

I. Introduction: Training Up Your Children

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Proverbs chapter 22. We will be here for the next couple of weeks. Today is our third message on what we started a couple of weeks ago: training up your children, based on Proverbs chapter 22, verse 6. We waited until we got to this particular chapter and this verse, which is probably the single greatest opening information verse in the Bible on training up your children. We have looked at it for two weeks now, and this will be the third week. Actually, this lesson today will be split into two; we will do part of it this week and the other half next week. I really want you to get the full understanding of everything.

As I told you, each week we will build on the following week. The first week we had a defining and a context for child training. Last week we talked about the baseline. We build on that. What I want to do very simply is to try to help you by laying a very concise, very easy-to-follow, and understandable plan for you, your kids, and your family. Last week we explored the idea of building a biblical baseline of biblical truth in your child's life and how vitally important that is: training them up with the understanding of their true spiritual condition. You understanding it and then helping them understand it.

The book of Romans is an incredible book. It is a book that, in time, if you are ever going to get the Bible down very well, you are going to have to really understand the book of Romans. It probably took me six or seven times to go through the book before I really got a handle on it, and every time I go through it again, I realize how much I do not know about it. But it is a great book. The book of Romans is the book where all of the doctrine, all of the things that we believe as New Testament Christians, are laid out clearly for you. Part of the problem with Romans is the style by which Paul writes it. He writes it like he is a Philadelphia lawyer laying out his case, which he is doing. He is laying out the case for New Testament Christianity. So it is an incredible book, and chapter by chapter, it deals with all the issues that we as a church need to understand.

I do not have time to get into it this morning, but the placement of the book in the New Testament is vital to understanding why it is where it is. You have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, then Romans. There is a reason for that, and it is an incredible book. In Romans chapter 5 and Romans chapter 7, it tells us, dealing with our children, about what we all know as the age of accountability. Even though the term "age of accountability" is not found in the Bible, we know that there comes a time in our children's lives as they grow up where sin, the Bible says in Romans 5:13, is not imputed to them. But then there comes a point in their life when they fall under that, and now they are sinners, and that is when they need salvation.

The point I want to make is this: even though up to the age of accountability they are in innocence, and there is no sin imputed to them, many parents do not understand that they still have an old sin nature. They just do not understand it. They still have an old sin nature that they are not yet aware of, and they do not grasp it. They do not understand it. They do not recognize

right from wrong in the sense the biblical sense lays it out. Their old nature will always prevail as a child, always will, unless it is checked, if it is kept to itself.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

In your flesh and my flesh today, you know as well as I do that is the source of all our issues with God and all of our problems. You know the difference: you come on Sunday morning and you hear me preach, and if you are saved and you are not right with God, the Holy Spirit of God will convict you. That will not happen with a child. A child is oblivious to it. That is why they can do some of the things they do that we look at and do not understand, but to them, they are oblivious to it because sin has not yet been imputed to them.

Last week I showed you and answered for you a very perplexing question that I get all the time, and I am sure you do too if you work around many people. We live in a world today that wants to get away from any personal responsibility for anything. We want to take accountability from people. When people come to churches, if a guy preaches hard messages or messages that will keep somebody accountable or make them look at their life and keep them responsible, they do not want to hear that today. We live in a world where the world itself has taken away any accountability. Sin today, we talked about this last week, sin today, in the world's standard and unfortunately in many Christian circles, what we knew 50 years ago as a blatant sin is now a disease. It is now a sickness, and you are not responsible if you get the flu. You are not responsible if you get a bad cold. So you are not responsible when sin becomes a sickness. But if sin is a sin, then you are responsible for it, and that is what we want to get rid of today.

I told you how that at a very early age, a child having experiences, a child having thoughts, is introduced to things that are not good, and maybe very bad in some scenarios. They will begin to fall under all kinds of influences as a very young child, and they have no defense for it. Just like they do not understand right from wrong because they are under the age of accountability. When these negative, bad influences, or the things that they hear, or things that are said, or things that are done, when those things come into their young lives, they do not know how to deal with it. They do not know that it is wrong. They do not understand that it is something that is going to hurt them. When it is left unchecked by their parents, when there is, as I said last week, no first line of defense, when there is no baseline of truth being infused into that young child's life, those influences in time—and each child is different, you have to understand that—but I am telling you this, those influences in time will develop into patterns of a lifestyle. Somebody will grow up 20 years old and begin to sin, and they will say, "Well, I was this way all my life. I was born this way." No, you were not. You were born in innocence, but you had an old sin nature. Things came into your world that were left unchecked by your parents, who should be the guardian of your soul. Now these things have developed to where they are at in your life, and the damage will already be done, and it will come out later when you see it, and then you are finished, you are done. It is hard to get back from that.

Most parents do not even think about that. To them, parenting starts when the first problem arises. Everything goes good, and then when you have a problem, that is when you start

parenting in that sense. Of course, that is when you deal with it. Child specialists, people who specialize in children and their life and their development and their growth, will tell us that by the time a child is three or four years old, that child has now developed his patterns and personality probably for the rest of his life. By three and four years of age, waiting until they are seven and eight to deal with the issues is way too late. In those early years, when there is nobody giving them the baseline, then they are left to their own baseline, which they do not understand, so they allow these things into their world. The parents are oblivious to it, and before they can ever see it, when it raises its ugly head, it is way too late.

The two key words, and I gave you a bunch of key words in our study, the two key words here that you want to remember are proactive and reactive. As parents, Christian parents, dealing with anything in your life, but certainly with your kid, the key word is proactive. You want to be ahead of it. You want to get out in front of the problem. Do not get caught chasing them to catch up. It will always be too late because negativity will always win. The more negativity you allow in your child's life, and the longer you allow it in, the harder the catch-up and the fix is going to be. That is also true of our lives, by the way, but we are talking about children here today. I have seen people who were grown Christians who got the wrong influence, got around the wrong people, and they were good people. There was a time they loved the Bible, they loved everything about it, and now they are so far away from God that it is unbelievable. Why? Because they allowed things to get ahead of them, and they allowed the negative influences to do what negative influences will always do: they will always win.

The Bible gives you and me as a parent the ability to see what is coming long before it gets here. We talked about that concept a couple of weeks ago when I called it the high tower concept: you being in a building, a tower of the Word of God on biblical principles. It allows you and elevates you above everything that you see life in a different dimension, and you can see through the principles of the Word of God what is coming your way long before it gets there. That is the way it should be with your children. Parents should be proactive, not reactive. Proactive means you are out in front of it. Proactive means you see it coming before it ever gets here. Reactive means you just found out about it. Now it has been going on for five or six, seven years, and you are trying to run to catch up to fix it. You do not want to catch yourself in that kind of scenario. I will help you any way that I can with that and everything that we do.

I showed you also last week that as parents, we are the first line of defense, and this is so important to understand. We are, and I used the example of basic training last week in the military, but you are fundamentally the drill instructors for your children. You train them through a discipline system, a system of structure, a system of discipline, the basic issues of life through the Word of God. That is what you do. Where a drill instructor will teach you the basic issues of life in the military, you will structure them and discipline them and teach them the basic understanding of life as a Christian. We are God's border guards, we are God's customs agents.

One of the things that discipleship does, and I never really talk about this, but it is one of the basics for it: we will have a lot of people come into church, and you do not always know where they have been and what they believe and where they are at. We have had a lot of people come in that thought they were saved, but you know as well as I do, they really were not saved. We have

people come in that are messed up on baptism. We have people come in that are messed up on spiritual gifts or something like that. If you just allow them to come into your church, and certainly they are allowed to come, but if they just walk into the mass and they become part of the group, many times they will bring those things in, and they are not saved, or they are confused on an issue, and it will cause them a problem. One of the things discipleship does is it allows you, through those basic 10 lessons, to open up the baggage that they are bringing in, look inside the luggage, allow them to keep one thing that needs to be kept, but get rid of what does not need to be kept.

We have had many, many people, and I tell you all the time, there are people who start to be disciplined who, in my mind, I do not think they are really saved. I really do not. I do not think they have ever really been saved. But I am not going to go up and say, "Hey, I do not think you are really saved." I would rather have God tell them that. What I have learned over the years is that when you get into the Word of God in Discipleship One, what is the first lesson? Salvation. What really happened the day you got saved? Almost in every case, God will reveal to that person that they are not. I am going to tell you something: in dealing with people, you are always a lot better off when God shows them what is wrong with them than you trying to show them what is wrong with them. When the Holy Spirit of God, it is a natural process, and you can just open up their baggage as they come through. You allow them, "You can keep that, oh, that is good. Yeah, you got this. Nah, this is not right. You got to learn this differently." You bring them through. That is what you do with your children. That first line of defense looks inside their baggage, the things that they are putting into their life, allowing them to keep some good things, but making them get rid of some bad things. That is the key in your Christian life as a mom and a dad with your children. You always want to know where they are at. You always want to know what influences are moving into their life. It is your responsibility to cut out the bad ones, and you do that through a first line of defense. We will talk about that more as we move through this, but it is just the way that it is.

Then I gave you a plan, a place to start last week, and I am happy to say that as of today, 19 families have begun that plan. 19 families have begun to follow what I gave you last week on really understanding how to put the whole thing together, and it is going to make an incredible difference in your life if you stay with it. You have just begun the process to lay a foundation in the life of your children to get it right where God wants it to be. Again, the key word is consistency. This is why I only asked you to do it one day a week. You would think that would not be much. I will tell you something, with some people, their self-discipline is so bad that being consistent with one day a week is going to be a challenge for them.

Probably the number one child killer in a family today will be inconsistency. The number two child killer will be procrastination: not doing what you need to do when you need to do it by putting it off. No contingency in training them at two or three years of age and bringing that up is worse than not doing anything, actually, because it teaches them inconsistency, and inconsistency comes back to no self-discipline. That is where it starts.

I told you that in this series of lessons, there is something for everybody. I would like you to take what I give you and fix yourself first. Fix what is wrong with you first. But then the Bible says in

Romans chapter 14, verse 7, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." There is somebody always watching your life at work, the people, the circle of friends that you hang around, but especially at work. People see you when they find out very quickly that you are a Christian, and then they see the inconsistencies that you have in your life. It does terrible damage to the cause of Christ. But how many of you have lived that life before them that is honoring to the Lord, and you have become like John the Baptist to the lost nation of Israel, the voice that cries in the wilderness? They are looking for help, they are struggling with things. If you do not even have any kids, if you are single, someday you will, so learn it. If you just got married, you probably have some on the way any minute, so you need to understand that. The bottom line is this: you can use it wherever you are at. God wants to be able to put you into scenarios where people need help and are hurting, that you become the right person in the right place at the right time.

I am telling you, learn the material. Learn it for here. There will be times when you will have a couple come in that are starting and struggling, and we will have to be way past this, and I cannot take eight or nine weeks and teach it again. No, I do not need to, because I have you ready to go, and I will just put them with you. Somebody is always watching our lives. You will want to let God use you. Couples in our church with good, solid families, I think it is a great blessing and a great testimony to the ministry of our church, how many of you have the ability to take other couples and really help them with your marriage, with your life, with your family. You look at the parents with kids in this church that are ministering together side by side. We will go down to Restart today, and they will be out there wrapping hot dogs with their moms and their dads. They will be in short and close. They will be out with Will on his team down there going and doing all the things that need to be done. It does not get much better than that. You look at those families, and you talk to them, you learn from them. I am always 24/7 available to you. There are several parents in this church right now that we met together, we had problems with your children, and we sat down with the whole family, and I infused myself into your family, and I put the money on the table with them, and they are doing pretty good. I check on them. I will see them going up the stairs, and I will say, "Hey, you are doing okay?" I will find out if you are not. I am here to help you. I do not want any parents to go through the agony that I have seen so many parents go through when they lose their children, and the real tragedy is there is no reason to. Many times the kids will be unteachable. I found this to be true: the kids are unteachable because the parents have been unteachable, and so the kids just pick up that trait from mom and dad.

With that in mind, let us get started today, and let us go back to our original verse, Proverbs chapter 22, verse 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Caleb, would you stand up and ask God to bless the service this morning?

"Lord, I am here with you right now, training up children. Lord, just help us wherever we are at in our lives, Lord, to just take things and apply it to our own lives, whether they are kids or not,

just help us to use that. And as he is saying, use it for the ministry, use it for your honor, Lord. And pray for the ministry of something, amen."

Amen.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

II. The Invaluable First Line of Defense

Today, as I said, I want to build on last week's message. I want you to leave here today being tied into last week, thinking and understanding one great principle and concept: the absolute invaluable concept of a first line of defense and building a baseline of truth in your family. This is going to hitchhike right on last week, and I want you to see and understand how absolutely vital it is. There will be a lot of things I say you can take with a grain of salt, a lot of things I will say to be funny just to break up the tension sometimes. But I am telling you, there are some things that I say that I want you to zero in on and dial in on. I want you to understand the absolute invaluable importance of that baseline in your family's life. You are going to see it today.

I love you, but hear me out. When you lose your child—God forbid that you ever do—but I want you to understand this concept. If you ever lose your child, you say they get 16, 17, 18, 19, and you have lost them. They are gone. They want nothing to do with the family. They want nothing to do with you. If they can, they are out of the family, and they are gone. If you lose your child at 16, 17, 18, and 19, here is the reality of that. This is what you have to see: in reality, you did not lose them at 16, 17, 18, and 19. In reality, you lost them at two, three, four, five, and six. You have to understand that. I cannot stress this point enough.

The Super Bowl is coming up in February, I think it is. We are all going to sit down, and we are all going to watch it, and we are all going to enjoy it. Some of you will not care who wins, I will not. Some of you will have your team. Woody will be brokenhearted because Denver is nothing this year, and he will be all upset about that. That is one of the good things about not caring about sports; you do not have to get bummed out if your team does not win. But I want to tell you something: whoever wins the Super Bowl did not win it in February. They won it in July and August in training camp. That is where they worked the hardest on the fundamentals. That is where they did everything they needed to do, spent the extra time, did the extra work, spent the extra hours, spent the extra routines to get to the place that in February they could win the Super Bowl. It is the same way with our children. You will win or lose the battle for them early in their life, not later in life. The baseline, the first line of defense of truth, will be the preparation for the day that is coming in each of your child's life.

III. Understanding the Evil Day

I want to talk to you today about the greatest single threat as a parent with you and your children that is coming your way, and in many cases, has already come. I want to talk to you about the evil day today. I want to talk to you about the evil day that is coming in your child's life, just like

it came in your life and my life. Unfortunately, some of your children have already blown through that barrier of the evil day.

Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived. He said in Ecclesiastes 12, verses one and two, a favorite verse of mine:

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

That is one of the most profound verses anywhere in the Bible for your children. I have always thought it was interesting that it starts out by saying, "Remember now thy Creator." Because in the public school system and in the world that we live in, probably the number one challenge that your child is going to face is simply the fact: was God the Creator? Because they are told from beginning to end that it is evolution through a process. A child today, if he does not have that first line of defense, will go off to school and get influences in his life, and he will lose the aspect that God was a Creator, and he will lose everything that goes along with it.

There is a time in your child's life when he says to the world, "I do not have any pleasure in this." The world and all of that stuff is yucky. You ask a kid that is six or seven or eight years old, "What do you think of kissing girls?" "Ugh!" Ask him when he is 14 or 15. Things change. He just did not suddenly grow lips. Nor did she. Things change. But there is a time in your child's life, and it has to be where you capitalize. It has to be where you build the first line of defense and build that baseline of truth. Because there will be a short window of time when that child will look at mom and dad and look at the world, look at mom and dad and look at the world, and want to stay close to mom and dad and forget the world. But there is a time coming when he will look at mom and dad and the world, mom and dad and the world, or he will leave mom and dad and he will take the world. The baseline, the truth, is only going to be the thing that keeps you. Before the evil day comes, while they are still tender, while they are still pliable, while they are still workable, while they are still teachable, you do not have to argue with them about truth, about the Word of God.

Come to the point in your life that you understand that you as mom and dad are the absolute fundamental, greatest single influence in your child's life. Only you can give over that influence to somebody else or something else. Verse two says, "While the sun, the light, the moon, the stars, be not darkened." All of those things are what God created. What he is saying here is the fact that there is going to come a time when your child, who understands and loves the light of God, that light will give way to the darkness, and God will no longer be to him what He once was.

In the book of Ephesians chapter six, verses 10 through 18, we all know it as the great chapter on the whole armor of God.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

I know that when we teach that, and you hear it taught all the time, it is usually taught to adults, young Christians, Christians, and I get that. There is nothing wrong with it. But I want you to see the ultimate context in verse one of chapter six.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

So fundamentally, this armor begins to be the first line of defense for your children. The promise there that he talks about, "which is the first commandment with promise," will be found in Deuteronomy 5:16 and Deuteronomy 21:18-21. That will be the promise that if you do not do what is right as a child, God will kill you. Good promise. The armor of God here is given to help you stand in the evil day. The Bible says "spiritual wickedness in high places." It says, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood." You are going to find that in Ephesians chapter six, what the real battle is with your child. The real battle with your child is not a physical battle. The real battle with your child is going to be a battle for their mind: to keep their mind close to God and not get it saturated with the things of the world. Saturated with the Word of God. You do that one way: that is the first line of defense, which we know to be the baseline. The baseline.

What a parent needs to do, as I have already talked about a little bit this week, and talked about it a couple of weeks ago, you need to get your own high tower, your own high place. If the devil is going to operate in a high place, get a higher place than his high place. That is the principles of the Word of God that will take you above everything that is up there. Verse 13 says, "having done all to stand." That is the question today for every parent. I know that whenever you preach something like this, there are a lot of good parents in our church who have done a great job with your kids. You really are, and I commend you for it. You will be the first ones, after I say what I am about to say, to come up to me and say, "Well, what am I doing wrong?" Well, you are not doing anything wrong. But it seems to be, in preaching the Word of God, the ones that do not need to get it always get it, and the ones that need to get it never get it. I am not sure why that is, but when I figure it out, you will be the first to know. I have been at it for 45 years now.

"Having done all to stand." Teaching your child to stand up to the evil day. That right there is what every parent's worst nightmare should be: that your child is going to get bulldozed over by the evil day. And brother, do they ever.

IV. The Crucial Age of Accountability

I think it is probably time right now, before we move any farther in this, that I define the evil day for you. I think you need to know what we are talking about here so you know better what you are up against. There will come a time in your child's life that they are no longer under the blood. When they are under that age of accountability, and they are in innocence, the Bible says in Romans chapter five, it says that the law is in effect now. It slays them, or Romans chapter seven, slays them now, and sin is imputed to them. The age of accountability has now come.

I want to be very honest with you, and I want you to understand the seriousness and the gravity of what I am trying to say today. In all of your child's life, the most crucial time in that child's life will be that time when they approach that age of accountability. Without a doubt. Not only is it the most crucial time in your life, let me tell you this, it is the most scary time in your life. It is the time when your child literally hangs on the brink between going to heaven and going to hell. You realize that you hold the responsibility for that. I get it, I have parents all the time, all my 40-some years in the ministry, who have worried about this, fretted over this, and I am not saying that you should not be concerned about it, but what I am saying is this: just like anything else in the Bible, you do it by the book, it takes care of itself. The problem is, parents do not do it by the book.

I am telling you something, I have seen parents at this stage of their child's life make some of the most absolutely disastrous decisions that you have ever seen in your life. The age of accountability has come, and this is where most parents absolutely fall apart with it. It is because of a couple of things. One, they have not done what they needed to do, so now this day has hit them. Now they are almost like, "Oh my God, what am I going to do? Here it is, we have got to do something! Oh, wow, wow, wow, what are we going to do?" You are trying to win the Super Bowl in February when you should have prepared for it back in July.

I want to speak frankly to you today, and I want to speak openly and honestly. Every time I speak like this, parents get mad at me. They get upset with what I say, and that is okay. I would rather have you upset with me for saying it than God upset with me at the judgment seat of Christ for not saying it. So many parents will drive their kids to an eternal hellfire and damnation. They will actually put them in the car and take them there.

To get saved, really saved, there are some things that a person has to understand. Parents look at a kid wanting to get saved, and because he goes to Sunday school, or he heard a sermon, that now he comes home and says, "I want to get saved." They are saying, "Praise the Lord, all right, we are here, let us get it done so we can get that passed in life." That is the biggest disastrous mistake you could ever make. To be saved, whether you are 90 years old, 40 years old, or 10 years old, there are some things that a person has to understand. There are some things they have to understand about God. There are some things they have to understand about salvation. There are some things they have to understand about themselves. More than just, "I am a sinner and I need to be saved." But when a parent hears that, they see the surface. They do not see down in the depth of really what he understands.

I have seen kids, parents, I even have to say this: I have seen parents win their kids to Christ when they were four years old, five years old, and six years old. Let me say this as kindly as I

can: you are out of your mind. Absolutely impossible. Let me tell you something, here comes a flash for you: if you do not go home with anything else, go home with this. Salvation can only come in your child's life after he has passed through the age of accountability, not before. How do you get a child saved from something that he is unaccountable for, that he does not even understand in his life yet? But parents want to push that. They want to get past that terrible moment of salvation for their child, and they kid themselves into thinking that the first time the child says, "I want to be saved," "Let us do it! Praise the Lord." No four-year-old or five-year-old on this planet is ever in the age of accountability.

I had a lady one time, give her some slack here, she was a witch. She told me that she won her, I am trying to think what it was, it was not her son. It would have been her wife's son, that would make him her nephew. She told me she won him to Christ when he was two years old. Baptized at three, went to seminary at four. He is a missionary to Lemonskin someplace. I have no idea where he is at. I find myself in situations like that, and I will be honest with you, I am just going to tell you the truth: I do not say a word. When you tell me something and I do not say anything, that is a little clue for you. You want to tell me, "Hey, I am going to do this." "Hello, are you still there?" "Yeah, I am still here." I never say a word. In many cases, it is not my job to say anything because I know, everybody says, and boy have I heard this all my life, "Bob, if you ever see anything wrong in my life, tell me." That works right up until I tell you. But I have to say this, that within that statement, there are people in my world that I feel comfortable enough that because of what they have said, and in my relationship with them, if I saw something out of whack, I could go up and say something. I hope they would do the same to me. But that does not happen very often.

I am going to say this again: salvation has to come after the age of accountability has entered into your child's life, not before. That can be a very fine line to walk. You cannot get them saved from something before they understand what they are getting saved from. Do you understand that? But in parents' hurry to get them saved, you forced an issue, salvation, on them long before they were ever ready. Look at Romans chapter seven. We do not have time to get into this one, but Romans chapter seven tells you exactly what has to be in a child's life or anybody's life to truly be saved. A four-year-old cannot do it, a five-year-old cannot do it, a six-year-old cannot do it. The only one who can do it is somebody who has passed the age of accountability and now sees themselves as a sinner. Seeing yourself as a sinner because your Sunday school teacher told you you were one, seeing yourself as a sinner because you heard your mom and dad talk about it, does not mean you understand it for your own self.

It takes those early years up through the age of accountability and then moving on, walking your child step by step through that time, making sure by building the first line of defense that they have everything that they need. As you build the first line of defense and lay a basic baseline of truth, as they grow and they mature and they hit that day, you have again, the two things that give you from the baseline and the first line of defense, you have something to fall back on because you built it. Now you have something going forward to build on. Know exactly where they are at the right time. It is scary, it really is. But you have to follow the principles of the Word of God. That is why God gave them to you. In that, it is no different than anything else. Most parents do

not. They just get saved in their mind. They never ever think of what it really takes to be saved. They never stop and think, "Where is my child really at? Where are they at in their mind? Where are they at in their comprehension? Where are they at in what they really can understand?" I do not mean that they can just spit it back to me and they can explain it to me. I mean, do they grasp the concept to their very soul? Giving the right answers does not mean that they understand it. They come to Sunday school all the time. They are around it all the time here. They hear the terminology. We see it with adults. I can go to any church in this city, and when there are 500 adults, I can say to every one of them, "Are you saved, are you saved, are you saved, are you saved, are you saved?" And they say, "Yes, I am." And I throw them an open Bible and I say, "Show me the process of exactly what happened the day you got saved." Not one of them could explain it. Because you understand, just because you know the terminology does not mean you understand the concept.

That evil day will be when the child has to face the world, the flesh, and the devil without you being there with them. It is the day that he or she now becomes personally accountable. It is the day that he or she now understands, and you are right there ready to go. You build everything in their life up to this point that they are going to fall back on you. Not their gym teacher, not their math teacher, not some football coach, not some baseball coach. They are going to fall back on you because you have trained them to do that. Now he or she will have to stand on the foundation that you built them on. Last week we talked about Matthew chapter seven, a man building a house. One man built it on a rock, Bible doctrine. The other man built it on sand and how unstable that was. When you build your child on the bedrock of the foundation of the Word of God, then they have something to stand on. When you build it on the sand, they do not have anything, and the sand will change, it is always moving.

When that kid hits the age of accountability, as Solomon said before, "when the evil days come and he says, I have no pleasure in them," when you build them on that foundation and that day comes, as Matthew chapter seven, here comes the rain, here comes the winds, here comes the flood, here comes the world. Now they go to school. Now they are under other people's teaching. Some will be good, some will be bad. Now they make friends. Now other influences begin to work their way into their little lives. Some good, some bad, some very bad. Now their social life begins. Now they have an introduction to social media. Now they all text, now they have emails, now they have MyFace, YourSpace, all of those different things. Now they have those secret apps that when the parent tries to watch the kid's activity on it, they can go someplace and find one that you cannot trace. All those things are presented to them on the evil day. It is like they are walking the evil day, and the devil said, "Here it is, a smorgasbord of all kinds of things to get out from under the influence of your parents." Sooner or later, they will be exposed to these. I want to tell you something, you are not going to stop it. It is a process of life.

Maddie, do you understand what I am saying? I know you do. The first guy that wants to date you, after he talks to your dad, you send him to your grandpa. Kenzie? Where is my little gangster, Macy, at? She is out robbing a bank someplace. That probably means that neither one of you will ever get invited out on a date. You know that. I just fixed your whole relationship. They are never going to have to have a boy in their life. I think that is good. One, they have got

to go through Danny. That will be rough enough. Then they have got to get a double tap. They have got to come through me. After I run him up the road naked three or four times, then we will see what they are made of. Hoorah.

You are not going to stop it, folks. You are not going to stop it. Very frankly, by the time in their life that most parents have already lost control, they just do not know it yet. You are completely unprepared for it and do not know how to respond to it. So you react to it. I have seen parents reacting all the time. I have seen them, a kid gets in trouble, you ground them. You take away their phone. You punish them somehow. Put them in a timeout. Spank them. Take away their personal property, whatever. All that can be good. I am not saying that you cannot, but I am saying in most cases, they never get down to the base thing of what they really need to do. Grounding someone will not affect the old sin nature. You do know that. You have been grounded so many times it is unbelievable. Taking away their cell phone, taking away their this or that, will not fix their old sin nature. Do you understand? I am going to do what you did when that cop pulled you over. Remember when you were sleeping alongside the road, and he pulled over there, and he was not listening to you, and you wound up and you said, "Do you not hear me?" Remember that? Listen to me. Taking away their cell phone, taking away their iPad, taking away their, and whatever they have got, will not fix their old sin nature. Amen. "Go to your room." Oh man, that is like going to a federal penitentiary, and they send you to Fed Club. Over there in a minimum security. They have got tennis courts, pool things. They have got more fun stuff in their room than you have got in your house. You want to really do something, chain them to the bumper in the garage. Get one of those big dog cages, lock them up in there for an hour or two. Just kidding you.

My point is this, I am trying to make my point: what most parents do to their kids does not teach them anything. So you took away their phone. He is up there in the window with a flashlight doing Morse code to the neighbor across the street. The thing that you need to change and take away from him is in his mind. You do not do that by taking physical objects away. You do that by letting this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus. You have got to wash it out. Now I am not saying you do not use those things. I am not saying that those things are not tools. I am not saying that. But if that is all you ever do.

V. Insulation, Not Isolation

Please listen to me. You are not going to stop this day from coming. I have seen parents make some terrible mistakes. In a couple of weeks, I am going to teach you the seven or eight types of parenting that I have cataloged over the years. One of them is the protective parent mode. I know all parents should be protective of their kids. I am not saying that. Please, just listen to me. Maybe I ought to say overprotective parenting. Parenting and protecting your kids needs to be at a balance. Do not take the wrong one I am about to say. Overprotective parents want to isolate any sin out of their child's life. You cannot do that. It is impossible, first of all, and second of all, you should not do that.

When I was a kid growing up, I ate dirt. If you knew this morning, you all ate dirt too when you were growing up. Maybe in a generation today, you do not eat dirt because you have got so many

other things to do, but I ate dirt. I am not sure why I ate dirt, but we ate dirt. My mother had a heart attack because of all the nasty things that are in dirt. Later on, doctors came out, child doctors, and said a little dirt for your child was not going to hurt it because it helped the immune system build up stuff because of what you got into it. Now, I would not go home in the afternoon and feed your lunch being a dirt. But I am saying isolating your child from the world will never work. It will never work. First of all, you have to have a balance. You have to have a balance. Parents who force their kids into a set of rules are completely out of balance. Short term, it looks really good. I get it, but long term, it is a disaster.

What happens is you put them in a system where they are completely isolated from anything out there, or even in your mind, you think they are. You forget they have an old sin nature. You can lock your kid in a concrete bunker. You can lock your kid in a 55-gallon drum. Never let them see anything. Try to keep the world from them. Yet you have forgotten that they have an old sin nature, and the greatest can opener in the world is their mind. It is not about stopping their body from where it is going. It is stopping their thinking process and their mind that allows your body in time to go there. First line of defense. It is a thing where you just have to understand how this thing works. It is a thing where most parents just never, never get it. They make a tragic mistake in dealing with their kids: a lack of understanding the fundamental Bible principles in their own lives first and then in the lives of their children.

You cannot isolate your kids from the evil day that is coming. You cannot, it would be wonderful if you could. But sooner or later, when they get 16, 17, or 18, they are going to build other relationships unless you are going to lock them in the cellar for the rest of their lives. They are going to go to work, they are going to do this, they are going to do that. The moment they walk out your door, no matter what a great job you have done, the moment they walk out the door, that evil day is going to be right there waiting for them. They are going to have a slingshot effect. You kept them completely out of anything there. Oh, you have done a great job. The moment he gets exposed to all those things because he has never been trained about them, he is going to see them for the first time, he is going to be gone. Because isolation will not do it. You will protect them, you will hide them, you will isolate them, you will have a strict lifestyle for them with a set of rules. When that day comes, they will have no defense to it, and they will fall and collapse completely.

You have to train them to stand. To train them to stand, you have to have some alternatives that they can see. It is not a matter that the world is always a bad thing, and it is, but it is how you use the world. I grew up in the Christian school movement, and everybody thought the public schools were terrible. I am not arguing with you, the public schools are terrible, but I have a headline for you: the world is terrible. The world is terrible. Why not, and this is just me, why not build the baseline, build the truth, build, work with them? When they go to school, you have already got everything going for them. Why do not you take and train them to be a missionary to their school like many of you have done? Instead of just locking them away someplace that you think they are safe from the world and the devil and the flesh, there is not any place on this planet that you are safe from the world, the flesh, and the devil outside this book. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." When you do that, when the devil comes to tempt

you, like he did Christ in Matthew chapter four, "It is written," end of story. But that is a lot of work. That is a lot of work.

The evil day will be the time in their young life when they, without you, your influence, your rules, have to make and take their stand. They will be faced with the world, they will be faced with their own flesh, and they will be faced with the devil. Only the foundation on a rock, not sand, a rock, a prepared heart based on a house built on a rock that mom and dad from the very get-go have begun to lay a baseline of truth and a foundation on a rock that they will be able to stand. The baseline, the first line of defense that you continue to build because you have trained them the right way. You have trained them from the very first encounter of the old sin nature. You have trained them as a little child when they did this and they did that, you had a biblical process of training them that now at 16, 17, 14, 12, 13, whenever they are exposed to this, they are thinking the right way. They are doing the right thing. They are walking the right way. They have got a value system that helps them make the right choices the right way.

I get livid. I am so sick of it. I have heard it all my Christian life. I am so sick of parents who blame the sin in their kid's life on somebody else. I am so done with that. Believe me, if you feel that way, I am the wrong guy to talk to. I can give you a list of guys that will probably be sympathetic. I will not be. I am so sick of hearing that. I have heard it all my life. Moms and dads whose kids are not worth the powder to blow them to hell. Moms and dads who do not go to church, they do not do anything out in the world. They always want to sit there and tell me, "My kid is this way because so and so did this in their life." I will tell you what, there is not much that frazzles me, but that frazzles me. I am not frazzled at this moment, but I am working on it. I am so sick of hearing that. Your kids will be at 18, 19, 20, what you train them to be at three, four, five, and six. Do you understand that? Amen. You either build a foundation on a rock that is strong, or you build a foundation on the sand, and they are blown all over the place. It is just that simple.

When training up your child the right way and understanding what you are really up against, again, you can never isolate your child from the world. Do not even think about it. But by doing the baseline and training them early, you may never isolate them from the world. Here it comes, but you can insulate them from the world. You teach them not to react. You teach them to respond. When you react, somebody says, "Hey, we are having a party over here after the game tonight." "Oh man, that is great." That is reactive. Responding is, "Hey, we are having a party over here tonight. Do you want to come?" "No, I do not think I better." Responding is, processing. Reacting is an action of the flesh. "Oh, it sounds good, I want to do it." Responding is filtering the decision through the biblical principles and then coming to the right conclusion. You have to train that in the child. That does not happen because they grow up.

Let me show you what I mean. You get this. Every appliance in your house, think of your house. By the way, you have a wonderful house. We lose our house, we want to move in with you. That is okay. Think about your own house. Everybody has got a house. You do not think about what I am telling you. You realize that everything in your house that you have to make your life easy, it has the potential to kill you. You ladies get up this morning and blow dry your hair. Some of you did. You have got that thing out there. You know that blow dryer has the potential to kill you on

the spot. We all like our coffee. I have got a Keurig coffee thing, I love it. One cup at a time, best coffee around. You know that coffee maker has the ability to kill you? I will tell you something else. You have a, I do not care what it is. I do not care. Some of you, you know, you have got a phone charger. You want to charge your phone. You plug it in. It has the ability to kill you on the spot. Do you understand that? You have a TV, and I do not know about your TV, but my TV cuts out all the time. You are going to get back there and jiggle on it. That is television, as fun as it is and all the things we like to do. It has the ability to kill you right on the spot. Your radio, your vacuum cleaner. This is a good reason never to vacuum your home again, ladies. It has the ability to kill you.

Do you know why? Because all of those things that we have in our life that make life easier, they all run by electricity. If you grab a hot wire of electricity and you are not grounded the way you should be, you are a dead man. That power cord has electricity running through it, and that will kill you. It will electrocute you. In fact, your house is a death trap in every room, if you stop and really think about it. Remember those little spider eyes I told you about a couple of weeks ago in my headlamp where you walk in every room. Everything you touch has the potential of killing you. But you know why it is safe? Because they take that hot wire and they insulate it in rubber. That power cord is wrapped up and insulated in rubber to keep you safe. So you can hold the cord, take the cord, and even though within that power cord is enough electricity to nail you if you are not grounded right, you can pick it up and hold it everything you want and plug it in and use every utility in your house without it affecting you. You know why? It is insulated.

In the Christian life, there are many things that seem okay that will wind up killing you. So just like all of your things in your house, you take your children, you have an evil day coming, you have to insulate them against what is coming, just like the company that built your product has insulated you from electricity that is running through that cord. You insulate them with your baseline of truth. You wrap him in a protective casement of principles. You build him and wrap him and insulate him on a rock of solid foundation that no matter what happens, the wind, the rain, whatever happens, it cannot get to him, just like you can take your hairdryer and plug it in, and you can even have wet hair. Do you know what would happen if you had a bare hot wire and your hands were still wet? Or better yet, a blow dryer dries your hair, meaning your hair is wet. Do you have any idea what would happen if you picked up that hot wire to plug it in with wet hair? You would need a permanent. Or no, it would be permanent. You would be sticking out like that lady in Frankenstein. You know, Bride of Frankenstein had the hair sticking out there? It is insulated. You want to protect your kids from the world? Insulate them from it.

We hear a lot about character. Character is what we do, what your child will do, what you and I do when nobody else sees, that make the choices that are good or bad. You are not born with character. I want to make that very clear. You are born a character, but you are not born with character. Character traits are a learned behavior. Character is developed. Character is cultivated. Character is established in a person's life through proper training, proper things that you put into their life. A kid just does not get in the shade and grow up, and half of them turn out with character and half turn out with no character. That is not the way it works. Character is something that from the very early years of their life, they begin to develop. Then you pick it up

and you make sure that that character gets developed. In fact, in parenting, you build character on different levels. In a couple of weeks, I am going to show you actually how to do that. You build character through the levels of character, through the baseline of truth. You deal with each issue as it comes along. You work with a child to develop an understanding of why this is not right. You isolate that child, not from the things of the world because that is impossible, so you cannot do that. So you insulate him from the things that are out there. When he sees those things because he has the baseline of truth, he has the ability to respond instead of reacting. He filters all the things out. It only allows in what he knows to be, not just pleasing to mom and dad. We are way past that, pleasing now to God. I am going to show you how to get your child to that point in a couple of weeks.

Throughout his young life, at every opportunity, you now, and here is another great word, you reinforce in his life. Raising up your children and training up your children is a correction and discipline and everything that you do. The tool that you want to use the most is reinforcement. Reinforce in their life why I am not going to allow you to do this. Reinforce in their life why our family is what it is. Reinforce in their life why I am going to deal with you the way that I am based on my responsibility to God. The fact is most parents cannot say that because they do not do that. Along with that, he should see the character trait in the parent's life. In parenting, you lead and train by example. It is like building a church. We talk a lot about role models today. We get great athletes, and everybody says, "Great athletes should be role models." Well, maybe so. Usually they are not. We talk about every kid needs role models to grow up, a sports figure or famous person or somebody this or somebody that. Let me tell you something, the greatest role model and the only role model your child should ever have is you as a dad and you as a mom. That is the only role model they need, their parents. I have never really understood that concept was so hard to get. The whole Bible is built on patterns and models. Everything in it. You want to understand the Bible, you have got to get the pattern, you have got to get the model. Why would it be any different for a family? Kids growing up need to see the role model of mom and dad, and mom and dad build on that role model. Now I understand, I get it, I totally get it. In many of your lives, you did not have that. I understand, but you know what God did? God brought you to a place where you could have that. Amen. So do not be going, "Woe is me," you know, "I never had that." Okay, you have got it now. It was not a fact that you did not have it, God made sure you did get it.

Building Christian character through the Word of God, developing it in the stages as the child grows, getting him and her to the place that the evil day when it finally comes—and you will not stop it from coming—but when it comes because you have done what you needed to do, it is like BBs off a stone wall. There is no penetration. "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth." You hit the target of life with your child by which way you aim them. You will either be on target or you will be off target. It is just that simple.

Years ago, I used to belong a long time ago to the Pioneer Gun Club. I know a lot of you guys remember that now. This was in the old days when down there on Brickyard Road, they had a 300-yard rifle range that you could shoot the high-powered stuff. But then they put that golf range behind it, and somebody mistook a golfer for a deer, and that was the end of that. Every

week before deer season, and I was pretty involved there for a while, every year before deer season, the week before, they would have a free sight-in day if you could come out and sight your deer rifle in. I was assigned to all the new guys that came out. You did not have to be a member of the club. You took a guy at the gate, you went down, and you helped him zero his rifle in because most guys that deer hunt for the first time did not know that.

I got this guy, and it was very obvious that he had just bought a deer rifle. It was very obvious that he had just went to Walmart or someplace and bought this rifle. It was a pretty neat rifle. I remember it was a Marlin lever action, it was a 35 Remington, a good Missouri deer rifle. A good flat shooting gun. It had a scope on it. So I had him lay all this stuff out there, and I said, "Now what we are going to do here is this. We are going to start it at 20, 25 yards. What we are going to do is we are going to put a target out there, and I want you to really concentrate on getting three shots as close together as a group as you can. Then we will know where we need to go." I said, "Let me look at your gun, let me inspect your gun, make sure everything is good." I looked at it, I looked down it, he had not even cleaned the grease out of the barrel. I happened to have some gun cleaner. I said, "There is grease in this barrel." He said, "Yeah, yeah." I said, "Why did you clean it out?" He said, "I thought that would make the bullet come out faster." That is not what it does. So I cleaned his rifle out, we loaded him up, got him on there, and I had binoculars behind him, not that I needed them for 25 yards. I said, "All right, take your time, breathe, get the scope up in your cheek and get the cheek up there and get it shuttered there. Squeeze the trigger, do not jerk it. Just think about the target, hold a breath and squeeze it." First round, down there, it was three inches to the right and four inches down. Bullseye is here. I said, "Take another shot." He fired another one, hey, it touched the first one. I said, "We are doing good." I said, "One more." He takes another, and it, nice tight little group, but it was three inches over and four inches down. I mean, here is the bullseye, he was shooting down here on a target like this. So I said, "Okay, just a second." I went over here, and I was recording some things, and I looked around, he is putting his gun in the case. I said, "Where are you going?" He says, "Oh, no, no, no, no. That is good enough to get a deer." I said, "Can I explain something to you?" I said, "If you are at 25 yards, if you are three inches over and four inches down at 25 yards, at 50 yards, you are going to be eight inches down and six inches over. At 100 yards, you are going to be off the target completely. At 300 yards, that bullet is going to come around and kill you." He never understood it. He said, "Oh, I am good." And off he went.

My point is this: with your kid, if you are off two inches at three, four, five, and six, you will be a million miles off at 16, 17, and 18. You have to hit the bullseye every time. You have to make sure that you are shooting right down the line, and your target is being dead on. If you get off a little bit at the early stage of their life, they will be off a lot by the time they get 18, 19, and 20. It is just the same principle. It is the same principle.

VI. Conclusion and Next Steps

I am going to put a hold up right here next week. Because this is so important, next week, I am going to take you and show you the greatest example in the Bible that will show you everything that your child is going to face when that evil day comes. I am going to walk you through every

single aspect of the greatest example anywhere in the Bible of what your kids are going to face. I want you to tie these two things together. You families, you 19 families that are working, you should have done lesson one last week. You should be on lesson two this week. Spend your time with your families, do what you need to do, and then get next week, and I will put all that together for you. I want to show you exactly what they are up against. I want you to know before it gets here, what you are facing and what you are up against. The greatest example is found in the Word of God and leaves no stone unturned. We are going to talk about it. I will bring you through it next week.

Somebody said earlier, asked me if I was going to have a Christmas, going to take off a week and have a Christmas message next week. I said no, I said I am going to stay with child training. They said, "Oh, why is that?" I said, "Because the greatest gift I could ever give this church is your children back to you." Amen. We need to stay with it. There is no Santa Claus anyhow, sorry guys. Sorry Zach. There is no Santa Claus anyhow, I know, I know.

Now look, people at Restart, make sure you get your tracts, get your water, get your stuff. We will have a meeting.