

Teaching Children Piety

Read Ecclesiastes 11:1–6

I. Introduction

- A. How should we define piety?
- B. Is it legitimate to teach our children how to be pious?
 - 1. Con
 - a. Make self-righteous Pharisees
 - b. Teach only Christ
 - 2. Pro
 - a. Scriptural command: admonition of the Lord
 - b. Biblical practice: the saints

II. William Gouge on Teaching Children Piety

- A. Rationale for teaching piety
 - 1. Best thing that can be taught
 - 2. Necessary because born destitute of all piety
 - 3. Belongs to the office of parenthood
 - a. Objection: Shouldn't this be only the minister's task?
 - b. Why is this properly a parent's task?
 - 4. Children are most properly "God's"
 - 5. Best thing to bring children into double bond
 - 6. Most hopeful thing to leave behind on death-bed
 - 7. A special means for "propagating true religion" to future generations

B. How to teach piety: parental assets

1. Ground on God's Word
2. Read God's Word
3. Catechize/family worship
4. Seize opportunities for teaching
 - a. From nature and daily life
 - b. From ordained means of grace
 - c. From God's "great and admirable works"
5. Christian education through Christian schoolteachers
6. Parental example
 - a. Personal life
 - b. Personal conversation
 - c. Personal prayer

C. How *not* to teach piety: parental faults

1. Focusing almost exclusively on the temporal
2. Exemplifying a profane example
3. Careless about Christian education received
 - a. About the kind of religious instruction
 - b. About the quality of the teachers
4. Ignoring the basics
5. Ignoring daily events

III. Conclusion: Persevere (Eccl. 11:1)