

For the Love of the Family Ministries™
Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family
For the Love of the Family™ Series
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These messages may be copied in their entirety to help Christians in the task of rearing their children for God. They are not to be changed in any manner or to be sold. This header must be on any copy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the author.

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Rearing Spiritual Children

Proverbs 4:1-13 "Hear, ye children, the instruction understanding. For I give you good doctrine, for I have forsaken the father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding; decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, O son: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is getting wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding, and she shall bring thee to honor, when thou shalt give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown shall be put upon thee. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and do not forsake them. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have opened mine eyes, lest thou shouldst be entangled with thine feet, and shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; lest thou shouldst be forsaken, and thy life be taken away from thee."

of a father, and attend to know
eye not my law. For I was my
of my mother. He taught me
words: keep my
ng: forget it not: neither
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ing. Exalt her, and she shall
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e shall not go: keeper; for she is

The book of Proverbs is about a man instructing his children. He expects them to be spiritual. It is important for every Christian parent to realize that the devil makes war on babies. Not only does the devil make war on babies, but he also makes war on our children. If we desire to get to you through your children, the devil is in a spiritual battle. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Bring up your children in the Lord."

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Lord. Above all, taking the shield of faith where we the fiery darts of the wicked. "These two verses are in this matter of rearing our children to love and ser

thy shall be able to quench all we connected very importantly in the their Savior.

The shield of faith is a vital part of the Christian "whole armor of God" because the Christian life is The problem today is the Christian who hears these hear them. I am convinced that most Christians hear but do not understand the battle is real. Therefore and they have no idea how to train their children children for God is a serious issue that is not being hour. As the Apostle Paul names the different parts come to the shield of faith and emphasizes its importance by saying, "Above all, taking the shield of faith..." - for with the shield of are more than conquer through Him. Romans 8:31,37

ns armor. You are to put on the aware, as a spiritual conflict. words, but does not really they are in a spiritual battle , they do not live like it is real n this matter. Rearing our ng understood in this apostate of the Christian's armor, he ortance by saying, "Above all, faith, nothing can hurt you; you

Parents it is important for you to be spiritually seek to destroy our lives and our children's lives. minister to our children spiritual things unless we Lord. We need to get spiritually dressed everyday be spiritually dressed. How do we do that? I think here. You can open your Bible every day and go about mechanically with a ho-hum attitude. You will be sp Timothy 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth to give diligence to. Listen carefully, we need to God prayerfully, passionately. "We need to pray" Lord Word of God to me today. Holy Spirit be my teacher any sin that stands between me and you today? Show does show you any sin you must confess the sin, repent the sin. Then and only then will you be able to minister to your own children. We then need to pray for the fil to ask God to control lust that day by the Holy Spirit us put on the armor of God today. This must be done

ressed everyday. The devil will Parents you and I will never have been ministered to by the and teach our children how to there is something important tit methodically, ritually blinded and dead. II od, a workman that needeth th. "The word study here means go at the study of the Word of rd I want you to open the and my guide. Lord is there memysin. "When God ent from the sin and forsake ister to others, which includes ling of the Holy Spirit. We need t. We need to ask God to help everyday.

Folks, I do not see much passion today among Christians for rearing children for spiritual relationship with God and it takes seven more work to convey how to have a spiritual relationship to your children. Most parents have never sat down and talked with their children about dealing with their sin, understanding their own nature etc. One of the greatest experiences of my life was with our oldest daughter, Teresa. Teresa recently graduated from Bible College and has married a godly young man and they are currently preparing to go to the mission field. She has a heart for God. When she was sixteen the Lord laid on my heart to spend more time with her. For the next two years every Sunday after church we would go get a coke and take a drive. Sometimes we would drive for hours a

nd just talk about the Lord.

Shewouldaskspiritualquestionsandwewouldtalk outofbounds.Wetalkedaboutdevelopingourrelat talkedabouthowtoreallyprayandwhatshe wasGodspeakingtoherabout?Wewouldtalkabout agodlyyoungmanforahusband.Imadesuresheun ayoungmanwhowouldnotbeleadbyhisemotions, bythewordofGod.Iexplainedthatayoungmanwh wouldeventuallyleadherintosin.Weprayedtoget fatherandadaughter.Imadesuresheunderstoodw expectedfromherwhensheleftourhome.Thekeyh tomakethetime.Tothisdaywhenshereallywants shesays"dadcanwegogetacokeandtakeadrive daughterontheLord'sdayhelpedheratatimewhe ourhometounderstandtheimportanceweandtheLo lives.Parents,spiritualcommunicationisoneoft children.Thesecondkeyistakingthetimetodoi haveaspiritualrelationshipwiththeLordmyself heartwithmychild.Teresaisalovelyyounglady becameaspiritualleaderatBibleCollege,andhas Lord.Listencarefully;donotassumethechildren needtocommunicatespiritualtruthandrepeatito keytolearning.Setthetimeasideandpraymuchf heart.Proverbs23:26.WhenGoddoesgiveyouthec puttherightthingsthere.Ishowedmydaughtersh Godandwentoveritwiththemrepeatedly.Ilooked themquestionsandprayedwiththem.(Wehaveapro churchpeoplecalled"HowtoHaveaDailyTimewith onhowtohaveadailytimewithGodandgivethe shouldreadintheorderyoushouldreadthemandw yourBible).Itisavailablebywritingtoouraddr thisfromayoungage.BythetimetheywenttoBib Bibleverywellandtheirspiritualrelationshipwa sendourchildrentoBibleCollegeweneedtosend stretchandchallengethemspiritually.Theyneedt theirrelationshipforGod.Donotsendyourchildr challengeto liveforGod.

WhentheLordgavemywifeandIchildren,wewere notbeensavedverylongandwereinthefirstfew wifealmostdiedinchildbirthwithTeresa.Igoto hospitalinChattanooga,Tennessee,andaskedGodt anddaughter.Ifhewoulddoso,Iwouldpromiseto wasnotimpressedwiththechildrenthatwerebeing College.Also,Iwasnotimpressedwithmanyofthe withthosewhowerepreparingtoserveGodasPasto wererearing.Isharedthiswithmywifeandwepre

aboutthem.Nosubjectwas ionshipwiththeLord.We arningfromherBible.What whatshewaslookingforin derstoodthatshe needed butonewhowouldbelead oisleadbyhisemotions herandbecamecloserasa hathermotherandI erewasittooktime.Ihad totalkaboutspiritualissues ?"Thistimespentwithour nshewaspreparingtoleave rdplacedonourspiritual hekeystorearinggodly t.ThethirdkeyisIhaveto tobeabletosharemyspiritual whowashomeschooled, ahearttoserveandlovethe understandspiritualtruth.You verandover.Repetitionisthe orGodtogiveyouthechild's hild'sheartmakesureyou owtohaveadailytimewith attheirnotebooksandasked gramdevelopedforour God."Itgoesstepbystep booksofyourBibleyou hatyouarelookingforin ess.Ourdaughtersweretaught leCollegethey knewtheir swellestablished.Whenwe themtoaplace thatwill obechallengedtoexpand entoaplacewherethereisno

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this matter. We sat down together and read every verse about rearing children, our responsibility in rearing that was remotely connected. We prayed over them and would make them real in our life. We started the plan and we made this a goal in our life. God was gracious and we needed. We were not spiritually mature Christians these verses; we were just a young couple asking God for children for Him. James 4:8 became very real in our life. He will draw near to you. "God began to teach us and was showing us.

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I would go into Teresa's room every evening while she was asleep as a baby to do exactly as He commanded and not let us fail in our commitment on the part of the parents to make this happen. I believe the Bible teaches that I do not have a mini God. I know many people do not like to hear that, but the qualification of a Pastor as stated in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 "One that rules his own house having his children in subjection with the Lord how to rule (manage) his own house, how shall he rule God?"

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Parents, as soon as Junior learns to read get them with God. We started with our children before they could read reading them the book called "Little Talks with God." We also read to them the mass small children about what it means testimony for the Lord. We prayed daily with them for other things to be saved. As spiritual issues came to them.

started in his own daily time to read reading them the book called "Little Talks with God." We also read to them the mass small children about what it means testimony for the Lord. We prayed daily with them for other things to be saved. As spiritual issues came to them.

Do you know how many times the word instruction is used in Proverbs? Twenty-five times. It is used only eight times in the rest of the Bible. Proverbs 4:1 "Hear ye children, the instruction of a father." Proverbs 4:4 "He (meaning father) taught me also." Parents, whenever God wants to make a point in the Bible here repeats it. In Proverbs she has repeated it twenty-five times! Parents, he is saying you receive instruction from the Lord and give it to your children. That takes work! It means more than just reading a verse with them before they get to bed and praying a little prayer.

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I also want to point out to you something important about Proverbs 23:26, the last phrase says "let thine eyes observe my ways." Have you ever thought about what is the true definition of spirituality? The definition of true spirituality is the believer's submissive relationship to the Holy Spirit. Parents, he says "follow my example, observe my ways." If your children never see you submitting to the Holy Spirit they sure will not respond to the Holy Spirit. You need to respond to the Holy Spirit not just in services, but in the home as well. If God the Holy Spirit has

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dealt with you about something that you want to change in the home, set the example with you and this is the best way to tell them this is sin and I have a problem dealing in you every day.

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One of the real failures in child rearing is that we have given our children exposure, but not true instruction.

we have given our children

We may bring them to all the services, as well as verses in Sunday school and we feel pretty good about them in a Christian school and have prayer at meals. These things are good, but they are exposure, not the type of instruction that God is looking for. The Christian parents that are not training!

should. They learn a few things that we can even put in at bedtime. All these things are exposure, not the type of instruction that God is looking for. The Christian parents that are not training!

A lot is said today in Christian books on the subject of communication. They proceed to tell us that we talk about ball games, a child, children like etc. Listen carefully, God is saying spiritually communicating. Folks, this goes back to the Lord. These are things the Lord has ministered in this communication to explain to Juniors salvation, the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, how to pray, how to witness, how to study their Bible. You must talk to them about God the Holy Spirit, God the Father, the purpose of the church etc.

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We have been brain washed to believe that the child in Sunday school and the Christian school. The child will never learn these things. We will not be able to teach our children if we do not know what the Bible says. You are starting to see the void in talking about the Father, talking to his son about these and many other things. Parents, the children must learn spiritual truth from you.

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The reason for the massive spiritual failure is that you are not willing to work with their children in spiritual matters. I have heard many parents say, "I took Juniors away from God". The point is you only gave him exposure, not true training. Then they come back because they see a difference in that. If you are fortunate that God was gracious and God did get a hold of that child's heart, we are glad for that. However, many make a mess of their lives. The teaching of Proverbs is to stay with him for the rest of his life. Exposure without training is deadly to spiritual growth.

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will have to develop it himself. The big problem is he has already been religious and saw no power or difference in that.

A child that has been trained properly will not be blown away when the time of adversity comes because he will have seen you deal with problems in the spiritual way and you showed him how.

Proverbs 24:10, 19:21, 9:10 "If thou faint in the small. There are many devices in a man's heart: nevertheless the Lord shall stand. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding."

Remember parents the father in Proverbs is telling all this to his son. Do you see the way he talks to him? We have been brainwashed to communicate to our children spiritual things. That hat some how we are not to God. No folks we are to work at communicating God's might turn them away from truth to our children.

Some people will even say, "let the Holy Spirit do the work." Dear friend what is it that the Holy Spirit uses? The Word of God! Parents do not be afraid to communicate spiritual truth to your children. In fact you may have to force yourself to communicate to them. As you listen and observe you will learn their strengths and weaknesses and you learn about the child and their way. The lie of the devil is you will drive them away. No, folks when they are young you have a tremendous opportunity to mold their spirituality inking. Start off slowly and go deeper as they get more understanding. Remember this is a spiritual growth process for you and them. The more you communicate the more question they will have. This is a discipling factor for you. They should be a greater joy than to discipline your own children. You must have a passion and desire to work at spiritually training your children.

Proverbs 23:26 "My son, give me thine heart." How do you get their heart? Here he just asked the child for it. All the way through Proverbs she says, "Listen to me son." This is where love comes in. Verbalize to your children you love them. Makesure they know and tell them over and over that you love them and God loves them. Husbands and fathers sometimes have a hard time with this. If you start out early in marriage and when your children are small this should not be a problem. If it is hard for your personality ask the Lord to help you verbalize your love for your wife and children. I have found the best way to do this is to verbalize my love for the Lord to Him.

Dad, if all you ever do is beat the tar out of the child and never tell them you love them you are in trouble. Also, many parents do not understand how to discipline their children and beating the tar out of them is not God's method. I will deal with it God's method. I will deal with spanking, but there is more to it than that.

DadweneedtoprayforwisdomandaskGodtoshow uswhereweneedtowork
atinthechild'slife.Weneedtoknowourweaknes sesandthechild's
weaknesses.Parentsifwemakeamistake,bewillin gtoadmitit.Wemust
respondtotheHolySpirit'sconvictioninourlive s.

Iwanttogiveyoutenbriefitemsforreview:

1. Parents must have a spiritual relationship daily with the Lord. This relationship must not be mechanical, but a spiritual relationship.
2. Parents need to commit themselves to rearing godly children. Pray for wisdom and the endurance daily to do so.
3. Be willing to admit personal failure to God and the children.
4. Communicate spiritually to your children. Make yourself talk to them about spiritual things. We need to not only talk to them but to instruct them on how to have a daily time with the Lord. We must be available to instruct spiritually in all areas.
5. Explain to them truths from God's Word.
6. Get the child's heart. We need to pray for the child's heart and ask the child for their heart.
7. Teach the child to fear the Lord. Proverbs 1:7
8. Talk to the children about what God expects. You must do this more than once and this should be a continual process.
9. Make sure you tell the children you love them, that God loves them and you must show them you do.
10. Children must see parents submit and respond to the Holy Spirit. You must respond to the Holy Spirit in the preaching and teaching of God's word and in your own devotion all life. You must teach and encourage your children to do so as well.

The next message deals with proper discipline of the child. What we have covered up to now is extremely important, but proper discipline is extremely important as well. Proverbs mentions it five times. Finally we will cover what to do if you have failed to train your child to live for God.