

PARENT PAGES

A Growing Christian makes the Best Parent

Instructing and Training Children

Ephesians 6:4 gives some very specific instructions to parents. As you read it you will again see how vital it is for you as a parent to be a growing Christian.

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

The word “fathers” is loaded with spiritual meaning. It reminds us of the loving heavenly Father we have and to what lengths He went to save us for eternity. It also includes mothers and places the mother beside the father and what is said to and about fathers applies equally to mothers.

The parents represent Christ to their children. Children can only obey in the Lord when they regard their parents as placed over them in the Lord. In baptism parents acknowledge that their children belong to the Lord and are a trust from Him. And, in accordance with this, children are to look to their parents as standing in the place of Christ and to obey their parents as they were obeying Christ. The parent is the spiritual guardian of his/her children. Parents cannot delegate to another the responsibility for which God will some day call them to account.

The translation “exasperate” means to provoke to anger. Unresolved anger can lead to resentment that lasts decades, even a lifetime. Ways that parents can provoke their children to anger is inappropriate methods of discipline, angry outbursts, lack of encouragement, praise or affirmation, physical or verbal abuse, unreasonable expectations, nagging and making love contingent on meeting certain standards.

Training in the widest sense means “education,” embracing everything that is directed toward developing the mind and character. In the narrower sense it means that Christian education is best learned in the home. “Training” emphasizes the fact that children will learn from us by what they hear and see. As Robert Fulgham wrote, “Don’t worry that your children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you.”

Training and instruction mean to instill principles of life, training in good habits, cautioning and protecting against moral dangers, encouraging prayer, Bible reading, church going, taking pains to let them have good associates, and especially dealing with them prayerfully and earnestly in order that they may accept Christ as their Savior.

- Think about how you do the actions mentioned in Ephesians 6:4.
- Thank God for the ones you are performing.
- Pray for help to do an even better job.

Listed below are a few possibilities that are available for your spiritual maturing. Many of these resources are from Concordia Publishing House. (800-325-3040) Ask your pastor(s), child's principal or teacher for information on these and other materials.

Getting Ready for Next Sunday – Weekly study of upcoming Gospel lesson – (genesbrunotes.com)

Portals of Prayer (Journal)

Each devotion features a Bible reading, meditation, and prayer in an easy-to-read format. *Portals of Prayer* is great for personal devotions.

Happy Times (Journal)

If children could format a magazine, *Happy Times* would be it. Bible-based stories, colorful activity pages, and special projects are the mainstays of this monthly magazine targeted for 3- to 5-year-olds. A "Grown-ups Page" offers helpful and fun ideas for parents to encourage family time and Bible learning.

My Devotion (Journal)

Encourage 8- to 12-year-olds to build a habit of daily Bible reading at home! *My Devotions* is an excellent resource that points children to the Word through stories and situations to which they can relate. Each devotion page includes a Scripture reading, true-to-life story, and short prayer.

Blessing and Prayers for Parents (Book)

For parents of all ages with children of all ages, *Blessings and Prayers for Parents* points readers to our Heavenly Father as the only perfect parent and speaks to parents' need to hear God's specific words of forgiveness and grace.

You may also go to www.cph.org and search for "Parenting Materials" and find many other possibilities.