

BRINGING UP CHILDREN GOD'S WAY

Ephesians 6:1-4 Deuteronomy 6:1-8

Introduction: Before teaching in public schools teachers must have at least 16 years of education. Doctors have at least 19 years or more of schooling, and plumbers, carpenters and electricians go through several years of apprenticeship before becoming proficient in their chosen field of work.

For raising a child, however, there is no formal or required education or training. Tender, young lives are entrusted to people with little or no experience in child rearing. First time parents are almost always immature. Someone once said that being a good parent isn't just difficult it's practically impossible. Child rearing is a very trying experience.

There are specialists who have spent their adult lives studying children and parenting, and also have written books for parents- to- be to rear their children by.

Just what does God have to say about parents and children? In Genesis 1:27-28 God told the first couple to be "fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." The Old Testament belief was that lots of children meant that God was blessing and no children meant that God was displeased for some reason.

God has something to say to parents and their children and to children about their parents.

I. WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY ABOUT CHILDREN:

1. Children are gifts from God.
 - Children can bring sorrow or joy to parents.
2. Children have responsibilities: (*Ephesians 6:1-3*)
 - They are to honor and respect their parents.
 - They are to listen to them and care for them when they get old.
 - They are to be obedient at all times to their parents.
3. When grown children become parents themselves, they are no longer under their parents' direction.
 - They are, however, to continue to honor their parents.

II. WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY ABOUT PARENTS:

1. *Ephesians 6:4* - Parents have responsibilities to their children.
 - They are to love them.
 - They are to be models of mature Christian behavior before them.
 - They are to care for them.
 - They are to teach them.
 - They are to discipline them fairly, not sparing the rod.

2. Parents are not to provoke their children.
 - They are not to abuse them physically or psychologically (I wish you'd never been born, etc..).
 - They are not to neglect them.
 - They are not to expect too much from them as they are children.
 - They are not to withhold love from them for any reason.
 - They are not to force their own goals upon them.
 - They are not to refuse to admit when they (parents) are wrong.
3. **Deuteronomy 6:1-8** - Parents are to be parents God's way.
 - They are to listen to God, seeking His commandments.
 - They are to obey God's Word as they cannot expect their children to obey them if they (parents) knowingly disobey God.
 - They are to love the Lord supremely.
4. They are to teach their children God's Word and God's ways diligently, repeatedly and personally (not just send them to Sunday School for somebody else to teach them.)
5. Children are with the parents only **temporarily**, then they leave, as God intended.
 - Parents come into the world as children before God and then become parents of children before God, and repeated over and over, thus generations of children.
6. Peers and teachers are important in a child's life, but the most significant teaching and early learning occurs at **home**.

CONCLUSION:

1. It's easy to talk about children until you have your own.
2. Children are to be loved, enjoyed, therefore believe in them and be honest with them.
3. Children are not an extension of the parent, at some point parents have to let them go.
4. Children are God's gift to parents. Then Parents give them to society. What they become is their gift back to God.