

PARENTING DO'S AND DON'TS
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"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it,"

Prov. 22:6.

A verse like this is crucial to your family. It promises great victory, but comes with great responsibility. In everything there is a right and wrong, a dark and light and our reactions are crucial to the result. Many parents have become careless as to what they should do to guarantee a great family. I would like to begin with the do's and finish with the don'ts.

DO be sure you and your wife have a genuine born again experience. Your life is something your children will live with everyday. Nothing can keep them from knowing if you are a genuine believer or just painting a picture you want others to see. They will not rise to a higher spiritual level than that which their home life teaches. Parent example is crucial to the successful growth of your children. God's blessing on your home will depend on your relationship to Him.

DO start from your earliest family days with time for God at your home. Family devotions used to be normal in Christian families and considered a jump start for the day. Learn scriptures together and be sure each child has a clear proven salvation experience. They are your lifetime responsibility and you can never wash your hands of their defeats and victories. Yet, many of you consider yourself too busy to sit down daily with family and consider the Bible they must learn to obey. You are selling your family short, failing your responsibilities before God and will live with what you have or have not done for your family. Eternity will reveal the true record of your parenthood. Some of you will not only see great family tragedy but stand in the judgment of God with the shame of your failure. **DO** teach your

children the importance of choosing great friends, investing their lives in quality pursuits, and staying out of the pig pen of this world. Fill your home with quality music and control the TV allowed with clear Bible based reason for self control. Young lives are molded by what they listen to and view in their growing days. Help them choose friends that lift and challenge to Godliness instead of those who like tearing down others introducing them to evil. They must learn they cannot run with a skunk and smell like a rose. Dear parent, you must govern who they are with, what they listen to and where they go. Family rules are to be understood and obeyed without whining, pouting and crying, "Why can't I"? Godly control will protect their future.

DO not be afraid to discipline firmly but with love and tears. A growing garden plant must be cultivated into a useful crop. No excuse will ever cover the failure you allowed failing to hold your children to that which is right. Discipline is one of the great secrets of a successful life as a child of God. Don't allow their friends or even a Christian school to change what you allow. You can always find those who are slack in what they allow but stick to your proven family values. God warned, "spare the rod and spoil the child." Raise your daughter to be a Godly, pure, Christian girl. Rear up your son to be a committed, unafraid to be different young man of unquestionable character.

DO join a good church with standards in preaching and music. You need fellowship with other Godly families. Your kids need good friends, most apt to be found in a good church. See that they love and obey the Bible taught in SS class and preached from the pulpit. Lift up your pastor as a great man of God to be revered and obeyed. He should be their hero and example for them as they mature and with you, love and follow his ministry. Your worship as family members must be in the eyes of the neighborhood without question. Now allow me to go after some DON'TS. I

base them on thousands of families I have counseled through the years and clearly backed up by the Word of God. It takes a miracle of God and watchful dedication for you to get your children through the minefield of growing up. **DON'T** argue with your spouse in front of your kids. Stability is a trait to be sought after on a daily basis. Your son will treat his wife according to the attitude you parents demonstrate toward each other. They are not blind and can well hear and see the way you solve family problems. A constant bickering will scar their development. Your daughter will be like her mother and the constant challenge is to be a spiritual parent giving evidence to the love of Christ in all the process of their growth. Remember your children are your most valuable possession. **DON'T** allow them to dictate how they dress according to what is "cool". Today's fads are mostly based on sex appeal. Your son should not wear his pants low displaying his underwear top for all to see. He doesn't need ear rings and the current fad of seeing how big a hole he can get in his ears like a native of Africa. Your daughter must cover up and not display her femininity to the eyes of the boys around her. It is sheer nonsense to cover up in church and uncover in the pool. Modesty is vital as. I. Tim. 2:9 teaches women to "*adorn thyself in modest apparel as women professing godliness.*" How very sad it is for parents to allow their daughters to follow the scant and tight fads of the worlds sex crazed crowd. Your daughter is a jewel to be protected and not be displayed while your son must be taught to be with girls for the right reasons. Please **DON'T** fail to teach "hands off" to all that arouses sensual desire in your precious child. Virginity is a treasure you must teach your teen to value and cherish until marriage. Teenage pregnancy is on the rise as the world around them cries, "why not?" with constant pressure to seek pleasure in sex. "Wait" is a vital lesson for your kids to learn. Teach your son to realize how cheap he becomes when he tampers with

the virginity of a girl. Teach your daughter to be different than the cheap exploited girls in school. Lifetime marriage results from keeping the sex package wrapped until marriage night. **DON'T** allow the entertainment of the world by sound and vision to ruin your family. I John 2: 15-16 is clear. "*Love not the world neither the things that are in the world*" then states worldly things destroy by flesh, the eye, and the trap of pride. Uncontrolled TV is a cesspool of smoldering filth which destroys adult as well as sibling purity. It opens the door to profanity, vulgarity, crime, and sensuality which is a great enemy to your flock. An uncontrolled TV in your teen's bedroom I guarantee will lead to their downfall. Be sure they do not develop a fleshly stubborn love, for the Rock and Roll music of their peers. You must also forbid the evil copy cat world beat of the contemptible, contemporary, religious stuff that is destroying the church today. And please, don't trust your teen with a computer for his private use. Friends will soon feed them the passwords to get on pornography's web sites. I urge you parents to practice control if you value their soul. Lastly, **DON'T** argue and grumble about the rules of your church as your pastor seeks to counsel your children. Why shouldn't we dress better in the house of God and the events your church sponsors? Are we not commanded to be "*examples of the believer,*" I Tim. 4:12? What could be more evil and destructive than for parents to forbid pastor and workers to censure and call their children to a better walk as servants of Christ. In my years of preaching I am shocked at church members who grumble about strong Biblical preaching and Godly standards. You have no right to criticize your pastor's sermons and tell him what to preach. God tells him what and how to preach. Your family will stand or fall on your attitude and response to the commands of Gods book, to help our families walk their best for God.