

What Children Need To Know About God

By Kent Heaton

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

When I was growing up, we always had chickens either in the pen or scratching around the house. The care of chickens is not complex. They were provided housing, food and water with the expectation of some kind of produce in the form of eggs or part of the dumplings mom would fix for supper. On occasions, an opossum may have to be shot to protect the brood. Raising chickens was not anything personal and was as matter-of-fact as only providing what was necessary for survival. It seems hard to make a correlation between raising chickens and parenting but for many homes, there is not a lot of difference. Children are loved very different from chickens but that is where the differences end. As long as the child is provided a home, nourishment and some level of protection; that is all that is done. The one key ingredient lacking in many homes is the presence of God.

It is easy to see how successful our children have become in the world because they have good jobs, nice homes, and friends and seem to enjoy life. They work hard every week at maintaining the American dream. Life is good. Sadly, God is nowhere to be found in the home. There is no time for reading the Bible or praying together. Decisions are made for the family without God. Success in life is limited to the coins of popularity, wealth and materialism. Every home needs to build the foundation upon the knowledge of God. Children need to learn about the Heavenly Father first in the home. The obligation of the home is where the truth of God is rooted.

Children need to know there is a God. The training of the Lord first recognizes an eternal being that is the Creator, Savior, Protector and Judge. Parents must instill in their children the knowledge of the Lord in the hearts of their children. He needs to be real to them because He is real. Teaching children about God is the fundamental teaching of the child's schoolroom.

Children need to know the character of God. The admonition of the Lord shows the goodness of God and the severity of God. There are many places in the Bible where God's love is shown. His mercy, grace and love fill the pages of the Bible. Repeatedly He exercises a longsuffering spirit to forgive man. The embrace of a loving God is vital to knowing the true character of the Lord. There is also a side of the Lord children need to believe and that is the punishment of God. Like the examples of His love, there are many stories of the severity of the Lord against unrighteousness. God will punish. The Lord will exercise His will against those who disobey Him. Children must learn that God is to be respected for both His love and His severity.

Children must learn the Father loves them and wants them to obey Him. Salvation can only be found in the word of God. Obedience is not a burdensome thing but the beauty of God's love for all men. Teaching children to trust in God will give them a direction in life that will lead to Heaven. The most important thing you can teach your children is to know the Lord because that is the only knowledge they will take with them to eternity. Parents only have one opportunity to teach their children. Make certain it begins, includes and ends with God.

“We take care of our possessions for our children. But of the children themselves we take no care at all. What an absurdity is this. Form the soul of thy son aright, and all the rest will be added hereafter.” (John Chrysostom [340-407]; Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 13, 1st Series)

“A good home is authoritarian, for if a wise mother sees her young son about to eat poison berries, she stops him. She does not say: “I must not coerce him. He must make his own discovery of truth” ... but a good home is also ... an honoring of personality. So any sound education is both authoritarian and free.” (George A. Buttrick, Christ and Man's Dilemma, 1946)

“Dear Brother I Need You”

Dear Brother, I need you. I need you to teach our sons to desire the work of the church. I need you to lead me in song. I need you to teach me the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I need you to lead in worship. I need you to want to do what you have been born to do; as much as you need me to bear children and make a home, I need you to lead my worship. I long for my work; it is fulfilling and a joy. I was born to it, as you were to yours.

Labor not for me grudgingly, but as I do for you, willingly. I speak with great sorrow in my heart because of the reluctant way I have seen you take up your work. I cannot worship my God without you. But I also cannot worship freely knowing that you would rather not be helping. If I show my daughters a rebellious spirit toward their God-given role, they would grow up rebellious, materialistic and worldly. Our sons are watching you dear Brother. What will they learn from your example as they become men?

What will become of my worship and that of my daughters? The words I could say are clear without being written. It would draw tears to my eyes, so I decline the writing thereof. Won't you love your work, for God has given you great purpose, while I must forever remain... silent in the Church. Your sister in Christ (Coral Blake, via The Eastside Banner, May 6, 1990)

A Moments Wisdom

--“Nor shall I believe that you are in the Spirit except I behold in you the fruits of the Spirit.” (Desiderius Erasmus, Enchiridion, 1503)

--“We often hear it said: ‘If God existed there would be no wars.’ But it would be truer to say: ‘If God’s laws were observed there would be no wars.’” (Yves M. Congar; God, Man and the Universe, 1950)

--In no one else in all history do you find an abiding hatred, an immortal hatred except against our Lord ... The hatred against Christ has never weakened even after twenty centuries ... because He is still an obstacle – an obstacle to sin, to selfishness, to godlessness, and to the spirit of the world. (Fulton J. Sheen, The Eternal Galilean, 1934)

--A lot of folks who want the world to change are unwilling to change themselves.

--The person who invented the eraser had the human race pretty much figured out.

--The best time to begin serving the Lord is in your youth; the second best time is today.

--Friendship is like a bank account. You cannot continue to draw on it without making deposits.

--To profit from good advice requires as much wisdom as it takes to give it.

--If your mind should go blank, don’t forget to turn off the sound.

--The reason some people get lost in thought is because it is unfamiliar territory to them.

--Few people ever carve out success with cutting comments.

--My child helped me snap beans today; she saved the bad, threw the good away. I thought how patient God must be, when I help Him as she helped me.

--You wouldn’t worry about what people think of you, if you knew how seldom that they do.

--People’s minds are more often changed through observation rather than argumentation.