

III. THE ISSUE OF EXERCISING DISCERNMENT WHEN IT COMES TO TRAINING CHILDREN

A. SOME OF THE MATTERS THAT PARENTS OUGHT TO RECOGNIZE.

1. Parents ought to recognize that they have a job to do - to train up their children (Prov. 22:6).
2. Parents ought to recognize to train up their children requires a plan of strategy. How can I accomplish this training goal? This strategy ought to involve family devotions, faithful attendance in church services, good wholesome Christian activities, good Christian literature and good Christian music, etc.
3. Parents ought to recognize that the devil is opposed to the job they have to do and he will do whatever he can to keep them from accomplishing their goal with their children.
4. Parents ought to recognize that the example they set and the strategy they employ, in training their children, will determine in large measure what they turn out to be.

B. SOME OF THE MISTAKES THAT PARENTS OFTEN MAKE.

1. Sometimes parents actually encourage their children to do wrong by laughing at particular behavior which is wrongful and which should require discipline.

Some examples of this are seen when children are allowed to stick their tongues out at others, or say certain words that express rebellious attitudes like "shut-up" or "be quiet".
2. Sometimes parents lie to their children about being disciplined when they misbehave. They say, "Just wait until we get home, you're going to get a whipping." But then when they get home nothing is ever done, so the child learns that the parent doesn't mean what he or she says.
3. Sometimes parents make repeated concessions with their children when they misbehave. They say, "Don't you stand up in your chair." Then when the child stands in the chair and starts climbing on the table they say, "Now, don't you get on that table." Then when the child is standing on the table the parent then says, "Now you be careful and don't you fall." The parent has made a mistake in making such concessions. The child shouldn't be allowed to stand in the chair in the first place.
4. Sometimes parents are inconsistent in the matter of discipline. They will scold and whip their children if they themselves are occupied with something or in a bad mood but then at other times they allow their children to get by with the same misbehavior.
5. Sometimes a parent will place the responsibility of discipline on the other parent. "Just wait until your daddy comes home, you're really going to get it." Each parent needs to deal with misbehavior when it occurs and not make a villain out of the other parent.
6. Sometimes parents will allow a child to aggravate them and frustrate them to the point that they will holler at the child or "fly off the handle" and physically abuse the child.

7. Sometimes parents allow their children to back-talk or sass them and to defy their authority. The parent who allows this for any reason loses control over the child and loses the respect of the child. Once these are lost, it's only a matter of time before the child becomes more defiant and more truant or disobedient.

C. SOME OF THE MEASURES THAT PARENTS OUGHT TO TAKE.

1. Parents ought to employ methods of discipline which are commensurate with a child's age. Obviously infants are not to be spanked but they should learn very early what "no, no" means.
2. Parents ought to insist upon their children "obeying what they are told to do, when they are told to do it, and with the right attitude."
3. Parents ought to follow through when disciplining their children. When they deserve to be disciplined the parent should administer that discipline as promised. Failure to do this teaches a child he can do wrong and get by with it.