

HOW CAN PARENTS BEST HELP THEIR CHILDREN TO LOVE AND WORSHIP GOD?

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Much time and hard work is required to properly train children. For this reason many parents are failing in their duty to help children love and worship God. For several generations, parents have not trained their children. Selfish and lazy parents who are not willing to put forth the effort and make the sacrifices necessary to train children are the primary reasons for the sad state of affairs children find themselves in today. Parents want their children “out of their hair” at all costs. Play and entertainment have replaced a responsible attitude in the lives of parents. Lazy parents do not want to face the conflicts that arise when proper training procedures of children take place. An incorrect definition of grace and love on the part of parents has also condoned and propagated permissiveness.

Reproductive power is a glorious gift from God (Gen. 1:27-28), but it does not automatically make good parents and ensure good children. To help children love and worship God is one of the greatest challenges parents face. With this in mind and with the limited space to answer the question posed by the title, I will affirm that the greatest help parents can provide for their children in loving and worshiping God is to teach them the proper attitude toward and response to spiritual authority (Col. 3:17).

God is the ultimate in love and authority (1 John 4:8; Psa. 47:2; 83:18; 115:31). Parents must first therefore, be willing to respond to God's love and commandments in their own lives before they can be the proper help to their children in doing the same. There must first be the proper standard to guide the home (Rom. 13:1; 2 Tim. 3:15; Deu. 6:6-7; Pro. 22:6). Again the parents must live by this standard before they can expect their children to. Twenty times in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles, when kings are mentioned it is recorded “*and his mother was*” or “*he walked in the ways of his father.*” Parents must, therefore, train, nurture, and admonish their children by the infallible standard—the Scriptures (Pro. 1:8; Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 1:5). This is a much neglected principle. Does the child see his parents studying the Bible? Do they know the joy of having their parents talk with them about what the Bible teaches?

Children must be taught to respect authority. This begins with children learning to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1). Nothing is much more unbecoming and sinful than children left to their own way. The child not taught to obey his parents will be a problem in every facet of society. Parents are to see their children comply with correct rules and principles. Training has not taken place unless children are caused to submit to parental authority (1 Sam. 3:13; Gen. 18:10; Jos. 24:15). Discipline, both preventive and corrective, must be practiced if godly parents are to have the respect they deserve. A part of this discipline is chastisement.

The following verses should be diligently studied and obeyed: 1 Samuel 7:14, Proverbs 13:24, 49:48, 22:15, Hebrews 12:6-7. If children are to grow up into responsible, God-fearing adults, it will be when parents have helped by training their children to respond correctly to properly constituted and scriptural authority (Psa. 47:2; 83:18; 115:3; Dan. 4:34-35; Rom. 9:20-21). Paul commanded, “*Let every soul be*

subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom.13:1).

Parents must note Exodus 20:11, Deuteronomy 27:16, Proverbs 30:17, Matthew 15:4, 20:11, Ephesians 6:2-3. Why should parents expect their children to love and submit to the authority of Christ when they were not trained to love and submit to the authority of their parents?~