

My Son, Give Me Your Heart

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 23:22-26

The context of much of the book of Proverbs is set in the relationship between a father, a mother, and their children. Scripture also extends this relationship to the grandparents and their grandchildren (Deuteronomy 4:9). **Let's consider a few things from our Scripture reading:**

- Proverbs 23:22 – The sacredness of the counsel of godly parents extends even to old age.
- Proverbs 23:23 – The real wealth of the counsel is sacred truth and wise application. This comes from the instruction of the Scriptures along with the experience gained through living a life of obedience to those Scriptures. To buy the truth, etc. is to invest time and attention to what the Scriptures say.
- Proverbs 23:24-25 – Long-term joy comes from investing in the mind, heart, and life of your children, if they take it to heart and follow the Lord (cp. Proverbs 17:25 – *“grief”* and *“bitterness”*).
- Proverbs 23:26 – When we have given our hearts to the Lord and walked in His ways, it will be easier for our children to give us their hearts. If they are following the Lord, they will continually value the treasure of having godly parents and grandparents.

This is the ideal. Sadly, the pattern of godly parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren does not exist in many family situations. If anyone seeks the Lord and gives their heart to Him, He will break the negative pattern in an ungodly family and help them to start over (Exodus 20:3-6).

Let's see an example of the godly pattern:

- Proverbs 4:1-4 – Solomon's father, David had instructed him when he was young. Though his life was imperfect, David, was still a man after God's own heart.
- Proverbs 4:10-13 – Solomon talked through practical subjects that would protect and enhance a good life. This was a positive input – not just nagging and yelling when children did something wrong. Such instruction was both systematic and spontaneous, done with love and good will.

- Proverbs 4:20-27 – Godly counsel does not create dependance on the one who gives counsel. Children must be shown how to think and how to keep their own hearts through the counsel of the Lord.

Here is a sample list of some of the subjects that a father (and a mother) might share with their children:

- Proverbs 1:10-19 – What type of people to associate with. What kind of counsel to receive from others. Honesty, integrity, ethics and good citizenship. Good will to your neighbor.
- Proverbs 3:1-12,19-24 – Spiritual training. How to seek God and walk with God.
- Proverbs 5:1-23 – How to think and behave concerning the opposite sex and sexual behavior. Respect and reverence for your marriage and other people's marriages.
- Proverbs 6:1-11 – Business ethics. Handling money and debt. Work ethics and industriousness.
- Proverbs 24:21-29 – Involvement with politics, social issues / trends, and the system of justice and law.

Let us take a moment to consider God as our Father (Matthew 6:9-13). Maybe we did not have the benefit of having godly parents and grandparents. Maybe we did not know the Lord or maybe we didn't walk with Him in the past, and it affected our marriages and families negatively. Maybe we did attempt to teach our children and be an example to them, but it doesn't look like they are following our ways. What do we do? We go to God, right now. We confess to Him. We pour out our heart to Him. We listen to Him and follow Him. Now is always the time to seek the Lord (1 Peter 5:6-11; Matthew 11:28-30).

Consider these words as being spoken directly to you by your heavenly Father:

"My son (daughter), give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways."
(Proverbs 23:26)

"My son (daughter), hear the instruction of your father..." (Proverbs 1:8)

"My son (daughter), ... receive my words, and treasure my commands within you."
(Proverbs 2:1)

"My son (daughter), do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands."
(Proverbs 3:1)