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## **For the Love of the Family Ministries™**

**Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family  
Rearing Spiritual Children Part 2**

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## **Rearing Spiritual Children Part 2**

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*Ephesians 6:4, 10-18 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness: And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all taking, the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with*

*all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

If you have a child, they will be reared somehow, someway. The desire we should have is that we rear spiritual children who have a real hearts desire to love and serve the Lord. There is a difference. By way of review from our last message, we saw that not only does God tell us that we can rear spiritual children. **He expects us to. Then the question is why are we failing so miserably?** The children are not growing up to love and serve the Lord.

**Psalm 127:3 *Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*** Children are a gift from God for safekeeping. That is what this word heritage is about. I said last time it is not my purpose to criticize anyone. God knows my heart. I want to help. All I can tell you is what the Bible teaches. The Bible says, <sup>a</sup>God has given us children for an heritage, safekeeping for Him.<sup>o</sup>

We also saw last time that God has given the responsibility to fathers. **Ephesians 6:4 *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.***

Proverbs is a book about a father instructing his son in loving and living for God. One of the purposes of Proverbs is to tell us how to rear spiritual children. Last time we talked about **Proverbs 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old (leaves the house) he will not depart.*** I have heard many interpretations of this verse and unfortunately most of those interpretations try to explain away the teaching of the verse. I believe this is a real spiritual problem for many Christians today. I want you to notice the phrase in the verse <sup>a</sup>in the way<sup>o</sup>. The failure in our contemporary society to see real spiritual truth is clouded by what the devil wants to do in our life. Proverbs 14:12 watch very closely the phrase in this verse. ***There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.*** Folks, by our sin nature we desire to **go our own way**. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us ***the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*** Our old nature is a clone of Satan's nature. **Proverbs 14:14 *the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.*** There are many passages of Scripture that tell us we desire to go **our own way**. Judges 17:6, Psalm 81:12, Proverbs 3:5,7, 12:15, 23:4, 28:26, Isaiah 5:21, Romans 12:16, I Corinthians 13:5, Philipians 2:21, II Timothy 3:2, Jude 16, etc.

Folks, that is our problem and our children's problem. We desire to go our own way, not God's way. I am convinced that many Christians are failing miserably in their relationship with God because they do not understand this principle, therefore, they try to explain away Proverbs 22:6 because they want to live their own way. When our children are not trained to understand their old nature and how to have a relationship with God then we have the miserable results we have today. Most of our churches are filled with activity orientation rather than dealing with the issue of our sin nature and then having our families understand what it truly means to have a relationship with God. Our children must be trained to understand what renewing the mind is about (Romans 12:1-2).

The book of James explains where we are and we are blinded spiritually by our lusts. In essence the desire to have life our own way. James 4:1-4 *From whence come wars and fightings among you?*

*Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not: ye kill and desire to have and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

This desire to have and go our own way comes from our own lust. **James 1:14** *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.* Our old nature, the clone of Satan that dwells in us, desires to have its own way. Do you realize the Bible tells us that each of us have our own special lusts? They may be a little different from the next guy but they are all rooted in going our own way. The Bible calls them the **desires of the mind** in Ephesians 2:3. They are created by the **way we think**. Folks, all of us are born with certain natural desires like food, water, air etc. Most of the rest of the things we desire are learned from our surroundings. They have been nurtured, taught from the earliest stages of our life. We learn from our family, culture, and peers to desire certain things as we grow older. Example: a baby comes out of the womb hungry, but he doesn't come out of the womb for an innate desire for rock music! Folks, that is the reason Ephesians 6:4 tells us to bring our children up in the **nurture and admonition of the Lord**. We will nurture God's way or we will nurture them to desire to have their own way. This is the real problem today. Many people try to explain away Proverbs 22:6 because they do not truly understand their own relationship to God and therefore cannot convey the teaching of the verse to their children. Remember Proverbs 22:6 tells us to **Train up a child in the way he should go**. What way is that? God's way is the aspect of the Christian understanding his old nature wants to go his own way not God's way. Folks, you and I can try to make the old nature religious, and put a pretty face on it but it does not work. This must be done God's way and that is what Proverbs 22:6 is about. It is about training the child not to go his own way but to truly understand he has to be trained in having a real spiritual relationship with God. Much of what is going on today in the church is deceptive because many Christians are deceived about their relationship to God. Therefore, they cannot rear and train their children for God because they have never learned how not to go **their own way**. Unfortunately, many pastors are in this category as well and they are leading their people in this. When their children do not grow up to serve God, they are perplexed and want to explain away Proverbs 22:6 because it is not the experience of their life. Rightfully so, because they are going their own way. **Galatians 6:7** ***Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.***<sup>o</sup> This verse is written to Christians. So, it is possible for folks to be deceived about their spiritual relationship with God. Why, because they want to go their own way. They are following their old nature. Our old nature is wicked and vile. We cannot trust it and we can never let our guard down. We are told in the Bible to mortify the flesh and we have to train our children to spiritually do so.

So, dad must have a real spiritual relationship with God. How does he have it? The old nature wants to go his own way. The old nature is very powerful in our life. The book of James again explains this. Satan's sin was one of pride and independence from God. Our old nature wants us to be independent of God. Keep in mind that most Christians would be in this category. Therefore, surely our children will be as well if we do not change that. James 4:6-10 "But he giveth more grace, Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud but giveth more grace to the humble. Submit yourselves

therefore to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners: and purify your hearts ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

Folks, the first place to start in having a relationship with God is to understand the place of usefulness starts with repentance. The place of usefulness is humility. The old nature is one of pride, rebellion, and independence. The devil's goal is to break your fellowship with God and render you useless for service to your redeemer, Jesus Christ. To have a relationship with God means we humble ourselves before Him. We come to the place of submitting our pride, our arrogance, our rebellion, and our self-will to Him. True humility means to be willing to repent and forsake our sins and put ourselves under the hand of our Lord. Most Christians are seeking to live the Christian life in self-effort. Therefore we fail, because we do not understand the place of humility and utter dependence upon God. Then and only then will we have a true relationship with Him. Then and only then will we start to understand what Proverbs 22:6 is about. Someone says, "Pastor Coomer, I know a family that had one child that lived for God and one child that did not. How do you explain that?" I have seen this just recently in a family. Three of the children are not living for God and one is. I have talked to the parents and the children. The parents did not have a clue of what it meant to have a spiritual relationship. The child that did live for God had some caring teachers and adults who helped him to learn what it meant to have a spiritual relationship with God. The parents had failed and they still did not realize it. They still talked about how they had done all they could do. In their pride and arrogance they were going on their own way. This is a family that did not have a clue about what it meant to have a real relationship with God and were leaders in their church. Their decision making process was flawed by their desire to go their own way. Three of the children learned that nurturing from their parents who were leaders in their local church. This is the sad state of affairs today in many churches.

Many churches today will tell the Christian they must deal with sin in their life to have fellowship with God and end it there. This is true, but it is not the end in itself. We must certainly ask God to show us any sin in our life that stands between Him and us. We must do this every day. I do this every morning when I start my day. I ask God to show me if there is any sin that stands between Him and me. We then must confess and repent from that sin with the intention of forsaking the sin. Then we have fellowship. Now we are on speaking terms with God.

Let me see if I can get this across. In the book of Ephesians the Apostle Paul explains that the relationship between Christ and the church is like the marriage of a husband and a wife. In fact the Bible says, that the church is the bride of Christ. When we get saved we become part of the church or the bride of Christ. Ephesians 5 explains the intimacy of that relationship. Watch closely, I just explained how to get on speaking terms with God. My relationship with my wife would be pretty miserable if all we were ever on was just speaking terms. There is a whole lot more to having a relationship than just being on speaking terms. Listen to me carefully, my relationship with God must be a passionate relationship! I need to seek after God. "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you." I need to love the Lord. I must passionately seek after Him. It is more than just being on

speaking terms. Then and only then will he reveal himself to me. We must have a dependent personal relationship with our Lord. This is a true passionate love relationship. It is my responsibility to develop in my wife and children a passionate desire for the Lord. It is my responsibility as your pastor to develop in you a passionate desire for the Lord.

Folks, knowing God requires two things: First of all, knowing God requires that we have a desire for God. Secondly, knowing God requires that we seek Him. Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Let me end this message by saying what is happening today is that many Christians are living for their own way, their own lusts. Therefore, they are teaching their children to live for their own way or lusts. What must happen is that we train our children to go God’s way not their own way. This starts with learning how to deal with our own lusts, dealing with our own way, and then training our children not to go their own way, but as Proverbs 22: 6 says “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old (leaves the house) he will not depart.” I believe God and what he says. That is God’s promise. Remember I have to be in the position as a father to train my children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I cannot even begin to do that unless I have a real spiritual relationship with God.

In the next message we will see what the scripture says about conveying that relationship to our children. That is what Proverbs 22:6 is about. We must train our children to have a real, dependent, spiritual, passionate relationship with their Lord. In learning how to convey that relationship we will learn more about developing our own intimate, personal, dependent, passionate relationship with our Lord.