

## OUR HOMES: GOD'S TRAINING CAMPS!

Psalm 127:1-5

INTRODUCTION: One of our God's greatest blessings of life is the gift of our children: Psalm 127:3. Our children make our lives fun. Now here is our question: "Why does our God give us the gift of children?" Here is the answer: "To love, to enjoy them and to train them to be godly: Malachi 2:15-16. God is looking for fathers and mothers to raise up the children God blesses them with to be godly. Psalm 127:3-5. An arrow is made from a crooked stick that someone worked on and straightened out that stick so it could be shot straight at the target. Children all come to us crooked and our God wants us to help straighten them out so they can live for the glory of God. As parents our homes are to be God's training camps: Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-3; Ephesians 6:4. How can we as fathers raise up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord without exasperating them?

### I. THE NEGATIVES: FATHERS, DO NOT EXASPERATE YOUR CHILDREN!

In Ephesians 6:4 God gives parents the negatives first and then He gives us the positives. To "provoke" means to rouse wrath in our children. How do we provoke our children to wrath? Here are six ways: 1.) If we are overly protective. Sometimes we must let our children learn the hard way. Sometimes we just need to back off and let our children live their lives and fight their own battles. 2.) If you are overly permissive, you will provoke your child to anger. These parents have no rules for their children. In this home the child rules the home: Ephesians 6:4. A home with no boundaries, no rules, and no training will provoke your children to anger. God has set boundary markers and we as parents must let our children know what those boundary markers are and enforce them: Proverbs 13:24. 3.) If a parent plays favorites you will provoke your children to anger. Some sticks are more bent than others and they are difficult to make an arrow of. But when we start to compare our children it will make one or all of them angry. Isaac played favorites with his two sons and so did his wife Rebecca. Isaac loved Esau and Rebecca love Jacob and they made it very obvious. That rubbed off on Jacob and he did the same thing when he had children: Genesis 29:16-18. Jacob loved Rebecca and he loved her son Joseph more than all his other sons and he bought Joseph a coat of many colors: Genesis 37:1-4. 4.) Setting unrealistic goals will also provoke your children to anger. Trying to make your child live out your dream of accomplishing what you could not do will provoke that child to wrath. Pushing your child to be perfect will move them to wrath because no one is perfect. 5.) If we totally neglect our children it will provoke them to wrath. Our children spell love as T-I-M-E. If we are always too busy to spend any quality time with our children it will move them to wrath. Neglect of children was a trap King David fell into. David a man after the Lord's own heart did not seek after the heart of his own children and it brought disastrous results. Absalom, his son tried to kill his father David. 6.) If you abuse your children you will move them to wrath. If you physically, sexually, verbally, or emotionally abuse your children you will move them to wrath. When you tell your children, they will never amount to anything, my friend that is abuse.

### II. THE POSITIVES: BRING THEM UP IN THE TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD!

Ephesians 6:4: We are to bring our children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord! We need to bring up our children in a very loving environment. Our homes should be loving

training camps for our children. We are to be making our bent children into straight arrows for our Father's glory. One of the greatest gifts a father can possibly give to his children is to make it very obvious he loves their mother! Letting your children know that you love their mother gives them security because their friend's homes are braking up all around them. Physical touch for a father to his children is so very important and if you never experienced that it can be learned. 1 Corinthians 16:14.

We need to bring up our children in a spiritually nurturing home. Ephesians 6:4: the word "training" is the cultivation of the minds and morals of our children. We are to help our children come to know God and then to grow up being more and more like God. When we have a dedication service for new parents we are really dedicating the parents to raise their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If dad and mom don't live out in their own lives what they are trying to create in their children's lives it won't work. We have opportunities to help our children before bed time to hear exciting Bible stories read by mom and dad. Having a mom or dad pray each night with the children and name them by name and exclaim your love for your children before their God. Making Bible memorization fun for your children as the whole family works on memorizing a verse will make a life time of difference.

### III. WE ARE TO BRING UP OUR CHILDREN IN A DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT!

Ephesians 6:4: When we think of discipline you are thinking there is going to be correction if our children get out of line. Proverbs 22:15. We used the Larkin rod of discipline. A Lilac bush branch which they cut off the Lilac bush themselves. Proverbs 13:24: God says if you don't discipline your children you don't love them. Children need loving discipline. Children need to know that there are boundaries and if the boundaries are not observed there will be punishment. Godly discipline needs to be done in love and it must be done consistently. We must let our children know the boundaries and the penalties for braking those boundaries.