

DOGS AND CHILDREN

“Train a child in the way he should go . . .” (Prov. 22:6)

Dogs were among the first animals to be domesticated. They can be “trained” to help in many ways. This includes hunting, herding, pulling loads, and protecting households. They can also be “trained” to help the police and the military. Dogs can also be “trained” for therapeutic roles in aiding the sick and infirm. Consequently, the dog came to be known as “man’s best friend”.

Forgive me for narrowing our thoughts to the U.S.A. Approximately 42.5 million American households have one or more dogs for a total population of over 73 million. The cost of owning a dog in America varies from \$2,674 each year for small dogs to \$3,536 for giant breeds. The average annual cost of owning a dog in America is \$3,085. “Many” if not “most” of these dogs are “house trained”. For the most part, while we may “want” a dog, we really don’t “need” one.

Now let’s talk about children. While we may “want” children, we really do not “need” them. Millions of babies, as you know, are so unwanted that they are aborted. Sadly, often the most dangerous place for a baby to be is in the womb of it’s mother. For those babies fortunate enough to survive being in their mother’s womb, a certain level of “training” is expected. By law, public education is mandatory and America spends more money to “train” our children than another other nation. Over 120 million households have children averaging 2.58 children per family.

This brings us to an uneasy analogy between the way we “train” dogs, and the way we “train” children. For the most part our “training” of both is only physical. Nobody “trains” a dog spiritually, for a dog doesn’t have a spirit. While children do have a “spirit” we still often treat them like dogs. How many parents do you know with a serious plan to “train” their children spiritually?

If a child was sent to school unable to feed himself, the parents would probably be charged with neglect. Yet, many children leave home totally unprepared to feed themselves spiritually. It is tragic when children have not been trained to study the Bible or defend themselves from satanic attacks. “Christian” households too often depend upon someone else to “train” their children in the way that they should go. When the home and the church do not adequately train children, a wide variety of para church organizations are attempting to do so.

The “Shema” is the centerpiece of daily worship in the Hebrew home. It reads: **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 KJV)**

The Scriptures teach that Noah built an ark to save his family (Heb. 11:7). Building the ark took a lot of time and was a lot of trouble, but it was worth it! How much trouble are you willing to go through in order to save your family?

Someone said that the best way to break a bad habit is to drop it. Parents, now is the time to turn off the TV and dust off the Bible. When you give priority to spiritual things your children will have a tendency to follow in your steps. What you “do” speaks louder than what you “say”. A man who does not care for his own is worse than an infidel (1 Tim. 5:8). Godly fathers will not only make spiritual things a priority in their own lives but will “teach them diligently” to their children. These lessons should be lived and taught every day from when we “rise up” until we “lie down”. **YOUR CHILDREN HAVE AN ETERNAL SPIRIT, PLEASE DON’T TREAT THEM LIKE A DOG!**