

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn how to build up the Christian Church. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a believer in Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

In this eighth series, the Bible teaches five responsibilities of Christian parents with respect to raising their children. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: TO DEVELOP ALL AREAS OF LIFE. We will meditate a new Bible passage, memorise a new Bible verse and then review the previously memorised verses together.

(S)      **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is Proverbs 22:6. We will meditate the truths in the Bible together.

The memorisation verse is: To develop all areas: Proverbs 22:6. Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6.

(T)      **First. What is the meaning of training?**

Proverbs 22:6 teaches that parents have the responsibility to train their children. The word *to train* means to commit the child to the way God wants him to go. It means *to educate* and *to develop him* in that way. Therefore, *teaching* is not the same as *training* and *listening* is not the same as *learning*! The vinedresser does not *train* the vine by telling it how to grow. Nature is too strong for mere theory! The vinedresser must *prune* and *curb* the vine, *direct* and *lead* it in the way it should go. He builds poles and pulls wires between them in order to direct the vines in the way they ought to grow. Every year he prunes the dead and wild branches away, in order that the healthy branches may bear the best fruit.

(S)      **Second. What are the methods of training?**

Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers, ... bring your children up in the training and instruction of the Lord." Proverbs 22:6 and Ephesians 6:4 teach that *training* consists of four important aspects:

One. Training consists of *setting an example and praying*.

It is hopeless to try to teach a child some truth that the parents are not practising themselves! The best habits are not *taught*, but *caught* by observing the example of the parents. Parents ought to depend on God for their responsibility to train their children. Therefore, they ought to pray. God promised to do much more than what the parents pray or even can imagine (Eph 3:20).

(T)      Two. Training consists of *teaching the truth*.

The child must *know* the truth. That is, he must know the most important beliefs, values, convictions and standards of a life that please God. He must *understand* what the truth is, have *insight* in what is important and why it is important and gain *wisdom* how, when and to whom to do the right thing. Therefore, parents should use the Bible in teaching the truth, in motivating to obey and in training practical habits. They should also use the Bible to answer the questions of their children.

(S)      Three. Training consists of *practising habits*.

The child must *learn to obey or apply the truth* to his own life. In the beginning, the child learns by the example of his parents and by doing it together with his parents. Later on, the child should be given opportunities to learn to do the truth alone, but still under the supervision of the parents. Finally he should learn to do it as a habit, alone and without supervision. Every child needs coaching and encouragement. His parents should urge him to persevere until he has accomplished his goal.

In the area of practising habits, the parents and children must realise that real freedom has boundaries. Therefore, parents should *protect their child from too many choices*. In training habits, parents should *never compare one child with another* child, because God has made all children very different from one another. Comparing is very demoralising. Parents should rather motivate the child by *giving him compliments* when he makes progress and by *giving an unexpected reward*.

(T)      Four. Training consists of *discipline and correction*.

Discipline and correction helps the child to go the way he ought to go. This part will be more thoroughly discussed under Proverbs 13:24. In the area of discipline, the parent should try to distinguish between the child's need for

reassurance that his parents love him and the child's rebellion against their authority. Proverbs 10:17 says, "He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray".

**(S) Third. What are the most important areas of training?**

In Luke 2:52 we read, "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men". This verse states that God regards at least these four areas as important: namely the intellectual, physical, spiritual and social areas. The emotional area is included in the physical and the area of service in the spiritual. More specific, the following areas of training are indispensable for the child's development:

**One. Train the child to obey his parents.**

Ephesians 6:1 commands, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right". This is the first and most important truth to teach your child! It is the key to all the training of the child. If the child has learned to obey his parents in whatever is right and good, then he is able to learn all the other important areas of his training. He will learn to obey God and the governing authorities that have been placed over him. However, if a child fails to learn obedience, he cannot be trained in anything except evil and foolishness. *Obedience* is the key to train good habits and a life-style that pleases God, honours parents and contributes to building up the country!

If the child is already much older and the parents have failed to train the child in obedience, then it is always better to begin now than never. In that case it will be very good if the parents admit to their child that they have failed to train him in obedience. The parents should pray and confess their failure to God. God will forgive and give the parents new wisdom how to train their child. Parents should begin at once to train the child in obedience. If parents neglect to discipline the child's disobedience and rebellion, they actually train him to disobey and to be rebellious!

Parents ought to help the child to be engaged in pleasant and profitable activities, or else the child is sure to get into mischief and later into crime. Train the child by requesting it to do small responsibilities and by *expecting obedience*. *Encourage prompt obedience* by expressing gratefulness immediately after their willing response. And if the child does not obey immediately, then the parent must persist with the request and discipline, or else the parent will encourage disobedience. An expression says that the parent "*must conquer the first battle* or else he might lose the whole war". However, if the child hesitates, then the parent ought to help the child to do the required task until he can do it by himself.

**(T) Two. Train the child to honour his parents.**

To *honour* means to regard the parents highly, to show consideration to them and to love them without reluctance, selfish motives or fear. There are three ways in which children should learn to honour their parents: *The child honours his parents by not arguing or fighting with them*. Instead of quarrelling, the child should learn to state his point of view in a gentle way and then allow God to work it out in the way that will please him most. Children should not gossip about their parents. Gossip only dishonours people! (Prov 17:9)

*The child honours his parents by taking their suggestions and advice serious*. Proverbs 23:23 teaches the child to acquire truth, wisdom, discipline and understanding from his parents. Whenever his parents make suggestions or give advice, the child should learn from them. While he has the opportunity, he should learn from the years of experience and accumulated wisdom of his parents.

*The child honours his parents by including them in his real life*. 2 Corinthians 6:11-13 teaches Christians to open wide their hearts to one another. The child should learn to take the initiative to talk to his parents. He should learn to be willing to talk to them about his activities: what he does at school or at work, what he does together with his friends and what he does at church. He should also learn to talk to his parents about his faith and his thoughts, feelings and plans.

**(S) Three. Train the child to walk with God.**

In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, God teaches parents to *impress* God's commands on the minds and lives of their children. He says, "Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up". Parents and children should allow the Word of God to control the actions of their hands, the thoughts in their minds and the atmosphere and activities in the home! In Deuteronomy 32:46, God teaches, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law". God has given parents the responsibility to train their children to know God and to obey God. No governing authority in the world has the right to forbid parents to do this!

The Bible is the most important book that the children should study throughout their lives. The Bible gives young people knowledge of salvation (2 Tim 3:15). The Bible teaches them truth and trains them how to live righteously (2 Tim.3:16). The Bible makes them a mature and complete human being and equips them completely for their calling or task in life (2 Tim 3:17). Therefore, parents should train their children to read and study the Bible and especially to obey the Bible. Parents may make use of all kinds of means: They could have *a family Bible time*. The father or mother reads a passage from the Bible and they discuss the passage together with the children. They could have *a family prayer time* (Eph 6:18). They could memorise Bible verses together. At different stages of the child's development, the parents

ought to explain the gospel to their children and give them an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ into their lives! When the children are old enough, the parents could teach their children to have their own *quiet time* every day. A family could also serve Jesus Christ together in their neighbourhood. By means of these practical ways, the child can have the same sincere faith as his parents have. In 2 Timothy 1:5 is written, "I have been reminded of your sincere faith which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice". Parents ought to train their child to grow in faith. They should not deny their children difficult experiences in which they must trust the Lord. And parents ought to let their child share in their own experiences in which they have to trust God.

**(T)** Four. Train the child to have self-control.

2 Peter 1:5-6 teaches, "Make every effort to add to your faith ...self-control". *Self-control* is the ability to *restrain* your desires, speech and actions. Parents should train their child to restrain his desires, speech and actions. Parents should never allow the child to nag until he gets what he wants. If they do, the child will always use this method to get what he wants! Moreover, parents ought to set an example of dealing with their child in a calm and quiet way. Proverbs 10:19 teaches, "When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise". Likewise, parents should train their children to have the same calm and quiet ways when they talk to one another, especially when they are angry or upset.

**(S)** Five. Train the child to have responsibility.

Part of bearing the yoke when he is young (Lam 3:27), is to train a child to have responsibility. Parents should give their child increasing responsibilities in the home and outside the home. For example, train the child to keep the place where he sleeps and lives tidy and clean. Let him share in the family responsibilities in the home, on the field, in the shop or in the factory. Train the child to be responsible with money and possessions. Train him to travel, to relate to the opposite sex in the appropriate way and to take up a responsibility in the church.

**(T)** Six. Train the child how to respond to difficult circumstances.

It is very important that children see how their parents respond to other people and their circumstances. For the parents this is an opportunity to set an example in *love* towards people, *faith* in challenging situations and *hope* in difficult situations. Parents must realise that their children are observing their good as well as bad example. If the parents retaliate when people wrong them, threaten when people cause them to suffer (1 Pet 2:23), or when they criticise, judge or gossip about family and neighbours, the children might follow their bad example and also retaliate, threaten, criticise, judge and gossip! But if the parents set a good example, the children will most probably follow their good example. 1 Thessalonians 5:14 teaches, "Warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone". When children see how their parents serve and encourage needy people, they will learn from their example! When the children see how their parents trust God in their difficult circumstances, they will also learn to trust God in their own difficult circumstances (Rom 8:28).

**(S)** **POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. The topic today is "Develop all areas" and the reference is Proverbs 22:6. Let us memorise the Bible verse together.

**(T+S)** To develop all areas of life: Proverbs 22:6. Train a child in the way he should go.

**(T)** To develop all areas of life: Proverbs 22:6. Train a child in the way he should go.

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**(T)** **POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED**

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks. Series "Christian marriage", verses 2-5 and series "Christian parents", verse 1.

**(S)** To love and to lead: Ephesians 5:23,25. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her. Ephesians 5:23,25.

**(T)** To love and to submit: Titus 2:4-5. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Titus 2:4-5.

**(S)** To resolve conflicts: Matthew 5:23-24. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24.

(T) To remain faithful: Proverbs 3:3-4. Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favour and a good name in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:3-4.

(S) To love by spending: 2 Corinthians 12:14-15. I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions, but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. So I will very gladly spend for your souls everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less? 2 Corinthians 12:14-15.

(T) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and build Christ’s Church” and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to “Discipleship training on the air”.