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“Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.” ~ Proverbs 20:11

“You can put a public school and university in the middle of every block of every city in America ~ but you will never keep America from rotting morally by mere intellectual education. Education cannot be properly called education which neglects the most important parts of man’s nature. Partial education throughout the world is far worse than none at all if we educate the mind and not the soul.” Billy Graham (Day by Day with Billy Graham, June 23)

When the Ten Commandments were taken out of the public schools, many people did not realize that the moral compass of our children had just lost its direction arrow. Over the course of the following years, we had seen public school issues change from speaking out of turn and spit balls to guns and knives in school and immorality that runs rampant in the hallways. The secular reaction to this loss of direction is to begin “character training” with such programs as Character Counts. The goal of these programs is a noble one, but they are doomed to failure before they begin. The reason is that by taking the Bible out of the equation, you can only set the desired outcome in front of children, but not the reason “why”. And educational research tells us that if you only give a child a rule, but not the reason behind the rule, there is no retention and no application to other situations.

Why should our children be honest? Because “...he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.” ~ Proverbs 11:18 and “He who sows wickedness reaps trouble...” ~ Proverbs 22:8

Why should our children display a teachable spirit? “Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers...” ~ Proverbs 16:20

Why should our children show self-control? “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” ~ Proverbs 15:1

Why should our children guard their hearts? “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” ~ Proverbs 4:23

As you start the new school year, consider taking your children through the Proverbs this year. There are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs. If you read the Proverb of the day together and discuss it, every day, all year long, matching the Proverbs chapters to the day of the month, you will be educating your child’s soul and giving them the reason “why.”