
FELLOWSHIP
Parents Raising Their Children According to
the Up-To-Date Vision in the Lord's Recovery

On November 18, 2007, this special fellowship was given to the saints at the Church in Santa Clara. The primary burden of this fellowship was titled: **The Vision and Importance of the Next Generation**. This is the fourth of five portions.

We Should Nurture the Children in the Discipline and Admonition of the Lord

You must nurture your children in the discipline and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). The discipline of the Lord is telling a person how he should behave himself. You must consider your children as Christians, not Gentiles. The Lord's discipline tells a person how he should behave as a Christian. The Lord intends that all of our children become Christians. You should plan on all of them becoming not just Christians, but good Christians. You should tell them what a proper Christian is by teaching them the discipline of the Lord.

The biggest thing about a child is his aspirations. Every child has an aspiration when he is young. Parents must help their children to have proper aspirations. If you love the world, your children will probably want to be the president, a millionaire, or a great academic. How you live affects the aspirations of your child. Parents must learn to channel the ambitions of their children in the proper direction. They should aspire to be a lover of the Lord. They should not aspire to love the world. You have to be an example to them, and you have to tell them your ambitions. Tell them what kind of Christian you want to be. In this way, you will channel their ambitions in the proper direction. Their goals will change, and they will know what is noble and what is precious.

Children have another problem: They are not only ambitious and aspiring but also proud of themselves. They may boast about their own cleverness, skill, or eloquence. He may think that he is a very special person. Parents should not discourage them, but neither should they cultivate their pride. Many parents cultivate their children's pride and encourage them to go after vainglory by heaping praises upon them in front of other people. We should tell them, "There are many children who are like you in this world." Do not try to encourage their pride. They should be able to think, to speak, and to learn all the skills, but you have to tell them that there are many who are like them in this world. Do not destroy their self-esteem, but do not allow them to become proud. You do not need to hurt their self-esteem, but you must point out their pride to them. Many young people leave home only to find out that they have to spend ten or twenty years in the world in order to learn how to do things properly. By then it is too late. We do not want our children to become disheartened, but neither do we want them to be proud or to think that they are somebody.

A Christian needs to know how to appreciate others. It is easy to be victorious, but it is hard to accept defeat. We can find champions who are humble, but it is rare to find losers who are not bitter. This is not a Christian attitude. Those who are good in some areas should learn to be humble and not boastful. At the same time, when a person is defeated he should learn to accept his defeat. When they are defeated, you need to teach them to accept their defeat with grace. A child's problem often has to do with these attitudes. After a game the winner is proud, while the loser will complain that the judge was not fair or that he made the wrong judgment because the sun was glaring in his face. You should help them to develop a humble character. They can win,

and when they lose they can also appreciate others. This training will help them understand themselves when they grow up as Christians. If our children are this way, it will be easy for them to experience spiritual things.

From their youth, we should give our children a chance to make their own choices. We should not make every choice for them until they reach the age of eighteen or twenty. If we do, it will be impossible for them to make any decisions when they grow up. Give them the chance to choose what they like and what they do not like. Give them the chance to choose and then show them the right choice. Let them see it for themselves. Some prefer one kind of color, while others prefer another kind of color. Let them make the choices by themselves.

We must also teach our children to manage things. We must give them the opportunity to take care of their personal belongings, to manage their own shoes, socks, and other affairs. Give them a little instruction and then let them try to manage things by themselves. Some children have a bad start because their fathers love them blindly and do not know how to train them. As Christians, we have to train our children to manage their things properly.

I believe if the Lord is gracious to us, we will gain half of our increase from among our own children and the other half from the “sea” (i.e., the world). If all the increase is from the sea and none is from among our own children, we will not have a strong church. We cannot expect our increase to always come from the world. We have to expect the second generation, men like Timothy, to come from our own families. Before the church will be rich, there must be grandmothers like Lois and mothers like Eunice who raise, edify, and nurture their children in the discipline of the Lord. We must give our children the opportunity to manage things from their youth. We must give them the chance to learn to arrange things by themselves. Hold family meetings frequently and allow the children to make decisions. If we have to rearrange the furniture, involve them in its rearrangement. If we have to rearrange the cupboard, involve them in its rearrangement. Whether we have daughters or sons, we have to teach them to manage things. Then they will become a good husband or a good wife in the future. (*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, Volume 49, p. 536-541)

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