



“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

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**Sunday – February 7, 2021**

## **Heart to Heart...**

I want to write this article to help us understand what Proverbs 22:6 actually teaches: *“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.”* This verse is often quoted in lessons on child rearing and training. Many read this passage as a promise from God that if you teach your children about the Lord, they will be faithful to Him as an adult. What’s heart-wrenching, many have been caused pain and sorrow for their children who have left the faith as adults and some never return. It can create a false sense of guilt in the parents wondering if they trained their children in the way they should go. It also can lead some to thinking God didn’t keep His word. Let’s look a little deeper at this verse.

Proverbs is a book of wisdom to instruct. It helps the youth become wise. It helps the adult to walk righteously and make sound, wise decisions in their life; What to avoid and what to embrace. It teaches parents on how to work with their children. This Proverb begins with the words, *“Train up”* which is the Hebrew word, ‘hanak.’ This word appears only in three other places in Scripture. (Deuteronomy 20:5/I Kings 8:63/II Chronicles 7:5) The word is not always translated *“train up.”* In these verses it is translated *“dedicated.”* It means to get something started or initiate something from the beginning. The first two words of this Proverb is about starting a child off on a certain direction or path.

Then comes, *“in the way he should go.”* This is a little more difficult to translate into our English and the phrase literally translated says, ‘*in his way*’ or ‘*according to his way.*’ It is speaking of a path as a manner of life **the child** wants to follow. What does that mean? It simply means we are set on a path as children from our own desires and we seldom deviate from that path into adulthood! Our children have desires and if we allow them to set their path, train them according to their way, that’s the path they will not deviate from. If we train up our children, dedicate them to their ways, their wants, their desires, when they get older, they will not depart from those ways. It is natural for a child to follow foolishness (Proverbs 22:15). It takes

discipline to drive it from them. Children can be selfish. That's their way. You see it in regard to a toy when another child plays with it. That too is foolishness. A child wants to play soccer, baseball or any sport and has abilities. That's their way and parents join in encouraging it. Weekends are filled helping them in their way many times to the exclusion of the Lord's assembly. The desires of that child are catered toward that desire and when they get old, they won't depart from that drive within them.

This is why it is so important to see the meaning of this Proverb. Many children have left the faith, while parents are sorrowful and feel the pain. Children need to be trained in the ways of the Lord, to love Him and seek His truth and righteousness all the days of their life so that becomes their way, their desire. But if we start by training them in their way, their desires, when they age, they will not depart from their way. You see, our children make choices early on and if we allow them to be their own, their way, follow their desires, that's what they will grow up holding to. Parenting takes effort, a real sincere, godly effort to put within them to desire righteousness as their way in their heart.

***“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”*** (Ephesians 6:4) Fathers have a great responsibility and by bringing up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, you are helping your children that this will become their way! Oh, how we need to be praying for godly parents, dedicated to the Lord's will, serving Him instilling His will into the hearts of the children. Think about it!!!

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