

TRAIN UP A CHILD

by Angela Kmitta



Proverbs 22:6 says “Train up a child in the way he should go, and he will never leave it.” What does it mean to train up a child and how do we do that? Would you go to your dentist for open heart surgery, or to your eye doctor for a root canal? Of course not – they haven’t been trained to perform those procedures. So, why is it that so many leave it up to the world, the schools, babysitters or books written by humans to train their children? There is only one Book that has all of the answers – The Bible!! That is where she should look for the answers. To be effective trainers, we must first study the Bible, understand it, and live it.

We are often really good at teaching the “main” character stories and helping our kids to memorize the books of the Bible, the Apostles, etc. But what about the areas that don’t necessarily pertain to the services on Sunday and Wednesday? For a few minutes, consider the following areas in which we need to be sure to train our children to help them become, and hopefully remain strong, faithful Christians.

Priorities. In our busy lives, do we always put the Lord first? For the most part, Sundays are set aside for the Lord. But what about Monday through Saturday? Our children need to be taught to put the Lord first every day. There is nothing wrong with little leagues, clubs, and after school activities unless they interfere with our worship to the Lord. Are you missing and/or late to services to participate in social or secular activities? Do we miss Gospel meetings because our lives are so busy that we don’t make the time to attend? We need to check our priorities and make sure that we have them in order so that our children have the right example to learn from.

Service to God. There are so many things that we can do in service to



our Lord in addition to the worship service. We can teach Bible classes, clean the building, attend home Bible study classes through the week, tend to the sick and/or shut ins, just to name a few. It is important that we teach our children the importance of these jobs. These are not always the fun or glamorous jobs. Often times, no one knows you have done these jobs but you and God. You may not even receive credit for doing them. It is easy to think "I'm so busy and have so many other things to do. Someone else has been doing it so far so I don't have to make the time." What kind of example are we giving our children? Children look to us as a model. We need to make sure they see us doing the Lord's work every day.

Personal growth. This area of our lives is often neglected, especially when there are young children to be taken care of. We spend all day taking care of the house and the children, making dinner and seeing to others' needs. It is sometimes late when we have a minute to sit down and read our Bibles or turn to God in prayer. There is nothing wrong with that. However, consider this – children need to see us reading our Bibles and praying to God. In teaching Bible class, I have had children tell me that their parents don't read the Bible. Upon further questioning, the children admit they've at least never seen their parents read the Bible at home. Again, if children don't see the example, they won't be able to follow it.

The "Extras." Do we take advantage of home Bible studies when offered? This is an excellent opportunity to teach our children. When my daughter was 7 years old, she would beg to go with me to the week night Ladies' Bible class and I always told her no. We were studying topics that were too difficult for a young child to comprehend. But, because she was so insistent, I told her she could go to the class when she was able to do the lessons. I gave her the book and to my surprise, she worked very hard to find the Scriptures and to try to answer the questions. She didn't understand fully what she was reading and doing but she tried her best. If we start them at a young age and take them to the Bible studies, when they are teenagers they will continue to do so just as Proverbs 22:6 says.

Children are the Church of tomorrow. Are we setting the right example and providing the right training to ensure that our children are a faithful part of the Lord's Church?

Angela Kmitta
Eastside church of Christ
Indianapolis, IN