

Parenting – The Big Coaching Job

Christian parents have been assigned the role of coaching our children while they live with us. The window of opportunity lasts for a few years, then closes.

During these years, we need to get some things accomplished with the Lord's help. **First on my list is to teach the little ones the will of God.**

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

—Ephesians 6:4

The job falls first to dad. Lacking a dad, then mom has the job. This points to a regular time of training for the kids from infants to teens. Brief stories, little songs about God's ways and dramas work at early ages.

God allows lots of room for our creativity, but little for our excuses. The general rule for outcomes:

Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.

—Proverbs 22:6

Since our kids are made of the same stuff that we are, they won't do it all

perfectly. In some cases, parents may need to enforce the law with corrective discipline.

He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

— Proverbs 13:24

The Proverb writer recommends an intermediate device (rod) for punishment. This is the extreme case. There is room for lots of lesser punishments on the way to a paddling.

To assist parents in teaching the will of the Lord, churches provide a Sunday School program. Discuss your family needs with the teachers. Make sure the class time is well used. And make sure the children get there every session.

Coaches need to set the best examples possible. Parents who are lax in their own church attendance are making their coaching job more difficult and less rewarding. They are saying by their example, “The worship of God is important, but there are things even more important.” Children need to see their parents put the Lord first.

If there are two parents at home, the children need to witness the examples

of parents who love each other, speak kindly to each other and have the highest respect for each other. This is a very strong inoculation against divorce in their own homes in later years.

Both by our examples and our words, we need to stress the need for permanency in their marriages. God does not require marriage, but those who marry are to stay that way. Divorce is allowed for the believer only if the mate is sexually unfaithful.

While our children are on the way to marriage, they need positive instructions from parents on morality. God commands,

Flee immorality.

—1 Corinthians 6:18

This means that the coaches must coach about the activities that lead up to immorality. Issues that need to be covered include dressing modestly, entertainment and dating. The book, *I Kissed Dating Good-bye* by Joshua Harris has benefited many young people. Ignoring these issues may mean that parents are confronted with issues of abortion and raising fatherless grandchildren.

As coaches, let us set the example of enjoying life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

—Philippians 4:4

There are always things that are wrong. When we focus on the negative, we fail to express the joy of



Christian living. Paul uses the word joy or a related word about 16 times in the four chapters of Philippians. And he wrote it while being chained to a Roman guard.

Coaches need to set the example of obeying the government. Speed limits may interfere with our time schedules, but the children are noting our example of either speeding or not speeding.

Coaches need to coach their young about proper use of money. Giving to the Lord can reap financial benefits and balance the childrens' life values. Learning how to resist the credit card companies (who are now targeting youth) and save for their future is very much a parent's role. For help, order financial guru Clark Howard's *Clark Smart Parents, Clark Smart Kids* from Amazon Books or your favorite book seller.

Parents have a coaching job to do. The stakes couldn't be higher.

Walk A Little Plainer Daddy

Walk a little plainer daddy,
Said a little boy so frail,
I'm following in your footsteps,
And I do not want to fail.

Sometimes your steps are very plain,
Sometimes they are hard to see,
So walk a little plainer daddy,
For you are leading me.

I know that once you walked this way
Many years ago,
And what you did along the way,
I'd really like to know.

For sometimes when I am tempted,
I don't know what to do,
So walk a little plainer daddy,
For I must follow you.

Some day when I am grown up,
You are like I want to be;
Then I will have a little boy,
Who will want to follow me;

And I would want to lead him right,
And help him to be true -
So walk a little plainer daddy,
For we must follow you.

—Forrest Flowers

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