

## Prov. 22:6 “Training Up”

**For the Children:** Your parents train you in many things as you grow up: potty training; how to eat with a knife and fork and how to brush your teeth; perhaps they teach you how to go fishing or hunting or how to drive a car. But the most important thing they will ever train you in, or which you will ever learn for them, is what it means to be a child of God. The Lord has put your parents there especially to do that training. He has put you in a Christian home to learn especially that. Don't waste the opportunity! **Questions:** What does it mean that you have been “dedicated” to the Lord? In what way is being baptized more than that? What do you need to do so that this training is not “wasted” on you?

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### Introduction:

#### First Point: Train Up the Child!

- **Dedicating the Child:** The word, “train” can also mean to dedicate something – in this case, the child to God. It also implies doing so from the start. It is very important for the parents to view their child as belonging to the Lord, but given into their care as His stewards. However, baptism involves far more than simply dedicating a child to the Lord – something we do unto Him. It involves His covenant-promise, under which His covenant-people live – including the children of believers. The children are to be nurtured in that promise, not just regarded as unbelievers who need to hear the Gospel. Baptism also speaks of union with Christ, entrance into church and covenant, God's way of saving by washing sinners with Christ's blood, and the call to live a cleansed life
- **In the Way He Should Go:** Literally, this expression means “according to the mouth of his way.” It suggests feeding a child according to his age and stage of development. Training of the child should consider his individual age, character, gifts and calling
- **Appropriate Manner:** The appropriate manner of training the child includes “not provoking” (Eph. 6:4); godly discipline, including corporal correction (Prov. 22:15, 13:24, 23:14); and lessons being repeated, imprinted by God's grace on the child's heart and mind
- **Appropriate Content:** The child needs to be taught the love/fear of the Lord; the foundational place of His Word in all of life; Law and Gospel. Commands and promises – his sin and need of Christ, the way of salvation and the rule of gratitude; to resist sin and pursue holiness; the consequence of rebellion and the gracious reward to those who are faithful; that life is a stewardship, as we serve the Master with His resources; and he needs to be taught what his baptism means and the responsibilities it lays upon him. These things need to be taught by word and example of the parents, and accompanied by much prayer

#### Second Point: The Child Won't Depart

- **A Trustworthy Promise:** The promise that the well-nurtured child will not depart from the Lord might seem to go against the facts. However, Proverbs often deals with reality by presenting both ends of the spectrum. It therefore presents one end, the situation where godly parenting leads to righteous children. Elsewhere, it deals with bad parenting contributing to ungodliness in the children (Prov. 29:15); and even the possibility of a rebellious child who will not listen to the godly instruction of his parents (13:1, 15:20, 17:21, 30:17). The norm, however, is that godly nurture helps lead the covenant children in the way they should go, with a blessed outcome
- **Ora et Labora:** The warning that covenant-children do, sometimes, go off the rails, reminds believing parents not to neglect their responsibilities in nurturing and praying for their children. But the “norm” and its promise is strong enough that parents should not be unduly anxious about what might happen in the future. It is a case of trust in the Lord, prayer and godly work at parenting
- **By the Grace of God:** The promise here is not a guarantee that our efforts as parents will automatically produce good results in our children. Rather, godly nurture produces faithful children by the grace of God. That is the sense of this promise. That is why the work must be accompanied by prayer that God will indeed be gracious to us and our children

### Conclusion: