

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 12.4.2022

## WISDOM FOR PARENTS

### I. INTRODUCTION

**Prov 22:6** Train up a child in the way he should go;

even when he is old he will not depart from it.

### II. THE HOME AS TRAINING CENTER

- Proverbs is a training manual for parents and children.
- Here's why Solomon wrote the proverbs.
- Prov 1:2-4 To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, 3 to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; 4 to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth.
- In order to know wisdom, we need to have the prerequisite "fear of the Lord" (Prov 1:7).
- The first nine chapters are written as lessons from a Father to a son.
- Prov 1:8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching,
- Solomon wrote it for the youth and as a teaching tool for parents to instruct their children.
- That tells us that the path to wisdom starts in the home.
- Parents are the primary teachers of wisdom.
- Deut 6:4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 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.
- The home is to be the training center where wisdom is learned.
- Notice that what is in mind here is theological instruction.
- Through the tools of training, instruction, discipline, reproof, and correction, a heart of wisdom is being shaped in our children.
- If you don't help shape a heart of wisdom in your children, be assured their heart will be shaped by their own selfish, sinful nature and the world.

### TRAIN UP A CHILD

- Prov 22:6, 6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.
- As we read the proverb it seems to promise that our children will remain on the right path as long as we train them up in the right path.
- Principle of How to Read Proverbs: Proverbs contain general promises for the righteous that are generally true now, but ultimately true later.
- But is this particular proverb making a general promise? If you are diligent to raise your children in the Lord, they will turn out ok.
- We have many cases where this is not how things turned out.
- Is proverbs 22:6 a promise?
- Short answer, No, it's not a promise.
- It is a warning to parents and a responsibility placed on parents, but it is not holding them accountable for the wise or foolish choices that their adult children make later in life.

- Our English translations read:
- **ESV** Train up a child in the way he should go
- **CSB** Start a youth out on his way;
- **NIV** Start children off on the way they should go,
- The CSB gets it closest to the original language.
- "He should go" or "they should go" as a qualifier of "the way," is not in the Hebrew.
- Literally, the verse reads, "Train a child in his way, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

- What does it mean to "train a child in his way"?
- One of the ways this has been interpreted is to train a child according to his natural bent.
- That is, figure out how your child is uniquely wired and learn how to communicate and teach them.
- But keeping to what we have learned in Proverbs, this interpretation doesn't fit.
- Proverbs characterizes the natural way of children/youth as foolish.
- Youth need to learn wisdom and receive instruction, it's not something they're born with (1:4).
- They lack sense (7:7).
- Folly is bound up in the heart of a child (Prov 22:15).
- They need discipline (23:13; 22:15).
- Folly needs to be corrected and a taste for wisdom needs to be cultivated.
- We don't want our children following their natural bent because their natural bent is foolishness.
- We don't want to train them to "follow their heart" or "go their own way" because that way leads to death (14:12).
- We are born with a sin nature, our natural bent is rebellion and selfishness.
- Like all of mankind, we are born sons of Adam, dead in our trespass and sin (Eph 2:1-3).
- What did Solomon mean?
- "Train a child in his way" means *"train a child when he is young to have his way, and when he is old he will keep insisting on having his way."*
- Let your kids have their own way when they are young, they will continue on that foolish path when they are old.
- **Prov 29:15** The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother..
- They don't need to be taught how to do wrong, that's the default mode, it's already in their heart.
- What do they need? They need correction. They need to be shown what is right.

- Proverbs warns parents of the harm they bring to their children and the harm they bring upon themselves if they do not correct their children.
- **Prov 20:20** If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.
- **Prov 30:17** The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures.
- **Prov 17:21** He who sires a fool gets himself sorrow, and the father of a fool has no joy.
- **Prov 17:25** A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her who bore him.

### III. THE TOOLS OF TRAINING

#### INSTRUCTION

- Training involves a high level of commitment, it is difficult, and time consuming.
  - It's something that is done over and over again until there is mastery (e.g., athletes)
  - Wisdom teaches that we need to start this training when our children are young.
  - What you need to teach them will take place over a long period of time so start early.
  - Start teaching them principles and precepts from God's Word.
  - This training is theological in nature.
  - Start catechizing your children when they are really young.
  - Teach them the Ten Commandments
  - Teach them the Lord's Prayer
  - Teach them about the character of God, his holiness and righteousness.
  - Read God's Word to them.
  - Discuss God's Word around the dinner table.
  - Have a time of simple family worship (read a passage, sing a hymn, pray)
  - Make sure your family gathers on the Lord's Day, teach them the importance of being with God's people.
  - The work of training and instructing is intentional and continual.
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- Do you understand the general storyline of the Bible?
  - Can you explain the gospel to your children?
  - Can you teach them about our sin nature, salvation, and the work of Jesus Christ?
  - Do you understand the major teachings and doctrine of Scripture in order to explain them to your children?
  - Spurgeon, "Train up a child in the way he should go – but be sure you go that way yourself."

#### DISCIPLINE AND CORRECTION

- Children are naturally inclined to choose folly.
- They need to know right and wrong, and when they do wrong they need to be corrected.
- That is where discipline comes in as a tool for training and correction.
- That correction will be often in the form of a verbal rebuke.
- Correction, discipline and training must be addressed to the heart, all the while, pointing our children to the gospel.
- A corrective rebuke is a multi-layered conversation.
- Tedd Tripp writes that we are shepherding the heart of our children, "helping them understand themselves, God's world, the ways of God, how

sin works in the human heart, and how the gospel comes to them at the most profound levels of human need. Shepherding the hearts of children also involves helping them understand their motivations, goals, wants, wishes and desires. It exposes the true nature of reality and encourages faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

- The objective is to move them back to the path of obedience, first to the Lord and then to us as parents.
- We are correcting them so they will see the value of wisdom over folly.
- A verbal command is usually all the corrective action that is needed.

## THE ROD OF CORRECTION

- When the foolish behavior continues, discipline requires “the rod of correction.”
- Prov 13:24 Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.
- Prov 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.
- Prov 23:13-14 Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. 14 If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.
- What is the rod? A small stick, a switch.
- It is to be applied when verbal rebukes and corrections have failed.
- The rod is a principle not just a physical act.
- The principle is that a little pain in the present, applied in love, will produce the desired fruit of obedience.
- Hebrews 12:11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- Discipline teaches that there are consequences to our sinful behavior and actions.
- It should be uncomfortable. But it should not be harsh or excessive.
- When we train our children through the tool of discipline, the goal is that it will yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

## MOTIVATION

- When we discipline our children we must keep our motives in check.
- The way we discipline reveals any idolatry in our heart. (e.g., control, comfort)
- Discipline is an expression of love for your child. It is corrective, not punitive.
- Proverbs 3:11-12 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12 for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

## IV. THE GOSPEL AND PARENTING

- In light of our child's natural bent, their greatest need is Jesus!
- The gospel is to be the central focus of our parenting.
- The focus of our parenting is not simply behavior modification but heart transformation.
- Training and instruction and correction and discipline is a rescue mission.
- You are lovingly applying the wisdom skills of parenting to create the necessary friction against your child's natural inclination towards folly.
- We need to continually apply the gospel truths to our parenting.

- Loving discipline demonstrates to our children that there are consequences and that there will be accountability for sinful actions.
- It teaches them that there is an objective standard of right and wrong.
- And when they have missed the mark, when they have sinned, they need to turn to their Savior.
- Discipline is an opportunity for a gospel conversation, not just to hand out a punishment.
- We want them to know the grace and forgiveness of God, how Christ took upon himself the punishment for our sins so that we could be forgiven.
- Model God's character of love and grace and forgiveness.
- Prov 22:6 should not laden us with guilt for our failures as parents.
- It should cause us to be vigilant and committed to teaching, instructing, correcting, and disciplining our children.

## **APPLICATION AND REFLECTION**

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?