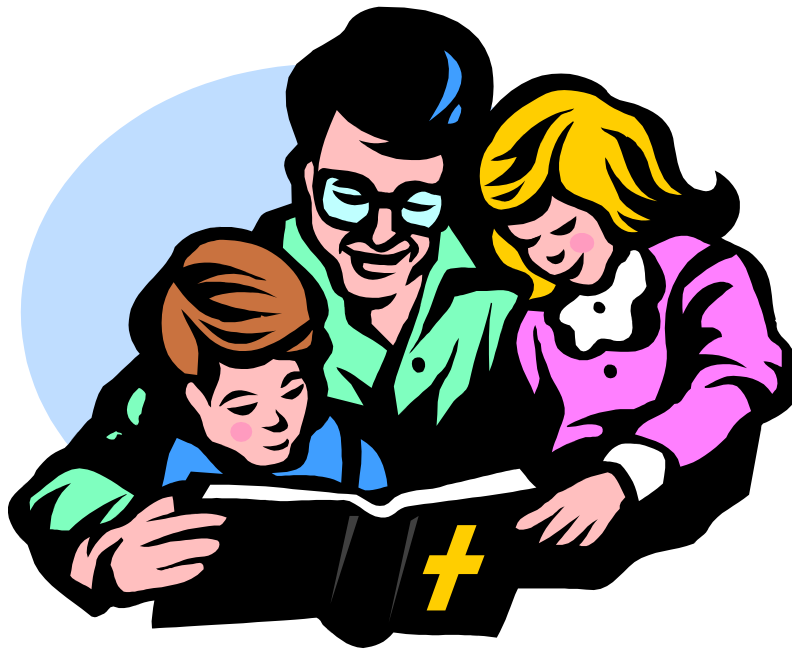


# The Rearing of Your Children



## Part I

by  
Evangelist Norman R. Stevens

## THE REARING OF YOUR CHILDREN – Part 1

Please open your Bibles to Ephesians chapter six and verse four. I would like to bring a message entitled "The Rearing of Your Children."

So let me ask you something, Dad and Mom, does the Bible give you any directions in the rearing of your children? Yes it does. You are clearly commanded in the Word of God to rear your children properly. In Ephesians 6:4, the Bible says, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." That phrase "provoke not your children to wrath" is one Greek word [one word in the Greek language] and it simply means "to rouse to wrath."

In the rearing of your children, you must be very careful that you do not cross the line to frustrate them to the point they do not know what is truly expected of them because the demands are too great or unreasonable. The Bible says, "Provoke not your children to wrath: but **bring them up**..." That simply means "bring them up to maturity." That is, you get your children as babies, and it is your responsibility to take them from a baby all the way to maturity. The Bible goes on to say, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The word "nurture" is the same word translated in many other places as "chasten." The word has to do with the whole responsibility of training your children. Nurture has to do with activities, things that you actually do. The word "admonition" is the word that means "to train by words." So what is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: Dad and Mom, you are to be very careful in whatever you do in the rearing of your children that you do not cross the line to frustrate them to the point that they do not know what is truly expected of them because the demands are too great or unreasonable. And it is your responsibility to take them from a baby all the way to maturity, both by the things that you physically do and the words that you give.

In Proverbs 22:6, the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." That word "train" literally means "start." The emphasis is upon the beginning, and it keeps on training until the end. The Word of God teaches you over and over again the importance of training your children; and the tragedy of not doing so is found in Proverbs 17:21, which says, "He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy."

The word "fool" in the book of Proverbs simply means "a rebel." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: that the father of a rebel never has any joy. In Proverbs 17:25, the Bible says, "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: you must do your job properly, Dad and Mom. You are not going to avoid trouble by not disciplining your children; you are going to increase your trouble. When your children, in their rebellion, continue to defy you, you are going to be brought to that place of brokenness and bitterness of spirit.

Dad and Mom, it is your responsibility to rear your children; and God enables you to rear your children in the power of the Holy Spirit, and He directs you in His Word. The Bible gives you instructions in how you are to do it.

Now! In the rearing of your children, you must always remember that you are in charge and that you must always remain in charge. Perhaps you would rather let your children be in charge. You ought not to be doing that. At no point, from birth until marriage, are you to be less than in charge of your children and in charge of the rearing of your children. From day one until marriage, when they will have a new spiritual head, you are in charge of your children. You are in charge of the rearing of your children. It is that simple.

Now! You can say, "Well I just don't think so." Listen folks! You are going to stand before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ and give Him an account for it. So you had better go ahead and start assuming that you are in charge of this responsibility because you are in charge of your children until the day they form a new marriage and thus have a new spiritual head. You are in charge. You are responsible. It is your responsibility to rear your children and you will answer to God at the Judgment Seat of Christ for it, so you had better take your responsibility seriously.

With the time remaining, we are going to look at two biblical principles on the rearing of your children. Please notice, number one: Break their rebellion.

You say, "Preacher! My children are not rebellious." They may not be rebellious today. You may have conquered their will, but they were born rebels. You say, "Preacher! How do you know that?" Because I know that every one of your children are born sinners. In Psalms 51:5, David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me." David was not saying he was conceived in a sinful act—he was the seventh child of a proper marriage. He was saying this, "I was, in conception, a sinner from conception." The pro-abortionists don't know that, but life begins at conception; and David said "from conception forward I was a sinner."

All of your children are born sinners, and the most natural response of your children is their response to defy authority. Defying authority is as natural for your children as taking their very first breath. Some children are more defiant than others are. Some children are more easily taught submission than others are. I understand that. But every child, without exception, is born a sinner; and the way your children manifest that sin nature is in their attempt early in life to defy your authority.

And the very first thing you must do—before you teach them that there is a God in heaven, that there is a Bible, that they ought to go to church, that they ought to do what is right—the very first thing that you must do is teach them that you are in charge. And, if you are not in charge, somebody else will be. Somebody will run your home--either Dad and Mom, who are to be mature enough to run the home, will run the home; or little junior, who is just a little baby, will run the home. Somebody will run your home, and God says that dad and mom ought to do it.

It is your responsibility to break the rebellion in your children. If you do not conquer this rebellion in your children, disaster awaits you and disaster awaits your children.

Do you realize, if you leave your children to themselves as the Bible says in Proverbs 29:15 ("A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame"), that they will bring you to shame? They will embarrass you. They will bring you to shame if you leave them to themselves.

All right, how should you do it? How should you break the rebellion in your children? You break your children's rebellion with the rod. You say, "Preacher! I taught my children that rebellion is wrong." No, you did not. You don't talk them out of rebellion. You can read the Bible through and you will find that God has one response for rebellion, that God has one response for defiance, that God has one response for the abuse of authority; and that is always the same response—the rod! the rod! the rod!

In Proverbs 22:15, the Bible says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Did you notice that word "drive"? Because rebellion does not give up easily, it is driven from a child by the rod. The rod drives it far from him.

Now! Spanking should be done appropriately. I don't mean abuse. I hate child abuse. I think child abuse is sin. I think a parent that abuses his children in the name of discipline is twisting the Word of God. He is wicked. And somebody ought to deal with him.

I am against child abuse. It is wrong. A spanking does not mean that you kick your children. That is not spanking. It does not mean that you take your fist and hit your children in the stomach or knock them around the room. That is not Bible discipline. That is child abuse. That is wicked. And you ought to go to jail for doing something like that. I am not talking about that.

Dad and Mom, a spanking is never appropriate when you have had it up to here and you become extremely angry with your children and you plow into them. That is always wrong, and it will never produce the results that you want.

In Proverbs 20:30, the Bible says, "The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: when you spank your children appropriately, it will change their hearts attitude. In Proverbs 19:18, the Bible says, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." In Proverbs 23:13, the Bible says, "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die."

That does not mean "that the child may cry like he is going to die, but that he is not going to die." That is not what it is saying. God is saying this: If you will spank him properly, he won't die in judgment for sin. That is, if you do not spank

him properly, Dad and Mom, he may die in judgment for sin and his blood may be required at your hands.

In Proverbs 23:14, the Bible says, "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." Do you know what God is saying? God is saying this: if you will discipline your children properly, not only will you save them physically from danger, you will also be participating in their spiritual deliverance. If your children would learn to respect and obey you, then they would be more likely to respect and obey God Almighty and thus be a godly Christian.

My friends, you have never seen a godly Christian who is a rebel at home! They do not exist! A child who rebels against his parents is not a godly Christian. He may put on a show somewhere else, but it eventually comes out that he is not a godly Christian; and when you spank your children, you are contributing to their Christianity. That is why spanking is a positive thing, a positive experience for the purpose of the good of that child.

It may take frequent spanking, and it will. You will think you need to do it every day. Sometimes you will need to do it every day or two or three times in a day. Have you ever thought, "It is not working"? My advice to you is, "Stick with it because it is what the Bible says to do."

You need to teach your children that rebellion and defiance meet with the most severe punishment. That is, make sure that the pain is greater than the fun of rebelling. Did you get that? You make sure that the spanking is very unpleasant and not something they are willing to risk for the fun of rebelling. Make it very unpleasant. I don't mean abuse them, but make it very unpleasant.

Make sure spankings are not acts of frustration. Make sure spankings are not acts of rage. Make sure spankings are not acts of vengeance. You spank your children because you love them.

Did you know that spanking is an indication of true love? The Bible is very clear on this. In Proverbs 13:24, the Bible says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." The word "betimes" here simply means "early." That simply means early in the child's life. Dad and Mom, you don't spank your children because you hate them. You spank them because you love them and would rather they experience the pain of the rod than the pain of a disastrous life by the judgment of God because they did not obey, because they did not submit.

Listen folks! There is a God in heaven, and that God will not tolerate rebellion. That God will either let Dad and Mom break the rebellion; or, as that child grows into manhood, God will break the rebellion. If that person is a child of God and grows up a rebel, and if Dad and Mom don't break the rebellion and circumstances don't break the rebellion, then God will take him home.

God will not let a rebel go unchecked if he belongs to Jesus Christ. God will deal with the rebellion. That is why He has made parents. That is why He has made the state. That is why He has made the church. One of the reasons is that they might bring rebellion under control because rebellion is what keeps your children from being what God wants them to be.

Dad and Mom, you must break their rebellion. It is the very first thing that you must do. Other things come along with it, but that is the most important thing you can do in the early days of your children. Break their rebellion!

Notice, number two: teach them verbally what is right. In the Bible you will find that talking is linked with spanking. It is interesting how many times in the Word of God, when the Bible deals with the rod, the context also deals with talking.

For example in Proverbs 17:10, the Bible says, "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool."

This verse talks about reproof. Reproof is verbal communication or explanation. If a person is a wise son, reproof will resolve the problem; and, if it does not resolve the problem, it may take a hundred stripes to resolve the problem. That shows you how deep rebellion can be and how far you must be willing to go to break rebellion. God is not suggesting here that you ought to spank your children one hundred times per whipping. God is suggesting this: that if a child's will is not broken, it may take a period of 100 stripes to bring him to the place that the reproof would do the job.

If the rebellion is broken, a reproof is enough. That is one of the ways you can tell whether or not you need to spank some more. If you give your children verbal instructions and they do not get the job done, they do not obey, then you have got rebellion on your hands and you don't talk any more. You spank. And when their will is broken, when their rebellion is defeated, then you can give reproof and they will understand. They will respond. They will obey. If they do not respond, if they do not obey, there is a good chance that their will is not broken, and you go back to the rod.

In Proverbs 29:15, the Bible says, "The rod and reproof give wisdom." In the book of Proverbs, "wisdom" is God's word for spiritual insight; and He is talking about children. If your children are going to have spiritual insight into spiritual things, the rod and reproof will produce it. The rod and reproof give wisdom, the Bible says!

Notice how the rod comes first. Why? Because there must be a brokenness regarding the rebellious spirit before there can be teaching. You are not going to teach your children to do what is right if their will is in defiance to you. What will happen is that you will wind up having an arguing match. Have you ever done that before? You tell your children something to do. They argue with you. You argue back and forth. Voices are raised. You get out of control and you get into a shouting

match. What do you have here? You have a parent that does not realize that he is dealing with rebellion. So don't argue with your children.

You need to teach your children. You need to teach them about spiritual things and things in general. You need to teach them what is right. You need to teach them biblical principles to follow. You need to teach them from the standpoint of the Word of God. After you break the will of your children, you need to teach them verbally what is right. That is what the Bible says in Genesis 18:19—"He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD." They will obey. That is what is meant by teaching.

In Deuteronomy 6:7, the Bible says, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Thou shalt talk of them, speaking of the commandments of the Word of God. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. And thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house.

It is proper that you spank your children to break their rebellion. But it is also proper that you verbally teach them biblical principles to follow.

Now you must not be intimidated by your children's questions or by their so-called threat of rights. You see so much of this today. Parents are so scared of their children. Sometimes the children are more talented than their parents are, and that intimidates the parents. Sometimes the children are more educated than their parents are, and that intimidates the parents. Sometimes the children are just bigger and stronger than their parents are, and that intimidates the parents.

Dad and Mom, I want you to remember something. You are in your position, not because you are smarter than your children are, not because you are more spiritual than your children are, not because you are bigger and stronger than your children are. You are in your position because God put you in it. You are the authority, and they ought to obey you! Not because you are smarter. Not because you are bigger. Not because you are stronger. Not because you are brighter. They are to obey you because it is right to obey you. In Ephesians 6:1, the Bible says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." When you teach your children, don't you be intimidated by them. You teach them with confidence.

Now there is nothing wrong with your children asking you questions appropriately and sincerely in a submissive manner. There is nothing wrong with that. Don't let them defy you with questions. Don't answer that. Jesus never did. There are those who came to Jesus and dared Him to answer what He was doing and why He was doing it. He never bothered to answer. But He had all the time of day for sincere questions. The disciples came to Jesus and asked questions all the time, and Jesus carefully answered those questions.

If your children defy you in their questions, you don't deal with that as a question. You deal with that as defiance and you go back to the rod. But if they

sincerely, submissively, and humbly ask you questions, you ought to use that as an opportunity to teach your children about spiritual things and things in general. And, as they grow up, they will come to that place where they wonder why you have taught them certain standards and certain convictions, and why certain things are right. If they have the right attitude, you ought to sit down, spend quality time with them, teach them, train them, and answer their questions.

You ought to teach your children what is right and not expect them to know what is right if you have not taught them what is right. Parents say, "My children ought to know better." Why should they know better? "Well they just ought to." Why? Have you ever taught them? "Well no." How are they going to know better? You need to teach them. You need to teach them what is right. You need to explain some things to them. You need to spend quality time with your children every day. What does that mean? It simply means this: set aside the newspaper; set aside the computer; set aside the telephones; set aside your hobby or hobbies; turn off the television set; stop the overtime at work; and take an interest in your children and spend quality time with them every day. Find out what questions are in their minds, and give them Bible answers. You ought to be on the lookout for the opportunity to teach your children about spiritual things and things in general.

We have noticed two biblical principles on the rearing of your children.

Number one: Break their rebellion. It is the very first thing that you must do. Other things come along with it, but it is the most important thing you can do in the early days of your children. Break their rebellion!

Number two: Teach your children verbally what is right, and don't expect them to know what is right if you have not taught them what is right.

It is proper that you spank your children in order to break their rebellion, but it is also proper that you verbally teach them biblical principles to follow.



## How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

Evangelist Norman R. Stevens  
602 Canterbury Road  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086-9601  
Phone: (813) 760-4028

E-mail: [nrsevangelist@earthlink.net](mailto:nrsevangelist@earthlink.net)  
<http://www.evangelistnormanstevens.com>