplary life before their children/others, a life they wish their children to pattern after. Since "the imagination of man's heart is evil continually" (**Gen. 8:21**), it is necessary that training and teaching be done early in family circle. It is said, "a child learns more by observation than through instructions."

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (**Prov. 22:6**). "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph. 6:4**). To a great extent, the future happiness and destiny of parents and children hinges upon the godly teaching and instruction they receive from parents. Parents who live unconcerned and ungodly lives will have an effect upon their children. On the other hand, there are blessings that follow generations of God fearing parents.

2. CREATING POSITIVE VALUES;

What a man sows, that he will reap (**Gal. 6:7**). Sin leaves a trail of sorrow in this world and the sinner reaps sorrow and suffering on earth in hell forever. However, the

judgment on sin is removed when the sinner repents and the Lord forgives him. Many children suffer physically and mentally, because of the sins of ungodly parents.

The influence that parents have for good or evil is much greater than they often realize. Parents who are not Christians, who do not worship God, who do not read the Bible, and do not have family worship in their homes are not doing their duty before God and their children. Fathers and mothers should be faithful and unwavering in their Christian lives and bequeath same on their siblings.

Parents need to be alert to evil spirits that influence children. Evil spirits are subtle and destructive, and will seek to control a heart that is young and tender. When these become established in a child's life, they are difficult to root out.

3. IDENTIFY AND CORRECT REBELIOUS ATTITUDE;

The spirit of rebellion is rampant in the world today. We read in **(2Tim. 3:1-2)** that there will be disobedience to parents in the last days. The spirits of pride, anger and envy become evident in a child's heart at an early age. It is important that parents possess the spirit of God so they can discern Satan's work and deal with their children as the Lord directs.

Power to resist these spirits will only come through earnestly seeking the Lord in prayer. Failure to successfully accomplish this by God's grace will leave the child with many frustrating disadvantages.

A child often manifests a stubborn self-will. When teaching and pleading in love and gentleness will not convince him, stricter methods of discipline must be applied. This will be for the future good and salvation of the child. The home and God's kingdom will be blessed and society will benefit also. This becomes the pride of the parent in future and develop to leadership position in the household of fellowship. **(1Tim. 3:4-5).**

4. STRICT DISCIPLINARY MEASURES AND METHOD OF APPLICATION:

In **(Prov. 13:24)** we read, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him promptly." "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" **(Prov.22:15)**. Oftentimes a lack of love for the child prevents parents from taking the right course in discipline.

These scripture quotations from the book of Proverbs do not approve nor encourage child abuse. The "rod of correction" has proven effective when administered with love and rightly. The pain the child feels causes the parents to suffer also. When a pure love for the child and his soul is alive in the heart of the parents, the punishment given

will bind parents and child closer together. Parents who discipline with anger are apt not to achieve good results because confidence between the child and parents will be greatly strained or broken. Parents who would use the Bible method of training their children, and God's blessing will surely follow.

Providing an atmosphere where children are taught by love and example is essential. Give children a consistent example of love, tolerance and compassion and you have given them guidelines to constructive and consistent living. Show them that unbecoming language and behavior does not augur well to correct any individual in the home or anywhere. Demonstrated to all a big heart capacity for warmth in a trying situation. Teach all that sorrow and misfortune can befall anyone and that everyone merits compassion and understanding in the name of Christ, then you have given the family the key to the heart of their fellowmen.

5. SHOWING GODLY LOVE AND RESPECT TO ALL;

Demonstrate to your child and all that God loves all men equally, and he will see the white fields of harvest our Savior saw **(John 3:16, John 4:35)**.

Show your children and all by example that the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God **(James 1:20)**, and you will have begun to lead them into the realm of man's insufficiency and God's sovereignty. God will conduct the affairs of all men according to His perfect will.

Show kindness and impartiality to those who are least and you have shown them the door to greatness.

Teach them that the redeeming grace of God is God's remedy for sin and failure in every human heart, and you will have bequeathed to them the true reason for thankfulness. This will open doors of blessing and faith to them. If they acquire an unfeigned love for the truth they will be led to the door of eternal life.

CONCLUSION;

The number one Christian obligation by parents is to teach our children the godly example set by our own lives. Therefore, we must continually examine ourselves and our moral attributes to lead our children rightly. **(Prov. 20:7)** says, "The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him." The main reason for the blessed state of this man's children is that they have someone to look up to and

use as an example from which to model their own behavior. So, we must strive to be that example to our own children, even as Christ is our example.

We believe the best way to assure that you are that good parent is through a disciplined life of studying the Bible, prayer, fellowship, and serving. As you do this your life will reflect the very character of God more and more each day and your children will witness that reflection follow-up.