

Raising Faithful Children Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Parents, while children are free to choose how they live, you can influence them to become Christians and remain faithful all through life. It is true that you cannot make decisions for them, but you can lead them to know the Lord. Solomon in the Proverbs reminds us in Prov. 22:6, ***“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*** This refers to giving your children a moral education based on God’s word. Children are still responsible for their own choices, regardless of their parents training, we need to realize this proverb describes a pattern and not a promise.

The apostle John wrote in **3 John 4**, ***“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”*** While John is speaking of his spiritual Children in the Church – He was still excited to seem them not only believe the truth, but to also grow and walk in that truth. Christian parents want nothing more than that their children not only become Christians, but remain Christians throughout their lives. What joy it is to know that you will see your children in heaven.

Perhaps you remember the verse that describes how Jesus grew up. **Luke 2:52** say, ***“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”*** We certainly hope that our children will grow up like that. We also want them to increase in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. And we pray that they will make wise choices in life, that they will be healthy, and can be a friend to God and have Christian friends. Let’s take the words of Jesus in **Mt. 16:26** to heart, ***“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”*** As we live our lives and set the example for our children, *we need to let them know that their souls are the most important thing in their lives on this earth*, for it is the only thing that we will be allowed to take with us when this life on earth is over.

How can we bring up faithful children? **First, let us realize that raising faithful children begins before they are even born.** We need to get our own lives in spiritual order and pray for children that will be faithful to the Lord. Most of us now know this, but there is no instruction manual that comes with the baby, every child is different and will need to be handled differently. What works with one child will not necessarily work with the others. Therefore, *parents will need wisdom to help them* know how to handle and deal with each child in a way that

blesses the child. James gives us this advice when seeking wisdom, (**James 1:5**) *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”* This is not some special revelation; but it is the everyday wisdom that we all need to live faithfully.

Second, Christian parents can sing hymns and spiritual songs to their children, starting with them when they are infants. An infant child may not understand all the words their parents’ sing, but they can sense from the tone of voice and hear with their hearts. Children learn to love God from their mamas and papas, and the best way to start is to sing to them Christian songs of love for God. Remember if you want God in their lives, He must first be in life of the parents.

Third, from the beginning decide that you will worship God regularly and take your children with you. In **Hebrews 10:23-25** we read, *“let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”* Regularly assembling with other Christians helps to keep us spiritually strong. Loving and faithful teachers and Christian friends at church can have a positive impact for good on your child. If you want to keep your children in church and loving God, then assemble with God’s family regularly and worship and learn about God together. (It is best if fathers and mothers both regularly attend.)

Fourth, parents, you must assume the primary task of spiritually training your children. You cannot leave that to others. God gave you, as parents, the primary responsibility to train your children spiritually, that is why He gave them to you. No one has a greater opportunity or responsibility than you do, to help your children to get to heaven. In **Ephesians 6:4** God gives fathers some advice in raising children, *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”* As the spiritual head of the home, fathers can do much to influence their children to love and live for the Lord. It is tragic that so many fathers are absent from the family. Sadly, many children don’t even know their fathers. In those cases, mothers must do all they can to help their children learn and know God.

Mothers can do much to lead their children to the Lord. Timothy became the Christian man that he was because of the women in his life. In **2 Tim. 1:5** we read, ***“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.”***

According to **Acts 16:3**, Timothy’s father was Greek, and it fell to his mother and grandmother to teach him about God and the scriptures. Mothers, if you don’t have a husband to help you, or your husband doesn’t share your faith, don’t let that stop you from doing all you can to bring up your child in the faith and instruction of the Lord.

In many cases, grandparents have been given the responsibility of their grandchildren. Grandparents can also make a profound difference in the spiritual lives of their grandchildren. I’ve known many grandparents who have regularly taught their grandchildren about God and taken them to worship. And they made a difference. Such as Lois, the grandmother of Timothy.

Fifth, make the Word of God a part of your everyday life. **Deuteronomy 6:4-9** teaches a powerful lesson on this: ***“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 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. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*** If God is not a part of your everyday life, what kind of example are you setting for your children?

According to **Deut. 6:4 and 10:13**, God gave us His word, His covenant, for our good. When the word of God lives in our heart, it can help us in multiple ways: ***to grow in faith, to make right choices, and to avoid the moral pitfalls of life.***

According to **Romans 10:17** ***“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”*** Nothing is more important to your children’s spiritual development **than a knowledge of God and His word.** God’s word will nourish your children with the truth that they will need in life, if they are to be faithful. It will **teach them what to avoid and how to avoid it.** It will keep their hearts tender toward God and shape their consciences for good.

The word of God teaches us how to treat our neighbor, how to love our enemies, and how to forgive the wrongs that we suffer. The word of God points people

toward sacrifice instead of selfishness, toward a work ethic instead of laziness, toward responsibility instead of blaming others, toward authenticity instead of hypocrisy, toward love instead of apathy, toward kindness instead of passing by on the other side, and toward the truth instead of error. The word of God teaches that God created us in His own image, and we aren't random accidents. The word of God explains where humans came from, why we are here, and where we go after we die. *Faith in God gives children identity, meaning and purpose.* You can't give your child anything more valuable than the knowledge of God in the Bible, who they are and who they belong to.

Our lives would be empty and sad with God and His word, and those who are trying to push God and His Bible out of our society are enemies of our children. They seek to rob your children of the blessing of a Christian heritage. When Israel rejected God and turned to idols, God sent them prophets to bring them back. One such prophet was Hosea, in **Hosea 4:6** he said, ***"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."***

Parents, the surest way to raise faithful children is to keep them reading and studying the Word of God; and the surest way to destroy your children's hope of a better life is to reject God's word. **Wherever the Bible is read and respected, people grow better and wiser.** Wherever the Bible is ignored, life grows meaningless and evil. It turns inward, selfish and immoral. The further that people get away from God, the uglier they become to one another. Life becomes cheap, and people begin to abuse the old and the children, even the unborn. I don't want a spiritually dark world without God for my children. I want them to walk in the light and in the love of God.

Sixth, parents teach your children respect and reverence. Children who are respectful learn how to obey and in time how to discipline themselves. Children who don't respect their parents or God find their lives full of heartaches and failure. Parents must establish loving authority over a child early in life, if they do, they will find their children happy and secure. If parents don't; they will have a battle with their children for years to come; and no one will be happy. **Prov. 29:15** says, ***"The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother."***

In Isaiah 33:5-6 we read, “***The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness, and he will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is Zion’s treasure.***”

When children learn to respect and revere God, they will find a life that is stable and abundant. Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Nothing is more crucial, than knowing that we are to be held accountable to God for the lives we chose to live on this earth.

Seventh, give them your love and blessing. Little children often come to understand their heavenly Father through their relationship with their earthly parents. If children have the security of their parent’s love, they will learn to trust in the heavenly Father’s love. Children who never feel valued by their parents will find it hard to feel valued by God. Children who never find forgiveness from their parents find it hard to believe in a God who will forgive them. Children whose parents reject them often think God might reject them too. Children can arrive at the wrong conclusions about God, when their parents don’t love them as they should. **Parents, teach them early and teach them often – but it all starts by getting your own life in order with God.**

Not only are you to teach them what God has said, but you are to be living that kind of life yourself. A child responds best to a parent who love and accepts them; one who loves God and is obedient to His teaching. When they see the joy in your life, they are most likely to want that same joy.

Faith and love move us to act according to God’s will – where is your life and faith this day? Make your life right with God and keep faithful, and **most likely** your children will follow your example. Won’t you get your life in order?