

## Children and Church

- I. Children are the “...heritage of the Lord...” (**PSA 127:3**) and are to be raised by parents in trust for God Who desires a godly seed. **MAL 2:15; PSA 144:11-12.**
- A. Children are to be trained up in the way that they **SHOULD** go. **PRO 22:6.**
- B. The way that children should go is obviously established by God. **EPH 6:4.**
1. nurture: Breeding, upbringing, training, education (received or possessed by one). b. Moral training or discipline.
  2. admonish: To put (a person) in mind of duties; to counsel against wrong practices; to give authoritative or warning advice; to exhort, to warn.
- C. The ultimate goal of child-training is not to prepare them for a career or marriage but for an encounter with God through Jesus Christ, which will inevitably happen. **PHIL 2:9-11.**
1. Children need to be correctly taught of God’s existence and attributes for they will not learn properly by themselves. Nature and experience are corrupt books.
  2. The fear of the LORD dare not be according to the precepts of men. **ISA 29:13-14 ct/w PSA 119:128.**
  3. The LORD is “God of truth” (**DEU 32:4**), known through Jesus Christ (**1JO 5:20**) Who is the truth (**JOH 14:6**) and Who planted the gospel church in this world to uphold the truth (**1TI 3:15**) that men may properly develop conformity to Himself. **EPH 4:15-16.**
  4. The local church is the governmental system of God for this world and when it is functioning according to Scripture, it is a civics lesson from heaven, for heaven. It represents authority, law, order, community, judgment, punishment, restoration, etc. in the purest form this side of eternal glory.
  5. To assume that children can be properly acquainted with God through Jesus Christ without His church is to assume what Scripture denies. It is to assume a disconnect between the Head and the body. **EPH 1:22-23.**
  6. Do not underestimate the importance of prioritizing church for your sakes and for your children’s sakes. **MAT 6:33.**
    - a. If you believe the Scripture teaches that men should believe, repent and be baptized into the church of Jesus Christ in this world according to the order of **ACT 2:38-47** and submit themselves to King Jesus’s order therein, then you had better be sure that the children are getting the right signals from you as parents as to the importance of church assembly and attendant duties.
    - b. Since children are to be brought up in the nurture and *admonition* (being put in mind of duty) of the Lord (**EPH 6:4**) which includes church assembly for worship, at what point is a delinquent parent flirting with a breach of apostolic order (**2TH 3:6**) and eventual reaping of unhappy consequences?
    - c. If you are reluctant to have your children in church because you think the church or its minister is not conforming to Scripture, say something to them for the benefit of everyone (**LUK 22:32**)! Share your light: don’t hide it under a bushel. **MAT 5:15.**
    - d. If a parent would not even want his/her child to become a member of a particular church, the parent shouldn’t be a member there either.
- II. **ACT 2:38-39** speaks of a gift of the Holy Ghost received by penitent baptism.

- A. The gift in context is being joined to the church indwelt by the Holy Ghost.
- B. Believers thus become part of the house of God, the house where He dwells. This was a dramatic upgrade from the O.T. system where the worshippers could only come to the house of God where the Levitical priests alone enjoyed the inner value of the place where God dwelt. **NUM 18:1-4.**
- C. This promise accrues to believers *and their children*, "...even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (v. 39).
  - 1. This qualified promise therefore depends upon God's election of sinners into Christ Who *called them unto eternal glory*. **ROM 8:28-30 c/w 1PE 5:10.**
  - 2. The gospel call, by contrast, is universal. **ACT 17:30.**
  - 3. The election of grace does not run in the blood (**ROM 9:11-16**) but the promise of the Spirit/Holy Ghost does flow in the direction of faith: the church of Jesus Christ grows according to the addition of *such as should be saved* (**ACT 2:47**), i.e., "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (**MAR 16:16**), saved unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ unto God. **1JO 1:3-4.**
  - 4. The Spirit operates *invisibly and freely* in the work of grace *inwardly* (**JOH 3:5-8**) but *visibly and orderly* in the call of the gospel *outwardly*, reserving His gift of church membership to believers only.
  - 5. Parents therefore should adhere to their instruction to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (**EPH 6:4**), living a good example and treating them all justly, and let the Spirit know His own. **2TI 2:19.**
    - a. We can't perfectly discern wheat and tares (**MAT 13:29**) but God does.
    - b. First impressions may not be the whole story. **MAT 21:28-30.**
    - c. Kingdom living is much a matter of doing what God tells us to do and leaving the results up to Him.

### III. Children from infancy should be familiarized with church assembly and order to prepare them for God's service in His kingdom.

- A. Inordinate concern about the challenges for the little ones cost Israel dearly at Canaan's border and gospel duty is not grievous. **NUM 14:31-32 c/w 1JO 5:3.**
  - 1. There will always be obstacles and inconveniences to any worthwhile enterprise. The value of the enterprise is largely determined by the desire, effort and dedication one has for it. **MAT 13:44-46.**
  - 2. Our church service takes less than two hours out of a 168 hour week, plus driving time and expense. How many people would think nothing of dedicating equal time and effort every week to get their family to King's Island?
  - 3. Prioritize what God prioritizes and reap His blessing, or... **1SAM 2:30.**
- B. Israel's great assemblies were to include the children. **DEU 31:12; JOEL 2:15-16; EZR 10:1.**
- C. N.T. ministers are to instruct the aged (**TIT 2:1-3**), the younger (**TIT 2:6; 1PE 5:5**) and little children. **1JO 2:13.**
- D. Parents should acquaint their children with the Scriptures and encourage their reading of them to wise them up unto salvation. **DEU 6:6-9, 21 c/w 2TI 3:15; 1:5.**
- E. Home life should be consistent with church assembly.
  - 1. Holiness reserved only for the assembly is the sacrifice of fools. **ECC 5:1.**
  - 2. Children will spot hypocrisy which opens the door to blaspheme God. **ROM 2:23-24.**
  - 3. Children are precious gifts from God not to be offended. **MAT 18:6.**