How To Raise Godly Children
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The first would be discipline. When the Bible talks about raising children, it talks about discipline. If you love your child without discipline, you’ll produce a brat. Look at Proverbs 10:1. This is a wonderful verse that I would always think about while we were rearing our children. “…A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.” Sorry to say, I’ve seen that verse proven many times in the 28 years I’ve pastored this church. But, I’m glad to say that a wise son makes a happy family. Nothing will make you happier than that. I would rather have my kids turn out right than have the largest, most prosperous church in the world. There’s no more joy than raising your children for God. But you’ll never have more of a broken heart if you don’t. You think it’s bad to lose your job. You think it’s bad to lose your health. But there’s nothing like losing your children. If you lose your children, you just about lose your life.

Have you ever noticed that most people who lose their children put up a white flag and just about quit Christianity? There’s nothing more rewarding or more damning. In Proverbs 13:24 we see one of the many, many verses on discipline. “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.” The New Testament says, “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth...” He goes on to say that if you don’t chasten your son, you’re treating him as a bastard. Now I don’t swear — I’m quoting the Bible, and the Bible uses that strong term. We’ve seen many fathers like that in the world today. They have children, and their children don’t even know who their father is! The father couldn’t care less about raising that illegitimate child. He’ll do anything not to pay support and not to help in the raising of that child. God says that if you don’t spank your child, that’s what you’re like.

The person who hits his child with his fist or with his hand in the face is the parent who doesn’t discipline his child and then gets frustrated and hits him. Spanking is not abuse. Not spanking is abuse. Proverbs 19:18 says, “Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.” The Bible is simple. You can’t understand the King James Bible? Then I feel sorry for you. Train up your child and spank him when he’s
young, because if you let him get too old, then he’s going to be like an unbroken dog. If you don’t house train a dog when he’s young, then you’ve got a problem on your hands. If you don’t spank your child and train him when he’s young, then you’ve got a bigger problem on your hands. “Chasten thy son while there is hope...” And don’t let your soul spare for his crying. That tells me you should spank him until he settles down. You don’t worry about his crying. You need to be firm and consistent. If somebody asked me what the most important thing in discipline is, it would be to be firm and be consistent. Do it every time, EVERY TIME.

Remember the illustration I used about a year ago concerning my dog? He doesn’t walk on the carpet in the living room. When he was a puppy, somebody said, “Well, can’t we bring him in just this one time?” If you bring him in one time, you’ve sinned against him. You’re confusing that dog. Anybody who has trained animals understands that. If we love our dog enough not to confuse him, then we ought to love our children enough not to confuse them. Do it every time. Every time. Fifty percent of a child’s character is formed by the time he’s three years old. Train up a child when he’s young, while there’s hope. Seventy-five percent of a child’s character is formed by the time he is five.

When you’re spanking your one- or two-year-old on the diaper, do you really think you’re doing a lot? “Poof, poof!” What do you think you’re doing when the kids scream and go crazy, and you stop spanking them? Listen, mother, what do you think you’re doing when the only time you see a problem is when the preacher’s around? My mother would sit and watch television day and night. I’d go over and visit her. Sure enough, when I’d sit down there would be cursing on it, or there would be sex, and she’d say, “Roger, I don’t know why it is, but the only time they swear on these programs is when you’re here.” She knew what I thought about television. Normally she would just sit there, and let it all sink in.

If you love your child, you’re going to look for problems. You’re going to see problems. And then you’re going to spank them — five, six, seven, eight good ones. You make them “burn.” But the biggest thing is to be consistent. Make it consistent, and make them not want it again. People say, “Oh, I don’t want to spank my kids so often.” Then spank them consistently, and you’ll get to the place where you don’t have to spank them. That’s a fact. Dad, you’ve got to take the leadership because moms are softer than dads in most cases. Proverbs 22:15, “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.” You see how straightforward this is and how strong it is? Look at Proverbs 23:13 and 14, “Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.”

Can you imagine the welfare department sitting in the back of this auditorium listening to me preach? Can you imagine the Vidette-Messenger or the Gary Post Tribune sitting in here? Can you imagine what they would write? But I’m not saying this, God is saying it. God is saying, “Withhold not correction from the child...” I’m just illustrating it. I’m just saying exactly what the Bible says. I couldn’t make it any stronger. “...for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.” You say, “I love my child too much to spank him.” You don’t love him if you don’t spank him. You want a friend, you want to coddle him, you want to baby him.
Don’t tell me you love him if you don’t spank him.

Don’t listen to psychologists, not even so-called Christian psychologists. Don’t listen to these educators, and by the way, don’t go into a Christian bookstore and buy one of those stupid books on how to raise your children. Look at their children; you don’t want that. The problem is that ever since this law was passed, people have gotten softer and softer. Even in our churches where we say we believe, we aren’t at all as consistent, we aren’t at all as firm, as even a weaker Christian was 25 years ago — I venture to say even most Catholics 25 years ago. God said to spank. If we lived a hundred years ago and were traveling by wagon train across America in Indian country, do you think we’d be watching for Indians? Of course! We’d say, “Man, I don’t want my kids to die. I don’t want my kids to have an arrow through them.” We’d look behind rocks and behind trees, and we’d look for moving bushes. “There are Indians out there who want to kill us!” Satan is out there seeking whom he may devour. I want to stress again, don’t blow up. You should never strike your child in anger. Don’t blow up, and then let it go the next time. Make rules, and go by them. Let them know what to expect, and then follow them consistently.

Raise up a child in the way he should go with discipline, and then, with family devotions. Turn to Matthew 18:19 and 20. “Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” What couple could read that and not think, “Hey, that says two. If my wife and I, or my husband and I, just agree and we pray, God will answer our prayers.” I don’t know how a mother and father could read this and not think, “We’re going to pray for our children.” “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” That means when you gather around the kitchen table with your children for family devotions, He’s there. People say, “I don’t know why we have devotions.” If for no other reason, He’s there. You’re starting the day off right. Now some are afraid; they say, “I’m not a theologian. Pastor Voegtlin, you’re a Bible school graduate.” That has absolutely nothing to do with it. I have never once in my life prepared what to say for devotion time. You sit there and you read the Bible. If the kids are really young, you use something like John R. Rice’s Bible story book. But real quickly you use the Bible, and you just read the Bible and explain it. Now, to me there’s no more exciting time to have devotions than when your kids are young.

I’ve heard parents say, “Pastor Voegtlin said this...” or “That’s a school rule.” If you practice that, you’re going to lose your children. Your job, father, is to be priest of the home, to open the Bible and read it and explain it. You say, “Kids, we believe this because it’s right here.” If you show a Christian child that what we’re doing is what God says in His Word, you’ve got a real good chance that child is going to turn out right. Isn’t that exciting? Go to Ephesians where it talks about the family. “This is why we believe this.” If you want to, you could just take notes during a sermon, take verses down and use them on Monday to apply it spiritually to your family. Explain that “this is the reason we do what we do.” Then you have prayer requests. It’s simple. You get the prayer sheet and you pray for a missionary every day. Then you look at the needs of the church, and you pray for those every day. One day when Becky was a young girl I said, “Do you think
you’d ever want to be a preacher’s wife?” And she said, “No, because I don’t want to pray for the offerings every day for the rest of my life!” You pray for the needs of the family, and they get to see God answer prayer in their own lives. Can you think of anything more wonderful than sitting down with your small children and teaching them? A hundred years ago there was one divorce in 36. As you know, there’s one divorce in every two today. A Harvard professor made a study of 1,005 families who had devotions. He followed them through the years and only one out of the 1,005 got a divorce. “The family that prays together stays together.”

Josephus, the unsaved Jewish historian, wrote that in his day at five years old they read the Bible, at ten they would study theological writings, and by 15 they had memorized Deuteronomy. Today, between the ages of 4 and 14 the average child has watched 20,000 hours of television. The average television is on 7 hours a day. As I’ve said so many times, I got rid of our television over a quarter of a century ago because it was a waste of time, a complete waste of time. We few preachers who preach against television are thought of as weird by other independent Baptists. There’s something wrong when preachers can’t preach against trash. They think we’re weird.

Look over in Deuteronomy chapter 6, this tells you the way it ought to be. Verse 6, “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates.” Not only are we to have family devotions, but there’s a great need to teach the principles of God’s Word throughout the day. We teach them during devotions and when we walk. We ought to be looking for opportunities.

Don’t just say you plan to; there’s nothing more important in your life, except for your mate, than your children. Your mate is more important because if that doesn’t work out, your children aren’t going to work out. Your mate, then your children. And so when you walk, or in our day, when you drive, take the children with you. Take them with you if you go to the grocery store. Take them with you if you go on hospital visitation. Today you can bring them right up into the room. When you sit or rest, talk to them before you go to bed in the evening. The passage says in the morning also when you get up. What does this mean? You just put the principles of God to work everywhere. Be teaching them all the time. You should be looking for opportunities, whether there are problems in the church or there is success in the church, whatever it is, you’re looking for opportunities to say, “This is what happens when you do wrong. This is what happens when you do right.” Look for it and teach them. Line upon line, precept upon precept. Some of the best times I had with my kids were when I was just talking to them. When a teenager gets to a certain age, it’s typical nowadays for the parent to say, “My teenager won’t talk to me.” If your teenager won’t talk to you, it’s because you didn’t talk to him when he was young. You cut it off. Every child wants to talk to his parents! You say, “I don’t have anything to say to them.” Then you’re not right with God. Talk to them! And I’m talking about at six or seven years of age. Talk to them about the type of person to
marry. You see these teenagers biting at the bit and wanting to date the wrong person, wanting to hang with the wrong person. They’ve got the wrong plans because you didn’t talk to them when they were young. Then all of a sudden you put handcuffs and bars on them and you’re afraid of what they’re going to do. And they balk. But if you talk to them, and you say, “Boy, I can’t wait until you get married. And this is the type of guy you want.”

I would joke sometimes with my kids. I’d tell Debbie, “You want a strong guy. You want a ‘mean’ guy, right Debbie?” She needed a “mean” guy because she’s too nice. She got him! Just talk to your children. My children didn’t want to date until they were freshmen in college. When I say “date,” realize I don’t mean a worldly date. I’m talking about godly courtship. You teach them to work hard but not love money. You teach them to have the right kind of friends, and how to be nice to the weak people but not follow them. They’re like clay and we’re forming them by spanking them, and then teaching them and talking to them.

I read about General Robert E. Lee walking through the snow one day when he heard something behind him. It was his small son jumping from step to step, trying to walk in his footsteps. He turned around and hugged him and prayed, “God, help me never to lead my boy to hell.” What a responsibility we have. Remember Hannah praying for a son? There were tears streaming down her cheeks. Her lips were moving but you couldn’t hear anything. The old backslidden priest thought she was drunk, but she was praying for a boy to give to God. Oh, how we ought to pray and give our children to God. Someone who goes into full-time service is no better than someone who doesn’t. I don’t mean fulltime service; I’m saying give our children to God. Seek, ask, knock. Claim Proverbs 22:6.

Again, the problem with our kids is that they hear one thing preached in the pulpit, and they see their parents act a certain way in church and around other Christians, and they hear and see something else when the door is closed at home. They’ve learned from their parents to have a religion in front of people and have nothing real at home. They see their parents say with their lives, “I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.” We know how vaccinations work generally. If you want to be vaccinated against the measles, for instance, you have a weakened form of the measles injected into you. The child’s defense mechanisms attack the foreign entities and form antibodies, preventing the child from contracting the disease. We take the weakened form of the real thing to prevent them from getting the real thing.

That’s what is happening in fundamentalism all over America. Do you ever wonder why bus kids can grow up in this church and make it and some kids from regular attenders can’t? It’s because the bus kids don’t have wrong Christian examples. They don’t have anything saying, “what is preached isn’t real.” All they do is listen to the preacher and youth pastor and the teachers and they say, “I love this.” But there are some church kids who have parents vaccinating them at home. They don’t have a chance. They hear their parents complaining. There’s nothing worse you can do. My kids saw me mad, but they never saw me sad over the things of God. If you sit around and you complain about your
state in the ministry or your state in serving God, you’re going to lose them! They’re gone! Are you listening? Don’t vaccinate your children against Christianity. You’ve got to teach them the Bible, true Bible principles at home by family devotions, by talking, and by your life.

Next, you raise up a child in the way he should go by teaching him how to work. That’s missing today. Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might...” Proverbs 6:6-9 says, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?...” Understand there are two great principles taught in the Bible if you’re going to succeed: one is faith and one is work. You’re not going to succeed without both. I believe that if you have faith, you’ll work. You’re not a Bible-practicing Christian if you don’t work. We live in a lazy generation. I’ve had Christians think there should be a union steward in the church! “They’re working me too hard.” We’re living in a generation that does everything it can to keep from work. If you teach your children that, you’re going to destroy much of what they could be.

Some years back, we started seeing many children of famous preachers going to the devil. There was a reaction, and it was the wrong one. That reaction was, “I’m going to protect my children. I’m going to put my arms around my children, and nobody’s going to get them. I’m going to baby my children.” You’ll destroy them just as much that way. God says, “Six days shalt thou work.” God says we’re supposed to work by the sweat of our brow. We should teach our children to enjoy work. You say, “I don’t know what’s wrong with my teenage son. He’s so lazy.” Look in the mirror. You made him that way. Spurgeon wrote an article that I thought was tremendous. He said, “If you want to ruin your son, first of all, never let him know hardship. When he’s a little child, carry him in your arms.” When my children were young, especially Jeff, because the church was so small, the teenage girls just wanted to carry him all the time. I had to lay down the law: “Nobody picks up my son. Nobody.” You say, “What if he falls down?” That’s another problem. What do you do when they fall down? Say, “Shut up. Quit crying, and get up.” Now, you first of all see if there’s blood running. See if there’s a broken arm out of the corner of your eye. But in most cases, their feelings are hurt. Don’t baby them! If they fall down, say, “Hey, you’re okay. Get up and just keep on walking.” You say, “That’s mean.” No, to do anything else is mean.

We have a college, and I believe we have many of the best kids of America. But if there’s any problem with our students it is that they have been babied by their parents and home church. Some think being a good Christian is babying people. There are some others of you who hear a baby scream and say, “Ah, it’s mine!” You run to pick him up. Let him be for a while. I can remember a certain mother when our church was real young who had a boy she carried around. When she would carry him around, his head was level with hers, and his feet were down to her knees. She picked that kid up and carried him around! I knew he would become a sissy, and he was the greatest one we ever produced. He’s worthless for God today. I’m not saying never pick up a child. But once he gets to a certain age and he can walk around, don’t carry him every place; don’t be holding him all
Spurgeon went on and said, “If you want to prevent his being useful in the world, guard him from every kind of toil.” You say, “What does that mean?” Well, that means don’t ever let him participate in the cross-country race. We’ve had college students come here and think we were guilty of child abuse because five-year-olds would be running around the lake. It shows where they come from! We do those things for a purpose, to give them an opportunity. Let them toil a little bit. I could give you a lot of other examples. He goes on, though, and says, “Do not suffer him to struggle.” You know, the teacher is always “picking on him.” You know that, don’t you? When he struggles in school, it’s never his fault. “Pity him when he ought to be punished.” Go to the principal. Just tell him how you “appreciate the school, but ....” “Supply all his wishes.” Give him everything he wants. “Avert all disappointments. Prevent all troubles...” (this is Spurgeon) “...and you’ll surely tutor him to be a reprobate to break your heart.” You will. I’ve seen it every single time. You think you love him? No, you love yourself. You’re raising him or her for you, but he’ll curse you.

Spurgeon goes on and says, “If you want to rescue him, put him where he has to work.” What made our country great? One of the things that made our country great is that we were put in the position where we had to toil. I’m talking about when the country was being built, when we were being attacked by Indians. You talk about natural childbirth, you’d have the child behind a bush! You’d build your own home, and who do you think helped? The little children would help. You would grow your own crops, and who do you think helped? The little children would help. What do children do today? Sit around and do nothing but crab and get in trouble. Teach them to work!

Now, in our day and age you have to look for work. I remember as my children were growing up, we had a college garden. We grew food for the college in order to save money. My kids didn’t like it, but I loved it because there was one full day a week when they were weeding, planting, harvesting, and everything else — when they had to work. You ought to be glad if we can find some weeding, mowing, or something like that around the property. Don’t let them fiddle-duddle around, be glad for them to do something. We’re raising lazy reprobates! If there’s anything that we’re weak in, it’s this right here. “Put him where he has to work.” Expose him to difficulties. Take those training wheels away from him. Let him fall down.

We used to have boxing every week. You say, “I hate boxing.” I don’t like it either. I’m no good. If I get hit in the nose, I tear up, oh, I hate it! But we had it. Jeff would get in there with somebody (and he was a lousy boxer; he hated boxing), but you know how kids are. They kind of dance around. They don’t say anything, but they’re thinking, “If you don’t hit me hard, I won’t hit you hard.” I’d say, “If I don’t see blood, you’re not stopping.” For some of you this is hard. Compare it to what our forefathers went through as they made this great country. We are a soft generation, and we’re raising a softer generation. If you do things like this, you’ll make a man out of him. I illustrated what Spurgeon said, but I guarantee in his day he had tougher things than this in mind. Can you be a good Christian and be lazy? No. Can you be a good bus worker and be
lazy? No. Can you be a good Christian school teacher or Sunday School teacher and be lazy? No! Again, I’ll say the number one problem we have with our college students is not great sin. It isn’t the academics. It’s laziness. It’s softness. It’s a lack of character. Bob Jones, Sr., used to say, “I’d rather see somebody with bad character than no character.” At least you can make something out of somebody who has bad character. But, no, they sleep in and can’t even wake up to get to class. They’re always making excuses.

Christians have the idea that if they say, “Yes, sir” and “No, ma’am” and they smile, everything’s okay. They’ve been taught to have a phony front. God says we’ll not succeed in this world except we know how to sweat, and we sin against our children if we don’t teach them to work. All over America, especially in large churches, there are worthless people with nice haircuts who dress and talk like fundamentalists. You may look at them and say, “Man, they’ve got potential.” They’ve got nothing because they were never trained. Listen to this quote from Teddy Roosevelt:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again; because there is not effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Fourthly, we raise up children the Bible way by loving them and spending time with them. Most people know that Billy Sunday’s children all went to the devil. Lately I’ve heard people say that proves God’s promises about training up a child aren’t valid. No, his children’s failure proves that Billy Sunday didn’t raise up his children according to the Bible. He died of shock when a newspaper man came running up and showed him a front-page story about one of his kids who was thrown in jail because of wicked sin. D.L. Moody’s one son went to the devil. He put him in charge of his second school in Massachusetts. The boy gave it to the devil. Over and over again we hear of preachers whose kids go bad, and the devil whispers in our ears, “If he can’t raise his kids, then I can’t.” Don’t lift man above God’s Word. God’s Word says you can. If his kids went bad, it’s because he put his desires, his ambitions, in front of his family.

I love the illustration of John R. Rice. Some “big shot” (and I hate pushy people who think they’re big shots) came on a Friday afternoon and said, “I’ve got to see you.” Dr. Rice said, “No, I’ve got to leave. I have an important appointment.” The man said, “I have to see you. You’ve got to see me.” Dr. Rice said, “No, this is an appointment that I can’t break.” They both left and this guy happened to drive by Dr. Rice’s home and saw him playing with his kids in his yard. The next time he saw Dr. Rice he said, “You’re a liar. You said you had such an important appointment that you couldn’t meet with me.” Dr. Rice said, “No, I’m not a liar. My appointment with my kids is the most important
appointment I have of the week.” I practiced that also.

You can’t just say your children are important, you must show them they’re important. Every time I see a boy or girl go bad or a marriage go bad, every time we’ve ever had a kid really go bad and I’ve had a chance to talk to him, I ask that child, “Did your dad have devotions with you on a regular basis?” Every single time the answer was, “No.” “Did you have family times together?” Every single time they said, “No.” Are you listening to me, Dad? You’ve got to show your kids you care. It’s not up to mom, it’s up to you, Dad. If there’s a man in the home, it’s up to him. You say, “That’s hard.” No, it’s not hard, not if you love your children.

I don’t like using myself as an example, but I loved planning things for our family. It used to thrill me to set up family activities. “We’ll do this, we’ll do that, we’ll cut out of school here and go to the zoo.” You NEVER have to conflict with the church, but sometimes you may conflict with the school. If you do, the school comes in second. I’m not saying just come in late all the time. Especially when they’re young, it’s easy to plan family times. You pop popcorn. Now, listen, you young couples. They have popcorn that doesn’t come in a bag, and you have to get one of these shakers. I’m not talking about a machine either. A shaker! We happened to have a fireplace, so it made it even more old fashioned.

That’s all you have to do to have fun with small kids. They love it. They giggle and they squeal, and it’s so much fun.

There’s something else you can do. Have pizza. You say, “We do that.” No, no, no, not from Pizza Hut. Make it. You see, that’s what makes it fun. You make it. You say, “It’s not as good as Pizza Hut.” Well, it helps your diet. The thing I liked the most was making sundaes. You get the ice cream. It depends on how much money you have, whether you have vanilla and chocolate and strawberry, whether you can get some whipped cream in a can, or whatever. It makes a mess because they make it. But, boy, do they have fun. I don’t know what it is, but there’s something special about mom and dad taking time with the kids and doing simple things. Like a picnic. Parents always say, “I don’t have money.” If you have to spend money on it, it’s probably not the best activity. People say, “We have our family night. We watch videos.” Oh, come on. Go on a picnic, and just spend the money you would have on a meal. Get Aldi’s hot dogs and day-old bread! You don’t have to have money. You have to have heart. You have to love enough to plan. You go on that picnic and you play “Kick the Can.” You buy these gadgets to make s’mores with. Or, you hike and get lost. I always got lost, and my girls would cry and I’d carry them on my back. Do you understand the point I’m making? I believe in a vacation—a time when you all pile into the car. You don’t have to go anywhere fancy, but I would suggest that you always don’t have to go to relatives’ houses either. You can get a tent. You can camp.

Raise up a child in the way he should go, and I believe that he’ll not depart from it. It takes discipline, it takes teaching the Word of God (you teaching the Word of God and Christianity), teaching them how to work, and showing them you love them. Remember I
said that love without discipline makes a brat? Let me tell you something else — discipline without love makes a rebel. Kids look for love. You might say, “I don’t communicate well.” I’m not the best at it either but at least write them notes. “I love you. This is why I love you. I’m praying for you.” They look for things like that.

I have to confess that I’m a very private person and I didn’t show the affection that I wish I had toward my wife in front of my children. But when I did, when I kissed my wife when they were around, even when they were teenagers, you know what they did? “Hee, hee, hee. Oh, ho, ho. Look at mom and dad.” They liked it. It said something. I used to pick her up and I would twirl her around. And the kids would go, “Ha, ha, ha. Hee, hee, hee.” You know what I think this said? “All’s well with mom and dad.” All’s well in our home. Kids look for affection. They look to see if you care.

You can raise children up right. I stress, don’t raise them up to go into full-time service, God will take care of that. As your pastor, I don’t think those in full-time service are any better than those who are not. We pay more attention to them because we send them to the mission field and we have to train them. But I’ll tell you from the bottom of my heart, I don’t think any more of full-time workers than any other good kid. Train them up to love God and to live for God. When you get to be my age, it will make your life or it will break your life. To the proportion that you raise them up for God, that will be your amount of joy from the time they leave your home.

People say they love babies but not the “terrible two’s,” and the “rotten three’s.” We’ve had speakers say, “When they get to be teenagers, you want to put them in a cage.” Preachers even preach on that in the sense that it’s to be expected. That’s wrong. It should get better. You see, when a child is a little tiny baby, he’s going to cry at times. But as he gets to be one year old, you can begin to discipline him. At two years old, for sure, he ought to be well under control. It shouldn’t get worse. If it’s worse, it’s your fault.

When they get to be teenagers it should be a joyful time, an exciting time as they blossom for God. Then when they get married and they pick the right mate, and they start having children and you see them raising their children better than you raised them (and that’s the way it ought to be), it gets more wonderful all the time. I don’t want to live long except for one thing—I’d like to see my grandkids grow up and live for God. Can you think of anything more wonderful than that? To see about 10 or 12 of your grandkids all living for God. There could not be a greater blessing!