

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart August 2024

Piety “on crutches”

By Steve Huston



*Train
up a
child...*

“... A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.” Proverbs 10:1

For the nine previous chapters in Proverbs, the wise man has “spilled much ink” in defining what it is to be wise or foolish; it is dependent upon one’s choice to follow or reject the precepts of wisdom, the way of the only true God. Solomon has carefully shown the destination of those who will walk by “*Yahweh*” and those who walk by “*Your way*.” Either Jehovah will be your God or you will have made yourself and your pleasure your god. One will either have the fear of the Lord which is only the beginning of wisdom, departing from evil, or one will despise correction and reproof, insisting on his own way, perhaps gaining

temporal happiness, only to be followed by eternal horror.

Is it any wonder, then, that the first of these “stand alone” proverbs show the relationship between a grown son’s (or daughter’s) actions and the effect those actions have on their parents? Solomon saw this proverb worked out in the life of his father, David, as well as it detailing his own experience.

This should: 1. Impress upon parents their duty to train their children well, bringing them up in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Such parents that would be “glad” must put more emphasis upon eternal joy than upon temporal riches and fleeting happiness. 2. Children who love their parents should feel a duty to walk in the paths of righteousness for God’s name’s sake, their own eternal end, and for the sake of their parent’s temporal/eternal gladness.

Too often, as children break free from the

strings of their parents, they have a desire to “sow their wild oats” or “flex their wings and fly.” Each child must become their own person, but each needs to become their own person IN THE LORD! It’s imperative that the path of righteousness Christian parents start their children upon, indeed becomes the child’s choice path, instead of feeling forced to walk in it. The rod and staff are imminently useful for “convincing” our “little lamb” to walk therein, but eventually the lamb must choose for himself the road he must traverse. Therefore, we warn, point to examples around them, and consistently exhort them to righteousness, while letting them know how pleased we are to see the Lord working in their lives in both little and big ways.

How sad if II Chronicles 24:2 described our own “little Joashes.” “And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD **all the days of**

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Jehoiada the priest.”

Stating that Joash’s piety “went on crutches,” Samuel Chadwick points out:

“So long as Joash was under parental control he was upright in character, straight in conduct, and religious in spirit. Mark his qualities. He had great zeal for the House of God. The slackness of its priests troubled him and he set himself to stir them up. He honored the Scriptures...” Chadwick later states: “Unfortunately all this excellence was circumstantial. It was due to the influence of something outside the man...It makes all the difference whether you have saints or fools for your friends. Environment is not everything, but circumstances and companionships, voluntarily chosen, determine our character and our career. ‘If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.’ A man becomes one of the companies he keeps. So long as Joash walked with the good, he went well; but

when he became the companion of hair-brained dandies, he excelled in wickedness and folly.”

It’s been well said that God has no grandchildren, only sons and daughters. It’s vital that we are praying for our children and helping them develop their own relationship with God. It takes huge amounts of intentionality. To this Chadwick warns:

“Circumstantial goodness is never safe. Pious homes have to be left, and relatives die. Conditions change...The devil is abroad, and temptation is inevitable in the world. **God takes away our props that we may find our feet.** We cannot live on other people’s goodness. We must have salt in ourselves. Religion is a personal matter. One man’s grace is never enough for two...Goodness calls for independence, courage, and sacrifice. In getting religion, get the real thing. Do not lean on the grace and strength of another... The soul’s roots strike deep when God does the planting. Props grow old and perish, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday,

today and forever. To the goodness rooted and grounded in God it does not matter who lives or dies. It depends upon neither priest nor prince, circumstance nor ordinance. Whom God makes to stand, nothing can overthrow.”

In looking at the effect that parents have on their children, that children have on their parents, and that companions have on one another, let us: 1. Take great care in who we trust. 2. Be quick to guard against wrong while also promoting the cause of Christ for righteousness. 3. Pray and do all in our power to be sure we are not merely propping up another; instead, let us steady them as they find strength in their own ankles and feet to stand firm and walk uprightly according to the Word of God.

“**Take heed to your friendship, take heed to yourselves, for every man is not only influenced by others, but is himself to others a minister of grace or an ally of hell.**” (Samuel Chadwick)



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