

## **Train Your Children**



## **For Heaven.**

### **TRAIN HOUR CHILDREN FOR HEAVEN**

"TRAIN up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. 22: 6. The statement is based upon sound physiological principles. As a rule, men keep on through life in the channel they have become accustomed to in early life. The seaman is not satisfied with any avocation on earth so long as his energies meet the demands of a sea-faring life. The railroader cannot content himself with a change to any business that does not run on wheels. And so the majority of men continue in the course of life to which they become inured in youth. So likewise men are apt to pass their days in control of those moral elements under which their pre-natal existence and early life were moulded. How very important, therefore, that life is launched aright, in order to secure a happy voyage, and reach a blissful heaven. In meeting the responsibilities resting upon parents, and those in charge of children,

### **TWO FATAL EXTREMES**

must be avoided. First, that awful deception of Satan which trains up a child in good morals, and a form of religion, and often only the latter; and causes it to think that it is now a Christian, and if sprinkled, a church member. This is educating the child to rest in a lifeless form, which will most likely close its ears to the good news of regeneration unto life, and sanctification into the image of God. In this sad graceless state, the masses of the sectarian membership are hopelessly penned up.

But upon the other hand, men have committed an error no less fatal. Knowing that salvation is something more than tutored morals and drilled formality; that all hearts must have the transforming grace of God, the deceiver has led them to relax discipline, and ease their conscience with the notion that they have met all parental responsibilities by setting a good example, administering good advice, and Eli's soft admonition, "Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear." I

Sam. 2:23,24. This is about as far as many professed saints think their duty extends. And when their boys grow up "sons of Belial," and go headlong to hell, they say, "Well, I have done my duty, I always gave them good advice, and if they will not heed it, I cannot help it." But is this all the Bible requires of parents?

### WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ELI?

Hear it, dear parents, for if you do no more than he did to save your children from hell, it ought to make your "ears tingle" as well as his. By the mouth of the little boy Samuel, God spake to Eli, and still speaks to all like him, "I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin I will also make an end. For I have told him that I would judge his house forever, for the *iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* Therefore have I sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." 1 Sam. 3: 12-14.

What an awful sentence! And in one day the two sons of Eli were slain, and went down to destruction. 1 Sam. 4: 11 And on hearing the news their old father also fell over and expired. Ver. 18. Thus when God began he also made an end.

The displeasure of God came upon that father, because he restrained not his sons from making themselves vile. To restrain means "to check," "to hold back." So we see that God has placed in the hands of parents, check-reigns, by which they can, if they will, turn their children out of the road to destruction, and hold them back from running down to hell. This truth has always been impressed upon our mind by the word of God; hence, we have always been disgusted with that abominable effeminacy which allows children to grow up in sin, dishonor God, disrespect their parents, and serve the devil, under the very roof where their parents profess to be the servants of the Most High God. Such parents may, with propriety, claim Eli as their representative head; but should blush to classify themselves with the seed of

### ABRAHAM, THE FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL.

He was chosen of God to represent the family of the redeemed in Christ; "Because," said he, "I know him, that he will *command his children and his household after him,* and they shall keep the way of the Lord." Gen. 8:18, 19. He not only commanded his children, but all his household. Nor did he only govern them in temporal and domestic duties, but he commanded them after him, to serve the same God he did, and obey the same religious duties.

God abhors mixture, and his godlike servant did not believe in having some of his family, or even his servants serve the devil or other gods while in his house.

And now, beloved, as sure as Abraham is the father and pattern of all who believe in Christ,—See Rom. 4: 11, 16; Gal. 3: 7, 29,—we can see in him what God demands of us. And we learn the same lesson in his dealing with Eli. In these two records God has set before us, in the most peremptory manner, the responsibilities that devolve upon Christian parents. Eli admonished his sons, but he did not restrain them, nor command them. Abraham commanded his children to walk after him in righteousness. The displeasure of God came upon the former, and his seed was cut off from the earth. But the blessings of God were pronounced upon the latter for his faithfulness, and he was honored with the title of "faithful Abraham," Gal. 3:9, and set forth in the word of God as the pattern and father of all true believers in Christ Jesus, whose children are we if we follow his example? Beloved, do you do this? Do you command your children after you in the service of God? Do you restrain them, hold them back from living in sin? Behold, as a father after the pattern of Abraham, you have just as good right, and it is just as much your duty before God, to command your children to serve and obey God, as to require of them the ordinary duties of this life.

But to return to our text, let us enquire

### WHAT IS MEANT BY "TRAIN UP A CHILD

in the way it should go?" Young's Concordance defines the Hebrew word, *chanak*-train—by "To train, to dedicate, to give instructions to." It enjoins the duty of dedicating a child to God, and thus so training and instructing him in his ways that he will not depart therefrom.

According to our standard dictionary, the word "train" is from the French term, *trainer*, or the Latin *traho*, both of which are defined, "to draw along, to draw, to entice. To exercise, to discipline, to teach and form by practice, as to train the militia to the manual exercise. To train soldiers to the use of arms, and to tactics. Abraham armed his trained servants." Gen. 14:14.

"To break, tame and accustom to draw, as oxen."

"In gardening, to lead or direct and form to a wall or espalier; to form to a proper shape. To train young trees."

By the root idea, and definitions given, it will be seen that it is properly used in the sense of persuasion, and enticing, and developing by education. But its full force is much stronger than mere persuasive influence.

Three applications are given of the use of the word; all of which show the exertion of imperative authority. First, it is used in the sense of drilling soldiers. Second, breaking and training oxen. Third, to train a twig or tree in the form it is desired to grow. All these uses are in harmony with the illustrations by which Christ represents his disciples. They are soldiers in a holy war. They are compared to oxen where he said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." And we are compared to trees, vine branches and grafts. To train up a child in the way it should go, is, therefore, to drill, and exercise him in righteousness, as a soldier is trained in military tactics. In the army every order is imperative. Moral suasion is not used in drilling soldiers. And some are even enlisted—drafted—without consulting their wish in the matter. While, it is true, others volunteer of their own free will.

When the great recruiting officer of the Lord Jesus enlisted the jailer at Philippi, he at once also counted his house-hold on the sacred list. Acts 16:31. And when "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord," "all his house" were also mustered in by faith. Acts 18:8.

And when the eye of prophecy looked forward to these last days, and beheld the seed of the blessed of the Lord, coming into the evening light, he saw also "*their offspring with them.*" Isa. 65:23.

Therefore, see that they come with you. Induce them to volunteer if they will: if not, while they are yet under your control, draft them into the divine service. Like Abraham, command them after you, to keep the way of the Lord. Place them under that godly restraint, and holy discipline that will train them up for God. As soldiers must obey their officers in all things, so enjoin upon your children the imperative order from heaven, to repent, and believe the gospel. Command them in the name of Jesus to get upon their knees and pray God for mercy. Hold them to obey God, and by faith, hold God to his word, to give them repentance, and thus save your children from sin and destruction, and they will honor and thank you for it.

### TRAIN THEM AS OXEN ARE BROKE AND TRAINED.

In breaking and training oxen and horses, kind and gentle treatment is the chief means of success, and in nearly all cases no severe measures need be added. But every good horse trainer begins the work with a fixed intention never to stop until the animal is really broke, rendered gentle, obedient and serviceable, ready to do what is required of it. Failure is altogether out of the question. One animal may take different handling from that of another, and may require a longer effort. But the ox or horse will be of no service unless trained to obey and work. Therefore it must be done. Just so, God commands you to actually train up your child in the way it should go. It is well to study the peculiar make-up of the child, and ask God for wisdom to adopt the best means in each peculiar case. *But train the child for God; you can and must*, or expose your soul

to the rebuke that fell upon Eli, and your children to the flames of hell, where his sons are doomed. Kindness, we say, is the most important means in conquering animals; likewise, children and men. But should stubbornness in an animal hold out against all kind means, a thorough tamer will resort to coercive measures. Bad habits that cannot be coaxed out, must be whipped out. And whom the Lord loveth, he also chasteneth. Just so, to train up a child in the way he should go, is not simply to administer an occasional soft, "Why do ye so?" and let him still go on in the devil's ways. It means that you must make a real success in changing him over to be a good and pious child. It means that he leave off sin, and walk in the law and service of the Lord. And when God's word says, Thus it shall be, that settles the matter. The Lord will see that it will be fulfilled if you firmly believe him, and do your part. O dear parents, in the name of Jesus, we are constrained to cry aloud unto you. Save your children from an awful hell! Now is your time while they are yet in youth, and God has placed them under your control and authority. For Jesus' sake, use that power for their deliverance. Lay hold upon the promise of God, "*their offspring with them*" and never slack your prayer, faith and training until you have the joy of sweet. God-fearing and saved children about your table as plants of righteousness. Do not allow Satan to suggest this false proverb: "You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink."

### **YOU CAN MAKE THEM DRINK.**

The old saying is a falsehood. Let it not be named among you as becometh Christians. It is not true when applied to dumb animals, and less true when applied to the salvation of your children. What sensible farmer, or good horse-tender will let a horse go without needed medicine to put him in good condition, simply because he cannot coax the animal to drink it? You are well aware of the fact there is a way to make him swallow even a very bitter dose. But in making boys and girls swallow the medicine from the tree of life, remember, the Almighty has a hand in that work. "You are workers together with God," and there is nothing too hard for him. You lead the wild colts to the water of salvation, and hold them right there, and God will make them drink. Some may think it a hard saying, but in the name of Jesus, we protest unto you, if your children are growing up wicked, and on the way to destruction, it is the result of your shortcomings in duty, your slackness of effort, if, indeed, it be not the bitter fruits of your own crooked life. It is true, that the lost condition of your children may have been chiefly the result of your life before converted to God. But had you known and done your duty since then, that influence might have been counteracted by the power of God long ago, and your offspring now be with you on the way to glory. Not one of you, whose children are unsaved, we dare say, have devoted as much attention to train them up in the way they should go, or been as thorough and persevering in efforts to save their souls from hell, as a horse trainer devotes himself to his task. What man, who, if he has a valuable horse taken sick, will not employ the best help in his reach, and if need be, labor all night to relieve the animal? And if there is a bare probability that a certain remedy will save the animal's life, will you let him die for the want of it, simply because the dose does not suit the horse's taste, and the dumb brute refuses to drink it? Nay, you do not even sweeten it, lest the sugar might neutralize the power of the remedy, but you draw his head up, and pour the medicine down his throat, whether he likes it or not. And if he refuses to swallow, you keep his head up until he does, and if necessary, even close his nostrils, keep him from breathing through them, until he has taken down the medicine. True, it looks like harsh means. But it is to save his life; hence, no one makes any fuss about it, or threatens to prosecute you for cruelty to the dumb brute. And is not sin working death in your own dear children? Can you lie down and sleep with ease while their steps are directed to the flames of hell? Do you really love your boy more than your horse? and value his soul more than the price of the animal? Then you should labor more intently and perseveringly to save his soul than the life of the animal. In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the help of God, take their case in hands, and thoroughly treat them for the awful disease of sin. If they will not take the water of life freely, rein them up with a good strong chord of love and discipline. If they still refuse to swallow, shut off the breath of self-life and self-indulgence. Stop letting sin and the devil have their way with them. *As long as young people have free license to revel in sin, they will be satisfied in its deceptive charms.* But absolutely cut off the indulgence

of sin, and they will begin to deplore the malignant disease within. We have known parents, even during a protracted meeting, and while daily praying God to save their children, give them horses and conveyance, and let them all go off to town to attend some worldly entertainment, Babylon abominations, or holiday works of the devil. We have seen others bow in family worship while their sons and daughters were irreverently sitting up, or amusing themselves outside, or in an adjoining room. Thus showing utter contempt for the God their parents worshiped. Others keep praying for their wayward children, and at the same time continue to feed sin and the works of the devil in them by gratifying their pride and vanity, and many other lusts that must be mortified and crucified. Stop, if need be, even with a wise and loving use of the rod, the outworking of sin, and pray mightily to God to make them sick of the inbeing of sin. Love them tenderly, and do all in the way of righteousness to make them happy, but yield not one inch to the will of the flesh and the devil in them. If they, on that account forsake the parental hearth, they cannot escape the hand of God. They will return and bless you for the bitter cup you made them swallow. *If you want your children to reverence God, see that they reverence you. If you want them to obey God, train them to obey you. If you want them saved from sin, as far as possible restrain them from outwardly committing sin.* Irreverence and disobedience to parents, develops the same unholy carriage toward God, and the practice of sin feeds the desire to sin.

### **PERSEVERE IN YOUR TRAINING.**

Your responsibilities, as a parent, cannot be met by a few spasmodic efforts to bring your children into the good and right way. To train these immortal spirits for their high destination, deserves the utmost care and labor of a life-time. Live not to please your children, but to save them. Look at the months and years of time, and lavished money men devote to the training of a fast horse. Should you not do much more for the moral and religious training of your child? With the horse-trainer it is a daily business. About twice a day the animal is vigorously exercised. Cannot you devote some time every day to educate and train your own flesh for God, and future happiness? To tell the truth, if you do not succeed, it is because you do not work at it. You are too worldly to devote a few hours every day teaching, praying with and impressing the fear of God upon the hearts of your children; and drawing, constraining and compelling them to embrace the love and service of God. Until you have taken as much time, and put forth as much effort in training your child in the way it ought to go, as men often devote to the training of a dog or some other animal, you should be ashamed to say, "I have done all I can for that bad boy, or that thoughtless-minded girl, therefore if he, or she will go to hell, I cannot help it." You have not yet made their training a real business. Better suspend most of your other business and cut down your income to a bare living, and put in a year or two to save the lost members of your family. Read much of the word of God to them, explain it, and enforce it upon their conscience. To train means more than a single effort of half an hour, or several repeated attempts. It implies a continuous and painstaking effort until the object is achieved. To speak a few words of religious advice once in a great while, does not fill the bill. Was there ever an ox broke for the yoke, or horse for the race by such careless and indifferent effort? Nay, the ox must be forced under the yoke daily, and driven and turned about until every element of insubjection is overcome, and the animal willingly and cheerfully steps under the yoke, and practically says, "I am at your service; give orders, and I will obey." Likewise must your children be so trained in righteousness, that their highest pleasure will be to obey you, and do the will of God.

Take plenty of time to pray with them. If they sin, show them what God says about them that do such things. Demand of them to get upon their knees and repent, calling upon him for pardon. See that they do it.

There is great significance in the words, "Bring them up in THE NURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD." Eph. 6:4.

It means that you must set God's will over against their will, and his law against their sins. Instead of saying, "You have disobeyed my orders," show them how they have disobeyed God, and offended the kind Giver of all our blessings. Make them feel it is an awful thing to sin against one so great and so good, and that every act of disobedience to parents is a sin against

God, who says, "Children, obey your parents," and awaken their conscience to the fact that all that they do, speak and think, is in the sight and hearing of God, and that it is he, both you and them have to deal with. If they are not even yet converted, in the name of Jesus demand of them to bow down and ask God to forgive them when any special offense has been committed. If you will thus by love, firmness, and godly fear, humble their natural disposed hearts to bow to God, it will not be long until you can constrain, or in holy love command them to seek God for the pardon of all their sins. Make these demands in faith that God will work with you, and produce the necessary conviction, and save their souls from sin.

And after brought into the family of God, let it be understood in the fear of God, that they cannot backslide and live in sin at their option. That the God whom you serve must have the homage of all in your house. Cannot we, in the superior grace of this dispensation, and by the help of the Lord in us, say as much as Joshua did?

"AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD." Josh. 24:15.

The law system required that every Israelite must do just as Abraham did. Must see that all his family, with his manservants and maidservants, and even the strangers that were in his house, must walk' in subjection to the laws of the Lord.

"And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God: for he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandments."—2 Chron. 14:2-4.

"Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped."—2 Chron. 29:30.

If Joshua could decide for all his house what God they would serve, and king Asa had authority to command the people to "*seek the LORD God of their fathers,*" and obey his commandments, and Hezekiah to "command the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord," have not we, who in Christ Jesus are "kings and priests unto God" as much power and authority to command our own children to seek the God of their fathers and obey his voice? Do we glorify God in allowing them to eat at our table and live under our roof, and yet openly despise God, and serve the devil? Is the God of the gospel weaker than the God of the law, that we cannot have our household in subjection to him? No, indeed. Therefore if any relapse into sin, do not allow them to continue therein.

Beloved, we speak from experience in these things. Our own dear boy, who was truly converted at the age of nine years, on several occasions allowed the enemy to draw his heart from the Lord, and as often was commanded back to God, and by his grace restored. Having been left motherless, he had his home with a kind and pious family for some time. On one occasion, when we came to a meeting at that place, we found him making no profession. We demanded of him to come to the altar and renew his faith. While kneeling there he said with tears, "*Pa, I cannot keep salvation, and live at Bro.-.*" We were no little astonished at this, as all in that house were saved, and exemplary in their lives. We asked how that could be, and this was the child's answer: "*Because when I do wrong, they do not make me get down and repent as you do.*" What a lesson for all parents! Yea, what a clear indication of your duty in the sight of God! Children, though victims of the fallen nature, are nevertheless quite natural Christians. There is a good degree of faith and religion in their little hearts, which can be easily developed. One element of the Christian character is however necessarily weak, and that is firmness. But this *can, and should be, supplied by the parents.* A few days ago, a small boy in one of the families here in the Home, having been offended by his sister some older than he, said, "I will backslide." Having been overheard by the father, he immediately said, "*No, you won't backslide.*" Is not this sensible? Is it not the father's duty to say who shall be the God of his household? The boy was taken and prayed with until the evil suggestion of the devil was banished from his heart and mind. So the firmness of the parent supplies the need of the child.

Last fall, by the exercise of this reasonable and godly duty, our dear son was restored to the favor of God. He had backslidden, and was rapidly growing harder, and drifting farther away from God. A haggard expression in his face saddened our hearts. We often took him to God in

prayer. Compelled him to kneel and ask pardon for his actions. Admonished him, and used the rod, but all with no real restoration, and lasting improvement. His frequent disobedience grieved our hearts, and the heart of God. Finally, in the solemn Spirit of God, we personally admonished the boy in the public congregation. Told him he was destitute of salvation, and that God would not suffer him to continue longer in that condition. We then commanded him to come to the altar. He is past thirteen years of age. Of course, the influence of Satan caused rebellion in his heart. But our demand was in the faith of God and the Holy Spirit. And though no conviction seemed to be upon him at the time, he knew he must obey. He came down, but with no intentions of yielding to God. Earnest prayer was offered. God heard, and his Spirit wrought with us. Conviction was soon manifest by weeping eyes. And there the Lord saved the dear boy. On our way from the house of worship, he made this confession: "Papa, when I kneeled at the altar, I came with my teeth firmly set together, determined not to yield." But God did the work. All glory to his name! And by continuing the training process, the dear boy has been advancing in the good way. He has become a true little Christian. His countenance has lost every trace of sin, and is sweet with innocence, and beaming bright with love. Praise God for the wonderful change! Now the dear child comes many times a day and greets us with his sweet embrace and kiss. Obedience is prompt and cheerful; and our hearts swell with gratitude and flow out in praises to God for the precious gift. Brethren, the real salvation of one child will yield you more precious and rich fruit than any other line of labor.

We come now to notice the last application of the words, "train up," given in the definitions.

### **TRAIN A CHILD AS YOU WOULD TRAIN A SMALL TREE.**

To train a plant or tree to grow erect by tying it to a stake or post, very beautifully and forcibly illustrates our duty as parents toward our children. Several things are thereby suggested to our minds.

First, we see the necessity of training the dear little ones in the right way when young. The younger the twig is, the easier it is straightened. Every day it is left to grow, while out of shape, the greater will be the force required to press and hold it in line; and the longer time will be required for it to remain in position. And, indeed, the longer it stands crooked, the probabilities of ever being straight become less. What a solemn lesson for all such parents that are foolish enough to allow their sons and daughters to grow up irreligious, hoping that when they get older the Lord will convert them. The tree must be straightened when small, or never. And though God can and often does convert men old and hard in sin, the great majority thus living, will die in their sins and be eternally lost. O beloved, lose no time in this urgent work! Every child comes into the world with more or less inherited crookedness. Begin at once to incline it erect. As soon as a child is old enough to receive impressions respecting anything else, they can be impressed with the existence of God, and the fear of the Lord. When but a few days old, they will begin to manifest likes and dislikes, and acquire habits. How soon they learn, in many cases, to want the lamp burning at night! Bring an infant a few times to the table when you eat your meals, and it will cry, if left back. And as soon as desire is manifest you can begin to train the tender sprig in the way it ought to go. Do your duty from the beginning, and your task will be comparatively easy.

Second, to insure a straight tree, it must be trained to a straight standard. Here is the difficulty with the majority of parents in the modern sects. They are crooked themselves, therefore cannot say, "Follow me, as I follow Christ." Making crooked paths themselves, were they to "command their children after them," they would still walk in sin. During ten years of gospel work in sectism, we saw but very few parents who had the face to instruct and pray with their children while at the altar. They usually requested the preacher, or some other member whose life was not so well known by them, to go and labor with their wife or child at the altar, while they sat back looking as serious as at the funeral of some member of their family.

Skeptics have often argued that the Bible is not true, because the children of prominent "church members," (?) and not unfrequently preachers, do not walk in the way they should go,

but are often the worst cases in society. But all this proves nothing against the Bible. When the Word says, Train up a child in the way it should go, the first thing necessary is, that the parents walk in that way. No one is fool enough to think strange of a tree growing crooked when lashed to another crooked tree.

We will simply add that no parent is qualified to meet the solemn responsibilities upon you, to train up your children as you ought, unless you are wholly sanctified to God, made free from sin, wrath and impatience; and perfected in faith, patience and love.

Third, it is not enough, however, that you live holy before your children. A righteous example is very essential to their salvation, but that is not all that is needed. You may plant a post ever so straight by the side of a crooked tree, it will for all that, remain crooked. And so with all your straight living, your children will, in many cases, be lost in sin unless you set up the Abrahamic command against the influence of Satan over them. *You must, in many cases, use righteous coercion*; just as a young tree, by the use of chords, may be forced into a perpendicular line alongside of a straight stake; the crooked places in the tree all resist the tension of the chords, but to no avail. The strong chords hold it straight, notwithstanding though crooked in its nature. But now, as growth continues to enlarge the tree, the additional fiber will adjust itself to the present position. The stretched timber on the one side will also gradually lengthen, and ere long the chords may be removed, and the tree will remain in its beautiful, erect position.

We find an exact parallel of all this in training up children. In most all cases, *real compulsion is necessary*. The chords of restraint tightly lashed around the crooked habits of the little fellow, drawing him up to perpendicular righteousness, are often violently resisted. Like the little tree, he pulls hard to resume the crooked that is in his nature. But he is kept straight by the strong chords and righteous restraint of true parental love in spite of all his efforts. Though he pull ever so hard, chafe and cry out for, what Satan calls liberty, let there be no loosing up. Hold him right to the line, and the rectitude that is compelled at first, will ere long begin to take form in his mind and will, and as he continues to grow, will gain the ascendancy in his heart. This will lead him to Christ, who will transform his nature, and adjust his inward life to the required outward, and perfect that which was wanting; in it. Then most all restraints will cease to be felt as such. And the soul that longed for liberty to revel in sin,—which, after all, is bondage to Satan — now finds real liberty in the paths of virtue and holiness. Now the child will walk erect, and become more and more fixed in his normal attitude toward God. Now, also, he will thank and bless the hands he would fain have bitten when binding him down to the demands of righteousness, and placing upon his stubborn neck, the blessed yoke of Christ.

Oh for the love of your dear offspring, do not let them go to hell, simply because the evil nature, and habits Satan has planted in them, thus incline them! Command them in the name of Jesus to seek and serve God. Command them by faith in the living God, and train them up in that service.

Just how long the training process should proceed before it assumes the positive injunction to seek and serve God, the wisdom of heaven only can direct in each particular case. But, for heaven's sake, slack no effort until the point of salvation is gained. Yea, and then let their perseverance in grace continue to enlist your constant vigilance.

### **TRAIN UP YOUR CHILDREN BY THE AID OF PROPER DIET.**

One great cause of children being ill-tempered, fretful and disobedient, is the improper food that is imposed upon their stomachs. The prevailing ignorance of parents in this matter is very deplorable. It has never entered the minds of many, that a good or bad temper and disposition in children is largely governed by what they eat. Many a child gets scolded or whipped for being ugly, when the parents should have the whipping, or at least a good free lecture, for creating the ugly in them which they try to whip out of them. One of the worst things for children is, free meat eating. It is about as certain to create a perverted appetite for flesh, as the use of tobacco will create a raging thirst for that most abominable weed. And very generally in proportion as this carnivorous appetite is allowed to develop, a restless, peevish, and ill-

natured disposition will be manifest. The meat appetite is also sure to supplant the relish for the child's proper food. Have you not often seen children, on being seated at the table, raise the cry, "*Meat!*" "MEAT!" "MEAT!" And if it be suggested that something else be eaten first, "*meat,*" is the imperative demand. And if denied, a cry, or storm of spunk follows. What a blessing if the dear little ones had never learned to eat animal food at all! Then, other conditions being met, sweet tempered children would surround your table, and peacefully eat what was served to them. But whence that insatiable appetite which so rudely cries out, *Meat! meat! meat?* Is it natural? Is that article of food so adapted to the real needs of children, that nothing else will stop their outcries? The New Testament itself is sufficient to prove the contrary. It invariably speaks of milk as the proper food for children, and "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." Heb. 5:12, 14; 1 Cor. 3:1,2; 1 Pet. 2:2. It is true, the apostles are here talking of spiritual things. But they acknowledge this physiological fact, as the basis of their lesson; namely, such food as milk, and not meat, is the proper diet for children.

It has been well tested and thoroughly demonstrated, that animal eating is animalizing in its nature.

Equally pernicious to the good health, sweet temper and amiable disposition of children, is the eating of pickles, rich pastry, highly seasoned and indigestible food of any kind. And still more awful the effects of coffee and tea. All these things derange the stomach, produce a feverish state in the system, from which results a restless, discontented mind and an irritable nature. And these abominable states of body and mind are used of Satan to make the child disobedient and self-willed, and difficult to control. It is far more easy and natural for a child to obey orders when feeling pleasant and cheerful, than when his mind and nerves are harassed by a foe in the stomach. So children fed upon natural and healthful food, are far more amiable and easily trained in the way they ought to go, than others whose stomachs are abused with the interminable round of trash that fashionable ignorance substitutes for human food. One great curse in the land is the bolt by which the best parts of the wheat are sacrificed to the god of perverted appetite. Especially is this a shameful deprivation of the proper elements of food to children. No person who has properly informed himself of the effects of bolted, and unbolted wheat bread, can conscientiously place his child in a home where white bread is chiefly, or entirely used.

Whatever tends to derange, impair and inflame the human system and mind, produces a restless hankering which is apt to lead to the use of tobacco and liquor. And thus, instead of training their children up in the way they ought to go, parents are, by their ungodly dair ies, directing the steps of their dear children in the way to drunkenness, misery, death and hell.

Therefore, train up your children to eat that which is good, plain and nourishing, such as milk, grains, vegetables and fruit, and that will greatly aid you in training their ransomed spirits for heaven.

### **AN OBJECTION – ANSWERED.**

Against the position here taken, it has been suggested that we may not hope to have our children saved as a rule, because Christ said, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

But mark you, he did not say, "Your children will remain sinners in your house: your boys and girls several years of age, or in their teens, will not bow to the God of their parents, and you cannot help it." Nay, his language wisely avoids the justification of such a state of things. "Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man — not a boy, or girl — at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Mat. 10:34-36. The term, household, is here used in the extended sense of grownup sons, daughters and daughters-in-law, who had really become the heads of other families. There is really no allusion to children under age, and dwelling in your own house, and who are therefore expected to be under subjection to you, as the head of that family. It may always be expected as salvation goes forth to the nations who worship idol gods, when it enters a family, and turns them to the true and living God, their sons and daughters, who have married into other families, and their sons-in-law and daughters-in-law will persecute those who have

embraced the new faith, until such time as they too may be won to the faith they before persecuted. But all this lends no sanction to that carelessness and faithlessness which allows children to grow up in sin around the very altar of professed Christianity. When Jesus, the captain of our salvation, commissioned his ministers to "go out into the highways and hedges, and *compel them to come in,*"—Luke 14:23— he surely would expect saved parents to compel their own children to serve the true and living God. The New Testament takes it for granted that a true Christian is "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." 1 Tim. 3:4. "*Having faithful children.*" Titus 1:6. This duty was regarded of such importance, that he that came short in the same, was not accounted worthy of the office of an elder. Yea, and men that were not found ruling their children and their own house well, were not even to be entrusted with the office of a deacon. 1 Tim. 3:12. Were this demand made upon the elders alone, it might be regarded as only denoting extraordinary ruling power. But as it is also required of deacons, it seems to indicate a real element of the Christian character, a state of things expected of a real Christian.

Even the wives were required to be in subjection to the husband in all things, much more the children. I Tim. 2: II. 1 Pet. 3:1,5. And does it not look reasonable, that if a man has his children under subjection in any thing, he should in this matter of their duty to God, and the eternal welfare of their souls? Beloved, if God requires us to restrain our children from sin, and we do it not, we become, at least in some degree, responsible for their sins, as if they were committed by us. It is evident that God so held Eli; and he would not require less of us, to whom more is given in this dispensation. "*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.*" Rom. 14:22. Here we see clearly that men may condemn themselves in allowing others to sin, when it is in their power to restrain them.

### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS.

1. The very first and all important demand upon parents, in order to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and saved in him, is to be wholly sanctified to God, and live blameless in his sight.

2. Pray God to fill your hearts with deep and fervent love to your children, and heavenly wisdom to direct it aright.

3. Begin in their very infancy to impress thoughts of God, and his fear upon their minds.

4. Teach them the love and goodness of God, and require them to kneel and ask his pardon for evil words and acts.

5. Have them in perfect subjection to you in all things in the name of the Lord.

6. By all kindness and persuasion induce them to give their hearts to God when they become old enough to be morally responsible.

7. Should persuasion fail to bring them to Christ, in the name of Jesus "*command your children after you,*" in the Lord.

8. This must be done in firmness coupled with pure love and melting kindness. And it must be a true faith in God: a real consciousness that you are in harmony with God, and that you, in all things, and especially in this matter, are a worker together with God, so that it is God and you, and not you without God, that makes the demand upon the child. And the child should be so informed. Thus saying, "God commands all men everywhere 'to repent,'" he has placed you subject to us, and holds us responsible to see that you obey him; therefore, in the name and love of Jesus, you must bow, confess your sins and give your heart to God.

9. If you have not a firm faith that God will work with you, producing conviction and salvation, do not undertake to command the child to yield to God. But first attend to your case. Get nearer to God, and be filled with that perfect love, which "*hopeth all things and believeth all things.*" Pray more for your children, and search diligently, if perchance you need to make some confession to them of faults, and perhaps ask their pardon.

10. If you firmly trust in God, and have a conviction of duty upon you from him, be not discouraged if the child seems impenitent. Hold fast upon the promises of God, and according to your faith so shall it be. The heart will melt and true repentance must ensue.

11. In the many cases where parental duty is modified by unavoidable circumstances, where both parents are not saved and of one mind, which is so very essential to the proper training of children, we leave each brother and sister to be taught of God what ye ought to do. We all know that no person can do with his or her children under such circumstances, the same as if both parents were saved and in harmony. The husband, however, is more responsible than the wife, since God has made him head of his family. But the success of bringing your children to God by either brother or sister, having an unsaved companion, will be commensurate with your consecration to, and trust in God.

But owing to the wide range of varied circumstances, all of which modify parental duty, we do not attempt to lay down rules for you to go by; but commend you to the wisdom that cometh from above, and to the promises of him who giveth liberally. So, likewise, in the case of children well-grown before parents were saved. Do not ask us, but ask God what you should do.

May God bless these earnest thoughts, written in much prayer, to the strengthening of all parents who read, and to the salvation of the dear children in Christ Jesus, to whom be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

### SAYING GRACE

"We thank thee Lord,  
For daily food,  
And pray thee bless  
It to our good.

O help us. Lord  
To do thy will,  
And every day  
Thy Word fulfill.

And when from earth  
We pass away,  
Well dwell with thee  
In endless day."