

3. Be a living example of Christ to your children.

It does not do your child any good to instruct him in the way of the Lord if you yourself do not walk what you talk. Therefore, you must always be examining yourself and your witness to your children. In *Proverbs 20:7* the Bible says, “*The righteous man leads a blameless life: blessed (happy) are his children after him.*” The main reason for the blessed state of this man's children is that they have someone to look up to and use as an example to model their own behavior. We as parents must strive to be that example to our children even as Christ is our example.

4. Discipline our children in the same way the Lord disciplines us.

The book of Proverbs teaches us many practical aspects concerning the discipline we are to provide for our children. Some of the scriptures that relate to this subject are as follows:

*The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul. Proverbs 29:15 & 17*

*He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly. Proverbs 13:24*

Other references: *Proverbs 19:18; 22:15*

As you can see by chastening or disciplining your child you are showing your love for them. This brings us to the motivation for discipline. Any discipline you give to your child should be done for their profit and not as a release for your own anger and/or frustration. Remember, you are to discipline your child in the same way that the Lord disciplines you. God never strikes at His children in anger and you shouldn't either. *Colossians 3:21* reads, “*Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children- do not be hard or harass them; lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated; DO NOT BREAK THEIR SPIRIT.*” (Amplified)

We as parents are not in the business of breaking our children's spirits, but instead we are to encourage their spiritual growth. Explain to them why you must discipline them, carry out that discipline, and then most importantly, LOVE THEM. If you are able to do this then you will be disciplining your children as the Lord would have you to.

As mentioned previously, these are but a few of the responsibilities that God calls us to as parents. It needs to be said that if you yourself are not a born-again Christian these responsibilities will be impossible to keep. This is why we here at Calvary Chapel decline any requests to dedicate children if the parents do not know Christ as personal Savior and are not in attendance here on a regular basis. We will dedicate your child and the parent who does in fact have a relationship with Jesus Christ, but it would be an act of hypocrisy for us to allow a parent who does not know Jesus Christ to make a vow to Him that he cannot possibly keep. We read in *Proverbs 20:25* “*It is a snare to a man to utter a vow (or consecration) rashly and not until afterward inquire (whether he can fulfill it).*” Other Scriptures relating to this point are *Numbers 30:2, Deuteronomy 23:21-23, Ecclesiastes 5:4.*

There are instances recorded for us in the Bible where individuals have made vows before the Lord and then not kept them. As a result of breaking their vows, these people were dealt with severely by God. We cannot allow people to make a vow unto the Lord if they do not have the understanding of the responsibilities that go along with making that vow. We view this as an act of protection and not as one of rejection.

Hopefully, you can now understand our viewpoint as being totally Biblical. The dedication of your family to God is something too serious to be entered into lightly. It is hoped that this paper has helped you to recognize the extent of this commitment that you will be making. If you have any questions concerning anything that has been said or not covered here, please write them down and inquire of the Pastor when you return this form at the church office.