



Introduction

Our modern culture has all kinds of ideas about parenting, mostly derived from a naturalistic worldview. The end goal of this indoctrination – whether its proponents realize it or not – is to conform our children to a worldview that rejects any remotely Biblical view of God and godly living in favor of “lifestyle choices” designed to bring destruction and ruin to their lives. Make no mistake about it, Satan is targeting our children.

Parenting By The Book

Parenting is not easy and the culture within which we live is making it even harder. But we must recognize that the Bible says a great deal about parenting. God says we are His children and in that relationship He parents us, providing the best model. What is most critical is that we understand the purpose and goal of Christian parenting. The worst mistake we can make is to abdicate that role, or to do it in a corrupt fashion. Grandparents also have a role to play. We need to train our children for godliness.

1. **Training a child:** Proverbs 3:11-12 reads: “11 Do not despise the Lord’s instruction, my son, and do not loathe his discipline; 12 for the Lord disciplines the one he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights.” In the Greek translation (LXX or Septuagint) used by the author of the NT book of Hebrews, these words have the following meaning:

— Prov. 3:11 “instruction” is the noun *paideia* and means “the act of providing guidance for responsible living, upbringing, training, instruction” (see Eph. 6:4 [nurture], 2 Tim. 3:16 [instruction], Heb. 12:5)

— Prov. 3:11 “discipline” is the verb *elegxō* and means “to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing”

— Prov. 3:12 “disciplines” is the verb *paideuō* and means “to provide instruction for informed and responsible living” or “to assist in the development of a person’s ability to make appropriate choices” (see Acts 7:22 [learned], 22:3 [taught]; 2 Tim. 2:12 [instructing]; Titus 2:12 [teaching], Heb. 12:6, 7, 10)

— A related term is *paidion* which means a young child.

2. **God Trains His Children:** Key passage Hebrews 12:1-11. God trains us as His children for a specific purpose: to be “partakers of his holiness” (12:10) and to exhibit “the peaceable fruit of righteousness” (12:11).

3. **Training Without Stirring Up Anger:** Key passage Ephesians 6:4. What are examples of specific things a father (or either parent) might do that would stir up anger rather than train a child? (For example showing favoritism of one child over another, but what else?)

4. **Moving from Law to Grace:** Key passage Galatians 3:24-25. Paul writes that the Law of Moses was “our schoolmaster” (KJV) or “our guardian” (CSB) until “the faith has come.” The “guardian” is the Greek *paidagōgos* and means “one who has responsibility for someone who needs guidance” but was historically used of someone tasked with conducting a young boy to school and back and seeing to his training and discipline until he came of age.

— Why might we need to parent by “Law” when our child is very young?

— How might we transition from “Law” to “Grace” slowly as a child transitions from being an infant, toddler, elementary school age, middle school age, teenager, and young adult?