

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 4/12/92 PM
Proverbs 22:6 "Practical Instruction on Parenting from Proverbs"

Intro: Parenting...

Stats: Columnist Ann Landers asked parents whether or not, given the choice again, they would choose to have children. Over 60% said, "No way." Other surveys said Lander's results were way off, and less than 20% wish they never had children. Still there are a lot of unhappy, frustrated, even disillusioned parents (Sell, 129).

Stats: When 10,467 parents in an adolescence-parent study were asked about parenting, 4 out of 5 agreed that "to be a good parent is one of the hardest things in life I do." (Sell, 130)

Illust: Charles Sell tells the following story in his book, The House on the Rock. (p 22) "When my teenage daughter asks, 'Dad, may I go out tonight...'"

Q: Where can we find practical help on parenting? We could turn to Dobson and Swindoll and Stanley (these are helpful). But let's not forget and neglect our greatest authority. We have a book that contains timeless truths on the topic of parenting, as well as every other area in life. The Bible, God's Word.

Key: Proverbs tells us how to be wise in life...

Proverbs: God's Wisdom for Daily Living

How to be Wise. . .

1. In Life--An Introduction (1:1-7)
2. In Developing Friendships (1:10-19; 22:24; 17:17)
3. In Your Marriage Relationship
4. As a Parent (6:1ff)
5. In Your Finances
6. On the Job
7. In Dealing with Temptation (23:26-27)
8. When It Comes to Alcohol (23:28ff)
9. In Handling Your Tongue (15:1-4; 18:4-8)
10. By Being the Man or Woman God Wants You to Be

Challenge: How to get the most out of our study. . .

1. Read Proverbs daily (a chapter a day for the next 3 months)
2. Use of Role Plays/Dialogue in our Study--Constantly be thinking, "How does this apply to my life?"

Quote: Socrates (in The Wisdom of God, D. Jeremiah, p 59)

Q: What does Proverbs have to say about Parenting?

Challenge: Go through the 31 chapters of Proverbs, and mark every verse that has to do with parenting. The book is chock full with practical counsel!

Here's a sampling...

1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 3, 20, etc -- "My Son"
 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 29:15, 17 Discipline
 4:1-7, 10, 20; 13:1; 15:5; 19:27; 22:6 Fatherly Instruction
 5:1ff; 6:20-35 Warning about Sexual Purity
 6:1-3 Teaching Children about Responsibility
 10:1; 15:20; 17:6, 25; 19:13, 26-27; 23:24-25; 31:28 Joys and Sorrows of Parenting
 14:1; 17:1; 31:27 The Priority of the Home
 17:6 A Child's Need for a Good Father
 20:7; 22:1 A Child's Need for a Model of Integrity
 20:11 A Child's Behavior
 20:20; 28:24; 30:11 Dealing with the Disrespectful Child
 22:6 The Training of a Child
 23;22 Teaching a Child to Respect Parents
 31:15, 21 The Importance of Mothers in meeting practical needs (meals, clothing)

As you can see, there's a lot there! Proverbs has much to say to Moms and Dads about how to please God in the home. Let's try to sum up a few key principles from this supply of verses.

Q: What are the marks of a Good Parent, according to Proverbs?
 Prov 22:6 "Train up a child..."

But how? How can we be that kind of parent?

Proposition: Proverbs reveals the following marks of a good parent.

- I. A Good Parent is a Model.
- II. A Good Parent is a Molder.
 - A. The Child's Values
 - B. The Child's Behavior
- III. A Good Parent is a Motivator.
 - A. That involves Discipline
 - B.

Disclaimer: None of us are "know-it-alls" when it comes to parenting. I don't want to come across that way. I just want to know, and want you to know, what GOD SAYS about parenting. Then by His help, may we be DOERS of His Word.

I. A Good Parent is a Model.

23:24-25 "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice...be glad...rejoice."

What strikes you from that verse?

1. Good parents have a handle on the goal in parenting.

The goal is to raise what kind of children? "righteous" "wise"

Our aim is not to produce kids that grow up to make lots of money, or earn lots of degrees, or get prestigious jobs. Our ambition is to raise children that are known for righteousness and wisdom. Children that love God and live for Him.

Is that your ambition Dad and Mom? We need to do some soul-searching. There are plenty of "Christian" parents that don't even get out of the starting blocks because of a breakdown right here.

2. Good parents understand and delight in the importance of parenting.

Q: What attitudes do you see in these verses? "rejoice" "have joy"

Illust: Cousin Rick..."If I knew then what I know now, I'd never had children. I was never cut out to be a parent."

Do you view your children as a source of joy in your life? Do you rejoice at the opportunity to disciple your young transplants from heaven? Or do you view them as an inconvenience? A tax deduction. A cramp in your vocational goals. A weight around your neck.

You say, "What does that have to do with Modeling?"

Everything! Right now you are impacting your children by the attitude you convey...at the dinner table at night...by your presence or lack of it at your child's ballgames or school functions...

Discuss: Look at 17:1. What does this verse say to us about priorities in the home? "Better is a dry morsel...than a house full of sacrifices..."

Q: How do we model?

1. By what we Do.

What's the greatest thing you can give your children? See...

20:7 "The just man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."

The greatest thing I can give my offspring is the Model of a Life of Integrity.

22:1 "A good name is rather to be chosen than riches..."

2. By What We Say

Did you ever notice how much of Proverbs is a conversation between a father and his son? Look at the following...

1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1; 8:32; 23:15, 19, 26etc

Illust:

Tran: A good parent is s Model. Secondly Proverbs teaches us that...

II. A Good Parent is a Molder.

Illust: Playing with Playdough Factory--put the glob in on end, and it comes out in shapes at the other end!

Parents are in the Molding Business.

Q: What does God expect us to mold?

A. A Good Parent Molds the Child's Values.

Think back to the verses we just saw--"My Son..." What is the father doing in these words? He's contributing to the value formation of his child. He's teaching his son what things he should VALUE in life.

Key: All parents pass on a value system to their children. Some consciously, some unconsciously. Some here tonight may not even realize that you have values. But you do! Your values influence your actions. Your values are the things you consider to be important in your life. As your children watch you and listen to you, they pick up on your values, and often, adopt them.

Illust:

Q: What kinds of things did Solomon teach his son to value?

2:1-2 Wisdom

2:5 A Proper Relationship with the Lord

4:14-15 Purity

Key: God holds parents responsible for the Value Formation of their children. And listen. Dads and Moms, value formation starts early! As soon as we bring them home from the hospital.

Q: If I asked your child to write answers to the question, "What things are most important to your parents?" What 5 things would top the list?

My Gut Level Fear: Materialism has influenced the Church more than we realize or care to admit. Having the new car is more important to us than supporting missions. The room addition is more important than the sacrifices needed to insure our children receive a quality Christian education...

Q: How do we know what values are right?

A: God's Word! God's Word tells us not only how to get to heaven (through Jesus Christ), but HOW TO LIVE until we get there!

A good parent gets involved in molding the child's values. Don't leave it up to the church, or the school...

B. A Good Parent Molds the Child's Behavior.

Key: A child's values and behavior go hand in hand.

How we think influences how we behave.

20:11 "Even a child is known by his doings..."

Behavior is important.

Let's look at 2 areas of behavior to which Prov says parents should pay particular attention.

1. The Way the Child Behaves towards Authority Figures.

20:20 "Whoso curses his father..."

23:22 "Hearken to thy father..."

28:24 "Whoso robbeth his father..." {Kids, don't sponge off your parents!}

note: Some kids take advantage of their parents. And the parents have the unbiblical notion that it's wrong to ever say "No" to their children, that if they say "No" that means they don't love the child!

30:11 "There is a generation that curses their father..."

That generation is NOW!

Q: Why is it so important that parents teach their children to respect and obey them? Why is it so important?

A: Because parents are the first Authority Figure a child knows. How a child learns to respond to his parents will dictate his response towards other authorities the rest of his/her life. That's why it's so appalling to see some children "run all over" their parents.

Discuss: Name some other authorities--teachers, civil, church, God

Illust:

2. *Sexual Purity*

5:1, 3 "My son...the lips of a strange woman..."

6:20, 24,25 "My son, keep... to keep thee from evil woman... lust"

7:1, 5 "My son, keep my commands... that they may keep ... strange woman."

Listen. Dads and Moms, God holds us responsible to teach our children about purity and morality. In the home.

Q: What do you do when you're watching TV, and the advertisement for the latest Special Feature flashes across your screen. And there is graphic color, pumped right into your family room, are 2 unmarried people engaged in lust.

What do you do? If you do nothing, what does that say to Junior, who's not only watching the TV, but also YOU?

Application: Let's be practical. How does all this stuff about "values" and "behavior" work out in real life? Dads and Moms, if Proverbs says anything to us, it says this--What we allow our children to take into their minds will effect the development of their character, and ultimately the way they behave.

For 3 years I was an R.D. at a Christian college. Every year I welcomed 50-60 18 year old young men to the Dormitory. It was their first taste of "freedom" (I used to chuckle as I'd watch Moms make their beds for the last time!). For 18 years Dad and Mom had been "training them up." I was the first to see what happened when Dad and Mom were gone. Again and again I saw young men (Christians!) who had never learned how the Bible applied practically to their lives.

Q: Parents, what kind of music do you allow your children to take into their minds? You say, "Well music is only entertainment!" No, music is entertainment that forms values!

Q: What kind of TV programs do you allow your children to watch? What are you allowing them to take into their minds?

Challenge: I'll be up front with you. I get into a lot of Christian homes. And I am stunned by what I see people do in the name of entertainment. From TV shows, to the type of videos rented.

Some may say, "Well the issue is Christian liberty!"

No. The issue is the value formation of our children. And that starts when they're little. Don't wait until Johnny is 16 and say, "I can't understand why Johnny's not interested in spiritual things!" You're 10 years too late!

Listen. There are lots of things I may have the "freedom" to do (eg--entertainment). But are they worth it?!

Challenge: Teach your children to cultivate an appreciation for wholesome Christian music, Christian books and magazines. Give them positive alternatives.

Tran: A good parent is a Model, a Molder, and...

III. A Good Parent is a Motivator.

How do parents motivate their children?

A. Motivation involves Discipline.

Proverbs has much to say about discipline. Let's scan...

3:11-12 "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord..."

Listen. Discipline is a GOOD thing.

Quote: James Dobson, in "Dare to Discipline," "The parent has got to convince himself that discipline is not something that he does to the child, but something he does for the child. His attitude toward the child must be, 'I love you too much to let you behave like that.'" (in Jeremiah, 66)

13:24 "He that spares his rod hates his son, but he that loves him chastens early."

19:18 "Chasten thy son while there is hope...crying."

Why discipline? See...

22:15 "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod..."

29:15 "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself..."

29:17 "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest..."

Key: Balance is needed!

1. Loving Affection
2. Firm Discipline

Parents must draw the line of right/wrong for the child. "This far, no further, or there will be consequences."

Consistency is key. We tend to go to extremes.

#1 Do you show affection to your children?

"Well I put a roof over their heads! I put 3 meals a day on the table for them! I clothe them! What more could you expect?!"

Do you ever hug your child? Do you get down on their level when talking?

#2 Do you use consistent, firm discipline?

"If you do that one more time I'll..." They do, and nothing happens!

Recommended Reading:
Dobson, "Dare to Discipline"
Jeremiah, "10 Myths of Parenting"
Goode, "An Abbreviated Plan for Child-Raising" {pick up this handout}

B.
The reason I left "B." is that much more could be studied and said about parenting from Proverbs. You fill in the blank! As parents, we must be constantly learning!