

# Training Children in Trying Times

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Date: 03 January 2019

[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles if you would and turn with me to the book of Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 4 if you would. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 4. We're talking about training children in trying times and I want to give you five things you can write down somewhere if you would like.

That I think would be a blessing to us. The Bible says in Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 4. You fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I think one of the most exciting days of my life was the day I became a dad. You know, it was different days back when I had children and when you have children, we weren't allowed to be in the room.

I used to hide in the bathroom when the nurses came in so I could sneak and get around all the rules. I broke every rule I could and it caused my children to be very weak and sickly and die. But then they changed all the rules and let y'all stay in there anyway.

So I guess they figured out it wasn't that bad a deal. But it's a lot of responsibility in being a parent. And the Bible says a whole lot about us raising our children. And I think one of the thrilling things in my life is also getting to be a granddad.

[ 1 : 07 ] And I want to see kids turn out right. So look at this verse 4 if you would. Fathers provoke not your children to wrath. Pretty easy to mess up our kids.

How many people have daddy issues? Daddy issues. And we grew up with daddy issues. But I ought not do that. I ought to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I want to try to talk to you about that in just a second. Colossians chapter 3 and verse 21. The Bible says, Fathers provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged. That's a parallel passage to that.

Fathers provoke not your children to anger lest they be discouraged. Father in heaven, I pray tonight that you would work in our lives. There are a lot of moms and dads in this room. A lot of people in this room that are still raising children.

And in those very important years. There are a lot of us that are older now. And we have been through the child rearing. And we can still influence our own children and how they raise kids.

[ 2 : 07 ] And we can still be fountains of wisdom to young people if we share Bible truth with them. So I believe, God, these verses can be used in every one of our lives. And I pray, God, that you'd help us tonight to get a hold of that.

And I will give you praise, honor, and glory. In Jesus' name, amen. I want you to look at Ecclesiastes chapter 8 and verse 11. You ought to look up these verses. I'm going to explain that a little bit to you on Sunday morning.

But you really ought to always have your Bible. You really ought to look up the verses. You really ought to know if what I'm saying is Bible. What I'm saying is true. In the day and time that we live, right now, 2019, we live in a day and time when there seems to be very little consequence to doing wrong.

Back in my day and time, being raised in the days of yore, the days of old, and the days of those other kinds of dads, they had a philosophy. You do wrong, I'll knock you on your rear end right here.

I have more than one time said something I shouldn't have said and found myself seeing stars laying down on the ground. And then I got up more than one time with my fist doubled like I wanted to fight.

[ 3 : 12 ] And my dad simply said, you really want more? And I said, no, sir. I'd just like to stop it right there. They used to believe in spankings, better known as beatings.

And they bragged about using razor straps. You don't even know what that is because you just throw away every razor. Back in the old day, the barber had this big old long belt that you go in and shave your neck.

He slashed that thing up and down. And lots of dads used to have those in their houses. Now, we raise kids today. Here's a Bible truth for you in Ecclesiastes 8, verse 11.

We're going to need to learn to do a little discipline. You don't need to use a razor strap on them. They don't need to see stars and look up from heaven, look up from the ground to the heavens because you just knocked them there. But there is no reset button.

You know, when I was a kid, when the first computer game came out, it was like move a little dash up and down, try to knock a little dot back over to the other side. Now you're killing people and racing cars and you die and get another life.

[ 4 : 13 ] And I mean, a whole lot, I don't even understand that stuff, to be blunt honest with you. So, look at what the Bible says in Ecclesiastes 8, 11. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

I'm not even going to preach about that. That's just extra tonight. But you ought to put a circle around that. Every one of your parents need to learn that verse. The wise man said if they don't get a spanking pretty quick after they did it, it won't do much good.

I was not very good at raising pets. When I came in and found a dog had messed in the house and it had been three hours since he did it, I was young and stupid.

I walked him over, stuck his nose in it, slapped his rear end and said, don't do that again. Somebody told me, said, you think he remembers three hours ago? He doesn't remember three minutes ago. Well, your kids don't either.

See, you don't deal with it. You let it continue to build up and the Bible says pretty clearly there. You need to learn and I need to learn Bible think and not American think.

[ 5 : 22 ] The Bible says in Proverbs 23, 7, as a man thinks in his heart, that's the way he's going to act. As a man thinks in his heart, that's what he's going to do. So I'd like to give you five Bible truths that I challenge you to study and decide if they're right.

And if they are, let's take them home and live them. Number one, your children are a gift from God. They belong to him. Number one, our children are not ours. They belong to him.

They're a gift from God. The Bible says in Psalm 127, low children are in heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his reward. There is a God and he cares.

There is a God and he's at work in our lives. Your children are only on loan to you. When you're young, you're like, I wish we could stop this loan payment saying I need a break from these kids because it seems like it takes forever.

But it'll be overnight. You'll realize all your kids are grown and gone. So you have some responsibilities. responsibilities. God loans you those kids. God put them in your home.

[ 6 : 23 ] God wants you to raise them for him. So they need to be surrounded in a biblical environment. If they're gods, they ought to be in a biblical environment. They ought to be raised with biblical principles.

You ought to have some family devotions. You are the pastor of your home. You ought to be. You know, to be honest with you, I jealously protect preaching time.

I believe that if we came to church here and we had singing all night long, that'd be nice. But it ain't what the Bible has in mind. I believe if we came in here and everybody wanted to give a word of testimony and the time ran out and we had to leave, that'd be nice.

But that's not really what God wants. He wants instruction from his book to his people. And as a dad, your job is to do that. They're not your kids.

They're his kids. They're to be raised by his principles. And in the Old Testament, they had an understanding of that. Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 6. I know you know this, but look it up and mark it down.

[ 7 : 22 ] And remember what Moses told parents to do back then. Deuteronomy 6, 6. And these words, that's these right here. And these words which I command thee shall be in thy heart.

They need to be in my heart first. I don't teach my children what I don't know. I don't teach my children what I don't believe. I don't teach my children what I don't learn. They're in my heart first.

Verse 7. Then I teach them diligently unto my children. You should underline in your Bible, I teach them diligently. And we could stop right there and spend a long time, I teach them diligently.

I heard a comment made within the last 48 hours about I wouldn't put my kid in that school because they don't teach well. And I thought to myself, I wonder if God ought to put a kid in your family because do you teach well?

Teach them diligently. I ought to sit down and say, look, I'm the pastor of this home. I am responsible for the understanding of this home.

[ 8 : 22 ] I am responsible for how much Bible they know. I'm responsible for how God works in their hearts. He gave me these kids. He made me the parent in this family. I am, in verse 7, to talk about them when we're sitting in the house.

I'm to talk about these scriptures when we're walking by the way. I'm to talk about them when we lay down and we rise up. I'm supposed to bind them on my hand and put them in front of my eyes and write them on the doors of my house.

I said, you know God wants you to keep the Word of God in front of your children. He gives you all the time. There's only one thing that changes people.

It's the Word of God in their heart. I like a little triangle that says, be, do, serve, train. And the B level is the most important level because it's a level about who I am.

It's my identity in Christ. But I won't know that if I don't get enough Bible in. And you know what? If you pump Bible into a kid, it's going to help you wash out rebellion. It's going to help you wash out sin.

[ 9 : 21 ] It's the washing of the water of the Word. It'll do a work. And you as a dad and you as a mom ought to say, we're going to have some Bible to teach God's children that he put on loan into my house.

If you believe that, say amen. Number two, I need to be an example to my children. I need to live what I'm teaching. I need to be an example to my children. You know, they're not going to do what you say as much as they're going to do what you do.

They quickly learn. He says that, but he does this. Kids are really smart to figure that out. When I started training young preachers in Adikipa, I used to go into every service wearing my coat and have my tie all the way up.

And then as I got ready to preach, I would take my coat off and I would toss it back onto a bench behind me in the choir. I would roll my sleeves up, loosen my tie, and I started letting the young guys preach. And it got to be funny.

When they walked up to the pulpit, I never taught. I never one time in a class when I said, let me teach you how to preach. I never talked about taking off your coat. They all took off their coat. They all threw it on the bench.

[ 10 : 23 ] They all rolled their sleeves up. They all let down. I said, stop doing that. Stop doing it. Why do you imitate every bad habit I have? Why do you do all the bad stuff I do? That's what kids do.

Say amen. Look at what the Bible says, if you would, in Genesis chapter 18 and verse 19. God's talking about Abraham and he says, I know him. I love that.

You could stop right there, couldn't you? I know him. You know God knows you. God knows you. He knows you. He saved you. But he also knows your character. And I wonder if the God of heaven would look down and say, I know him and I know he will command his children and his household after him.

There's so many beautiful things in that passage. Number one, I know him. That's what God said. Number two, he will command his children. Can we be honest? In today's society, most often in non-Christian homes at least, children do the commanding.

And where children don't command, mama commands. And mister, you don't even know what it's like to be a real man. But in the Bible days, the man of God walked in and said, God put me in charge.

[ 11 : 28 ] I am responsible here. And God said, I know him. I know he'll command. I know he'll command. I know he'll command his household. That means wife and kids line up. My favorite part of the verse is after him.

You're going to circle around that. After him. Do what I do. I think people are very embarrassed about what Paul said in the New Testament. Paul said, follow me. The word means imitate me.

The word means mimic me. Everybody always said, no, no. He said, follow me as I follow Christ. I said, you haven't read your Bible much. He said that once. He said, follow me more than once. He just left out to follow Christ. He just left that out because he was like, you just do what I do.

In fact, it's in Philippians chapter three. He said, look around church, find out other people are doing like I do and mark them and follow them too. In other words, I ought to be what I want my kids to be.

I ought to be what I want my kids to be. He knew that he would command his children after him. He knew that he would keep the way of the Lord and he would do right to justice and judgment. Our children need to know that loving Jesus is our first priority.

[ 12 : 31 ] In Matthew chapter six and verse 33, the Bible says, seek ye first the kingdom of God. Verse 32, it says that all those things that everybody looks after, God's going to provide them for us. In other words, my goal ought to be I need God.

Can I just tell you, I want you to look at Matthew 6, 32 and 33. You let money keep you away from doing the things of God. Business becomes more important than Bible reading. Business becomes more important than Bible principles.

Business becomes more important than serving God. In Matthew 6, 32, he said, you ought to open your Bible and underline this. For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. Basically, in Tennessee Hillbilly said, all the pagans want all the same stuff you want.

All the lost people want all the same things you want. And by the way, all through Matthew chapter six from verse 24 down to 32, he's saying, I don't want you to worry about that stuff.

They can worry about that. You don't have to worry about that. You're mine. I'll take care of you. And in verse 32, he said, lost people want all this stuff. And then he said, and I know you need all this stuff. Look at verse 32.

[ 13 : 34 ] Matthew 6, 32. He knows you have need of all these things. The God of heaven's like, hey, lost people are seeking this. I know you need this, but I don't want you seeking that. Matthew 6, 33, he said, seek ye first me, God, my kingdom, the word of God.

You ought to wake up in the morning and say, money's not what's on my agenda today. Fund's not what's on my agenda today. Popularity's not what's on my agenda today. Seeking God is. And then God will add all these things to us.

They ought to see us doing that. They ought to see. Before I leave. Mom and dad, your kids play you. They play you.

Do you understand that? They real quick, long about two, figure out how to play you. And they look at you and say, they think I'm dumb, but they are really dumb. Watch this.

Daddy says no. Mama will say yes. Mama says no. Daddy will say yes. I got kids over here. I just saw some kids shaking their heads. I saw some of your children going, what is that about?

[ 14 : 41 ] What is that about? They're being honest. All the parents over are like, I ain't never heard nothing like that in my life. The kids over are like, we know. Don't tell them. They're really dumb. Don't let that happen.

Get along with God. Find out what's right. Be an example to your kids. Third thing. If we're going to raise kids in these trying times that we live in, when the whole world is going to hell in a hat basket, things aren't right.

Here's what we need. A right relationship with our children. A right relationship with our children. In the Ephesian verse and the Colossians verse that you read at the very beginning, he said, don't provoke them to anger.

He said, don't mess with your kids. You've got to have a right relationship with them. You know what the right relationship is? Love. Love has more power.

Love has more power. I want to read a Bible verse to you if I can. I want to read to you. I want to read to you 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 14. The love of Christ constrains us because we thus judge, and if one died for all, then we're all dead.

[ 15 : 51 ] The love of Christ forces us. Did you know that Jesus does kind of force us to do good? But he does it by loving us. He does it by loving us.

It's like I can't not do right. The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 and verse 20, it said, where sin did abound, grace did much more abound. And then in Romans chapter 6 and verse 1, it says, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

I would never take advantage of his love. I want to do right because he loves me. It's hard to sin against his love. It's hard to sin against his love. I need to say before I leave this point right here that love is not giving them what they want.

And you know that about everything but discipline. You know, you don't really let them decide whether or not they're going to get those shots. You don't really let them decide whether or not they're going to take that medicine.

But you sometimes let them decide whether or not they ought to go to church. I don't even understand that. If I had to pick between shots and church, I'd pick church. I'd rather keep them out of hell than keep them out of measles.

[ 16 : 58 ] Just being honest with you. I'd rather keep them out of hell than to keep them out of a lot of other junk. I'd rather have my kid die young and go to heaven than die old and go to hell. May not make a lick of sense to you, but love doesn't mean you let people do what they want to do.

Love means you teach people to do what they ought to do, what the Word of God says. But it's love. It's love. Love requires time. Love requires time.

It requires quality time. It requires sitting down and maybe having family devotions and prayer. It requires listening to your child. It requires praying for your child and committing to the Lord.

It requires time to love them. You know, on a regular basis, I'll make a comment about I didn't grow up in an environment of love and almost everybody I ever talked to says something very similar.

I hope we change that. I hope our kids can know when my parents loved me, my parents cared about me, my parents opened up their Bibles and taught me. In fact, it's most of the time when we discipline our kids, it's only because they embarrassed us or aggravated us.

[ 18 : 02 ] It's not because of what it was right or wrong. I ought to be an example and I ought to have the right relationship. Fourth thing, I ought to train my children right. Proverbs chapter 22 and verse 6.

What a great verse. The Bible says, Train up a child in the way he should go. When he's old, he'll not depart from it. Training up your child literally means dedicating your child. I love this.

I just looked up the Hebrew word for training in the old Hebrew dictionary, you know? And it means to dedicate your child. It's a commitment to God to prepare and raise up your child for him.

Train up a child in the way he should go. I ought to be saying, I want to do what God wants me to do with my kids. The word train here is often used to refer to rubbing the palate of a newborn child with date, juice or chewed dates.

It was like, I'm going to give him a desire to taste certain things. I'm going to rub it in his mouth so when he gets old enough, you'll say, I like that. I remember that taste. That was put into my mouth.

[ 19 : 05 ] That's what the idea of training up is. The idea of training up is sit down and listen. I'm going to make you learn how sweet Jesus is. I'm going to make you learn how wonderful the Bible is.

I'm going to sit you down and rub the scripture in your mouth and in your ears till you think, boy, this is sweet stuff. It's to give them a taste for the things of God. It's to give them experience in the things of God.

We want them to get used to serving God, to enjoy serving God. What an awesome responsibility that I have to teach my kids right. I have the responsibility to teach my children correctly.

So what are some things the Bible says? Look at Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 29. A failure of mine, but look at Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 29, if you would. We're to speak edifying words.

We're to speak edifying words. If I'm going to train up my child, if I'm going to train them correctly, I want to get them hungry for the things of God. But I need to use edifying words.

[ 20 : 07 ] Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 29, the Bible says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. Would you underline corrupt communication? And you know what we tend to make that to be?

We tend to make that cussing. But really it's words that tear down. You see, the corrupt is corrupting. It's words that tear down. Words that destroy. They ought not come out.

But the opposite ought to come out. Words that are good to the use of edifying. Not words that tear down, but words that build up. Not words that make angry, but words that give joy and love and peace.

I can't wait until Sunday. But in Nehemiah chapter 8, they get through reading the Bible and preaching. And when they get to the end of that whole thing about hearing the Bible, they're sad and upset.

And Nehemiah and Ezra stand out and they say, and the Levite says, this day belongs to the Lord. You're not allowed to be sad. It's a holy day. Get happy in Jesus. They said, be happy.

[ 21 : 03 ] And we're going to have a big party now. And we're going to give out gifts. In other words, make the word of God something sweet. Make it sweet. It says ministering words that edify.

And then look at the next word. If you don't make it, it's not clear. Look at it. Words that minister grace. Words that minister grace. Words that put sweetness in the story.

Parents that react to their children out of anger say things that wound their souls. We wound them to the deepest part by the names we call them, the things we say.

Words wound far deeper than sticks. You want to talk about real child abuse? It isn't a whipping won't hurt near as bad as some insults. We should be providing spiritual support, emotional support, intellectual support, and social support.

We warn our children of the consequences of sin and making wrong choices. And we train them up in the way they should go. You know what the way they should go is? It's God's way. The way you should go is God's way.

[ 22 : 05 ] The sin way is your way. Our kid ought to learn how to say, he ought to learn the word no. Amen. You see, when you say, when I get to do whatever I want to do, which, man, you don't discipline your children and you don't say no to them.

And you think you're doing them a favor, you're cursing your kid. God's way is the way of salvation. God's way is the way to a purposeful life.

God's way is to guide your children to fulfill the very purpose God has for them. You know, when our kids are born, every one of us ought to look and say, because of the job I have and the people I get to work with, I get to look at young people all the time and say, boy, God's got a plan for your life.

I'm going to help you reach that plan. I'm going to work with you. I'm going to help you in any way I can because I know you're special. I know you're called. I know there's something special for you. If I had to say that to kids that aren't mine, what in the world ought a daddy be saying to his?

What, every one of us ought to sit down with our kids and say, boy, God gave you to us and God wants to do great things with your life and I want to put you in the way of doing something for God.

[ 23 : 12 ] Last thing I want to show you. Your children are God's weapons in your hands. Your children are God's weapons in your hands. Look if you would in Psalm 127.4.

Psalm 127.4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. What a verse. Your children are like arrows.

Arrows, that's like saying nine millimeter rounds. That's like saying 44 magnum cartridges. It's like when God gave me a kid, he gave me a long distance weapon with a lot of power that can knock the devil down.

That's what it's saying. Your children are like weapons against the enemy. Weapons, arrows in the hands of a mighty man. You're a mighty man. God saved you and God called you and God dealt with you and God put you in the ministry.

You're a deacon. You're a Sunday school teacher. You're a man of God and God gave you those kids and those kids are for you to say, man, go do something for God. I spent my life preparing you. Go do something for God.

[ 24 : 20 ] Verse five says, happy is the man that has his quiver full of them. No wonder he's happy. It's weapons. It's weapons. It's what you fight with.

Training your children is the way to glorify God. Training your children is the way to raise your children to make a difference in a world. We complain about the world. You gripe about the president.

You gripe about the Congress. You gripe about the markets. You gripe about morality and God's over here saying, oh, I gave you some weapons. How are you going to use them? I gave you some weapons. Train them.

You can't make a big difference, but you can make a difference of a big difference in the kids' lives I gave you. I wanted and I want my kids to serve God. Arrows, weapons to influence the world for the gospel.

Arrows are long-distance weapons. Can you imagine how strong an arrow was when the main way you fought was with a sword or a knife or a rock or a stick?

[ 25 : 17 ] And you could take an arrow and shoot and go a few hundred feet and kill somebody long distance? Can you see that? God gave you arrows. Arrows to make a difference everywhere.

Arrows you could send flying into space to go do something for God. So we spend years training our kids to launch them into the world to share our faith. What a privilege I have of being a parent.

It's a testy time to be alive. There's a lot of junk goes on. It's not really that different, by the way. Back in 1975 when Chris was going to be born, I can remember people saying to me, how could you bring a child into this world that is so violently wicked, so much violence, so much terrible things.

And I was like, oh, don't worry about it. God's going to take care of me and mine. We're going to do something for Jesus with our lives. But everybody was terrified about it. Now people are like, boy, it's a really bad time. I'm like, no it's not. God's given you weapons.

Let's use them. So daddy be an example. So daddy set them down and rubbed the scriptures in their mouth and rubbed the scriptures in their ear and teach them how to love Jesus and teach them how to serve him and realize they don't belong to you.

[ 26 : 28 ] God gave you children. Let's use them. For his honor and his glory. I want to make a difference. It won't be long until I lay down somewhere and don't get back up again. But if I can raise some kids and train some kids, I can make a difference that will live long after me.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.