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The Five Pillars of Parenthood ~ Part 1

What does it take to be a successful Christian parent? That is a question that has been asked throughout the ages. Well, there is no golden formula that will guarantee the outcome you desire. We know from the Word of God that there were children raised in ungodly homes that went on to love and serve the Lord ~ for example, Moses (Exodus 2). There were also children raised in Godly homes that became corrupt and ungodly ~ for example the sons of Eli (1 Samuel 2-3). I believe that the Word commands us to train up our children in the way that they should go, train them to their bent and bend them towards God. If you train your children based on the following pillars, you will be bending them towards God.

Pillar #1 ~ Teach your children to discern good from evil. Help your child to think Biblically and critically to develop personal convictions and character. The only way that this can be accomplished is for your children to understand the concept of Holiness. God is holy and His ultimate aim is to make us holy. Holy means "set apart." That means set apart from this world; we are to live *in* this world but not be *of* this world. Children need to understand that:

- God is high and holy.
- God is absolute truth. (Yes, there is such a thing as absolute truth.)
- God's Word defines absolute truth.
- God's laws are for our protection.

You don't teach discernment of good from evil by immersing your children into an evil culture. You teach them to discern good from evil the same way that banks teach their tellers how to discern a counterfeit bill from the real thing. Rather than having the tellers study every possible way a bill can be counterfeited, tellers only study an authentic bill. By knowing the real thing inside and out, it is easy for them to spot when something is amiss. The same is true of children. If you want holy children, you must train them to be holy. Children must be taught good from evil by being immersed *in* the Word and being trained *by* the Word.

As a parent, it is your job to direct your children in the selection of the books they read, the websites they visit, the music they listen to, the video games they play, the entertainment they attend, the associates with whom they mingle and the kind of environment in which they are placed. The Word tells us that a little leaven leavens the whole loaf. My favorite illustration of this is taking a bowl of mud and a pure white glove. If you put the glove into the mud, the mud doesn't get glovey, but the glove gets muddy. So it is with Christian children immersed in the culture of the day. They too will get muddy ~ at best. At worst, they will become like the sons of Eli.

Truth to take away: Your Life Is Not About Pleasing You. It Is About Pleasing God.

(Read about Pillar #2 in the November issue of the CHANews)

Some thoughts and phrases taken from Pastor Chip Ingram's teaching, "How to Raise Positive Kids in a Negative World."