

**Mr. Ken Martin**

**Sermon Transcript**

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# **Rearing a Moral Child**

I'd like to continue on in our short mini-series that we began last week on the subject of parenting from a biblical perspective. Last week we talked about being up close and personal and what the responsibilities of parenthood means in light of God's sacred word. This is going to be the second installment, covering an area of vital concern to all parents with children, as well as all future parents. It has far-reaching ramifications, as I mentioned to you in the start of this series. Parenting is something that is going to go into the millennium, into the Kingdom of God, where God is going to literally have to re-parent the entirety of the world because of so many of the problems and difficulties that have been produced from wrong education. This is why the prophecies talk about a time when God's education, the knowledge of the Eternal, is going to literally fill *{the earth}* like the waters fill the sea. God's knowledge is going to be everywhere, in every nook and cranny, so that people will have access to the right things that they just have not had in this first go-round of human experience.

These past generations of human life, since the garden of Eden up until this time right now and prior to Christ's return, have not produced the kind of world that God wanted. Education is a very important part of learning how to conduct one's self as a human being; and that education begins with Mom and Dad in a parenting relationship that God ordained, for He Himself is revealed in the pages of the scripture as a loving Father, a parent.

This second installment is going to deal with a very critical, vital area of concern for all of us; and when you see it in the broad sense, how it's going to impact into the future, you begin to see why this is so critical. It deals with the subject of moral character. Moral character. I've entitled this message, "Rearing a Moral Child."

This is a tough assignment for a parent today, in our day and age, when we see all of the things that have happened and transpired from the White House and the Lewinsky problem and so many other things that are coming down today in our day and age.

It is very important to keep in mind-and I would like to stress this again as an opening comment here-that parenting plays a most important part in the plan and purpose of God.

We must keep that in mind. God is revealed in the scripture as our divine Parent, our heavenly Father. The song we just heard for special music touched on that. He's just our Father; that's just the way He is-a loving Father. But there are many human beings that grew up never knowing their fathers. Some never had good fathers. Some had wonderful fathers. But, yet, the bottom line is this: parents play an important part; and parenting, a father and a mother, is pictured as the ideal situation. Obviously, human beings have not all experienced the ideal, and so we have had to make the best of what the cards of life have dealt and the circumstances that had to be faced.

Humans try their very, very best; but, as we mentioned last time, our best is not good enough. Again, we can't rear perfect children, nor should we have this illusion or idea that we can. We can't because of the sin problem that exists, according to the scripture; but we can have great children. That should be a goal that we should strive for, to have great children-children who are morally sound, who can stand on their own two feet as God-fearing men and women in their adult stage. This is very important. How do they get to that place? Well, that's where Mom and Dad come in, and emblazoned in the Ten Commandments is that wonderful fifth commandment that says, "Honor your father and your mother," because the parents play a very critical part in the great plan and purpose of God.

So what we discover is that parenting is a process that we're all involved in to one degree or another. We all need guidelines, at whatever stage of the process we find ourselves in, whether it be working with children in their infancy, or working with them right up to college age, when they go to college. And, boy, today as never before, is it important that you ingrain the right things before they go to college because college is becoming a bastion for disintegration of the scriptures and godly principles and morality.

When I say a "moral" child, I'm not just talking and limiting this subject to the area of what tends to jump in the mind first and foremost, which is sexual infidelity. We're not talking just about that. We're talking about morality in the broad sense, that deals with ethics and behavior-how to conduct yourself, how to deal with others-which the scripture addresses. Situations dealing with money matters, where today we see so many people seduced by money; and we see the programs that just keep feeding this, like "Want to be a Millionaire," "Survivor," all these different ones, "Greed." Wow! What a title for a program, "Greed," but it does show you where peoples' hearts are. They would love to get their hands on a basket full of money because they think, "If I could just do that, that would solve all my problems." The answer is, "No." Problems wouldn't be solved. They might be eased a little bit, but that's not going to solve the problems because we live in an imperfect world. God is going to bring about perfection. Man cannot bring perfection through this world. As a result, we find ourselves called by God now to recognize our own imperfections in our child rearing. Some of us have done good. Some of us have done fair. Some of us have done bad in certain things; but, I mean, it has touched everyone.

As I mentioned to you, this series of sermons is not designed to throw stones at anyone, but to merely show you where we have had weak spots in our upbringing ourselves; and you don't know what you don't know. When you start parenting a child, and you suddenly have this precious little gift of life, which is just an absolutely wonderful blessing from God, "What do I do now?" That's why we need guidelines. That's why we need help.

Today we've got a lot of pseudo-teachers out there that are telling us that if we do this or if we do that, this will produce this wonderful child. Some say, "Well, if you do this, this will eliminate all these bad problems." But they never address the sin in question, which the Bible addresses and says, "You can have great children; but even at your best state, no matter what, it's altogether vanity. It goes nowhere without God; and except the Lord God build the house, you labor in vain." So if you are a parent and you are trying to labor through rearing a moral child in this day and age without the help of God, you're shooting yourself down. It's going to be very, very difficult to pull that one off because of the growing trend of the day and age in which we find ourselves living.

What I would like to do is to focus on a very important scripture that is discovered in **Matthew 12, verse 33**. What parents must always keep in mind...and this, see, is not only for parents who now have children, because some of you may have already had your children. Well, that means now you've got to look back in hindsight as to what did I do, how did I do it, what could I have improved on, how will this impact in the future when given responsibility for training and teaching the babes in Christ in the Kingdom of God when Jesus Christ comes and establishes the Kingdom of God, because the people are going to need help and teaching.

The ones that survive into the millennium period of time, who come through this time of great tribulation and difficulty spoken of in the Bible, remember, they're going to come into that time frame with an awful lot of baggage and misunderstanding and misconceptions about parenting, about rearing children; and part of the job of the saints of God is to illuminate those minds and to help those parents to start parenting a God-fearing generation. So much you find in prophecies in the scripture that God talks about, like in Israel, how Israel degenerated into a period of time where it says, "And there arose," after all the leaders dissipated and the parents apparently didn't follow through and carry on the message, and so, what happened?

It says, "There arose a generation that knew not the Eternal." Now, the Gentile world as a whole does not...that means the non-Israelitish world...they don't know God's hand and purpose in these things. How do I know? Because when the prophecies speak, when He comes back and He executes these prophecies, it says of the Gentiles, "...that the nations might know that I am the Eternal." They don't know that now. They think Buddha is their god. They think Allah is their god. They think all kinds of different elements, but they do not know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel. That is a God yet to be revealed, except He already has been to a handful of people who have been called out of this world and given spiritual eyes to see and spiritual ears to hear what God is doing.

As a result, we find today that a parent, a God-fearing parent in the body of Christ today, must always keep in mind-and we're going to have to teach others eventually this very same lesson-that they must keep the end in mind regarding rearing children. What is the end result that is going to be accomplished in this young child, this young baby boy or young baby girl? What will he be like when he's an adult? So, we could ask it this way, in light of Matthew 12:33: What kind of tree will this child be when grown to adulthood? Now we see in verse 33, it says:

**Matt. 12:33** - *Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.*

{What will be} the product that comes out of the life of that child that now has developed into adulthood? This is what we work toward as parents; and our love and concern should be with this in mind, because you want the right fruit, the fruit that will have God's blessing. Notice, it either is one way or the other, and the scriptures in other places say you will know them by their fruits. So this is what we look for in rearing a moral child. We want to create an atmosphere that will produce a moral child; and in today's moral climate, that is a most serious challenge to all parents, whether you're a member of the body of the believers of the Church of God or whether you're just out there as a parent suddenly with a child and you have to take care of that child. You've got a job on your hands. The reason why is because of what is happening all around us.

**II Timothy, chapter 3**, verses 1-5. Here we are reminded that we enter into a time frame in the last days that are called "perilous times." A parent's job is one of outgoing concern for the family and for the child, for the children being reared. If the parent's heart and mind are not attuned to the job at hand, if they don't desire to be hands-on parents and they've got other things that preoccupy their time, then this creates a serious problem in accomplishing the goal of rearing a moral child, as we're going to see throughout the message today.

**II Tim. 3:1** - *...In the last days know that perilous times shall come...because you are going to run into individuals and these men are men who are sometimes parents, and they're going to be, (verse 2), lovers of their own selves...* Question: Is this why we read in the newspapers sometimes that a parent sometimes gets upset because a child is crying, because the child somehow disturbed his little whatever it was that he felt got disturbed? He gets upset and he wants that child to be quiet. He shakes that child. He shakes it so hard, in some cases, we hear the stories about a child being shaken, literally, to death. Or sometimes a child is thrown up against the wall and it's little head breaks open or gets a concussion and the child dies. There are just horrific things we hear about all the time. Why is that? Is it because men are lovers of their own selves? That child doesn't mean as much as the quiet; it interferes with "my" world? Lovers of their own selves? Food for thought.

Moving along, it says *they would be covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents...*so children are going to be reared in an atmosphere today of disobedience to parents, so if a parent is trying to instill certain things in a godly way and you're living in a day and age of perilous times, where disobedience to parents is kind of the thing that's going down, then it makes you realize that you, as a parent, are swimming upstream in life while the masses are going the other way. That's why we need help from on high as never before. *People will become unthankful*, they won't be thankful for that little child and the responsibilities that God so lovingly has placed in their hands. They look at the child as a burden rather than a joy. They fail to remember that it's God's heritage that they're dealing with, that that child is on loan from God to them. That child is not their child, that Mom and Dad, in concert with each other and God are the ones responsible for bringing that child's life into existence.

We see that the attitude in the world around us becomes, (verse 2, *continuing*), *unholy*, (verse 3), *without natural affection...*you've got to have affection when you're rearing a family. One large denomination used to have a bumper sticker, "Have you hugged your child today?" That's because we need to be hugged, we need to be touched, we need to be reaffirmed in those earlier years when emotions tend to dominate and we haven't kicked into gear yet with adult feelings and thoughts and emotions that begin to show more maturity as maturation takes place.

No, we see all these things get to the place where it says they *are*, (verse 4), *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God...*wow! We've got a pleasure-minded world today! Not that pleasure is wrong. God is the author of pleasure. He wants us to be very happy in what all we do. God is not a God who wants to deny us pleasure. He's the author of it, but what's happened is God is being left out of the picture, and people are becoming pleasure-minded. They're seeking pleasure at the expense of God instead of pleasure with the blessing of God. That makes a big difference. That's why they can never be satisfied. They go around, (verse 5), *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof*. In other words, "God, you stay out of my life. Keep that power out of my life because I want to be the one in charge. I want to determine what's going to happen here. *We are admonished*, from such turn away.

So what we have here today is that morality comes in all shapes and all sizes. That's what we're hearing around us constantly. Nobody seems to know what is right or wrong any longer. Nobody seems to know what is moral any more, what is good, what is evil. People are having a hard time putting a definition on things, but God has a clear-cut picture of what these things mean. Another bumper sticker quote: "If it feels right, then do it." Well, that has a lot of latitude in it. How should I interpret that? You know, if it feels right to rob a bank, should you do it? Is that what that means? No, obviously, no. Well, if you want to go and...well, let's not go there, because, you see, people can go anywhere they want with these types of bumper stickers. They are made in such a way to create all kinds of illicit thought processes.

Values differ even in "Christian" homes. People who claim to be Christians have a different standard and value system. Usually today what has happened in this so-called "pot-luck morality," we've got people out there who claim they are Bible teachers; and they say, "Well, it should be done a certain way here." And we have other groups that are not necessarily biblically oriented; but they write books saying, "Well, nobody really knows this. Nobody really understands this, so really you should just do it this way, and whatever works good for you. Whatever makes your boat float, go for it." That's the way they look at it...pot-luck morality. Then, of course, there is the subtle influence of society that is working on us all the time, putting thoughts into the mind, working on human thought processes in such a way that people, then, are led away from what God actually says proper rearing of a moral child is all about. And, so, today, there is great question in this area.

Christian values are to reflect the person of Jesus Christ. If one says that he is rearing his children with Christian values, then that child should be reflecting Jesus Christ, according to the scripture. Jesus Christ always demonstrated out-going concern for others, and that's exactly what a parent has to do for children. He has to reach outside of self and sacrifice the self, things that the parent would like to do, for the sake and the joy of rearing those children. It's a wonderful thing that has been placed before parents, but parents have lost sight of this in the world in which we live. Only a very small handful by comparison are striving to do it conscientiously according to the scriptural mandate that is given in the word of God.

Children today, apart from God, what kind of world do they grow up in? It's called a natural world. How do you grow up and develop in a natural world? Well, the senses, the five senses, six senses, whatever people want to call it...they look around and they see, so they make decisions based on what they see; what they hear, what they smell, oh! What they taste, ah! And what they touch. And some believe they have a little extra, call it ESP, and that they've got some added sense. Well, those things are...let's just put that one on a shelf. God gave the basics for getting along in a natural world; but what a child has to learn as a child develops, what our children have to learn, what all children have to learn, and what the world as babes in Christ will have to learn when it is their time, when they are to be re-parented, is that when you are dealing with the Almighty God, then you are going to discover, you are dealing with the supernatural world, not just a physical world. You cannot take a supernatural God and put Him in a physical test tube and test Him. You've got to be able to discover Him some other way; and that way can be found, and that way is found and brought forth in the pages of the scripture.

You can't smell God. You can't taste God. You can't feel God. And people can come up with wacky religions and say, "God is in the podium. I'm touching God. God is in the tree. God is in the air." That's pantheism-they're worshiping gods of many nations and then they get into this nature worship. They are either worshiping all kinds of gods or they are worshiping all kinds of elements of creation.

The scripture addresses that very thing. It says how people get caught off guard and go off the deep end. We're going to see that shortly here. But the thing we want to keep in mind is that if Christian values are to reflect the person of Jesus Christ, then a parent's moral obligation and mandate from *God is to make them {the children} God-conscious, {conscious of} where this world came from.* They're hearing that this world evolved. They're hearing that this world was just kind of a fluke in the universe because, you see, there are so many things out there and they're all dead. They're not going anywhere. Should we be so audacious as to think we're the only ones? God says, "You are the only ones. I made the earth. I made it to be inhabited. I put people on it, and I am going to see that My plan and great purpose is brought to pass." He doesn't beat around the bush. He just tells us exactly like it is in the pages of the scripture, but people don't want to hear that.

They want a world to their own liking; and so, that's why the vast majority of people choose not to bring God into the picture when rearing their children. They rear them all right, but they rear them in a physical world. The child grows up, and if the child grows up without the awareness of the spiritual world and God, I submit to you, dear brethren, they are going to have one terrible time dealing with the subject of morality, because morality is based on an awareness of a high supreme God that is watching our every move, who is going to evaluate and judge where we're coming from. As it says in the scripture, "Remember the Lord in your youth. Do what you want to do, but remember you're going to be called on the carpet to give an account of how you use this gift of life. Did you use it selfishly for yourself, or did you use it for others?"

When we look at the subject of parenting, we begin to realize that a child is in serious trouble if not taught at an early age about this supernatural world. Not the occult side of it, but the good, the righteous, and the clean side of it that gives glory to God and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to this earth to deal on our behalf with the sin question that we all struggle with. As a result of that, we have hope for the future.

Let's take a look at **Romans, chapter 1**, the book of Romans. The apostle Paul knew this very clearly, and he preached about this very strongly. He begins here in the book of **Romans, chapter 1, verse 18**, in which *he says*:

**Rom. 1:18** - For the wrath of God...he brings in something very important here that a lot of people don't want to talk about. God can get really upset. Remember, God today is invisible to people only because mankind chose to run away from God. God was there in the garden of Eden. The first man and the first woman saw God walking in the garden and talked with *Him*. As a result, then, {of what happened in the garden}, as the prophecy says in **Isaiah**, God is a God that hides Himself. He stays out of the way, working out His plan and purpose, to see where man is going to take *this*.

*We see here that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.* Now, this is talking about the third heaven where God's throne is, where God operates from. The first heaven is the

heaven of the atmosphere of our earth. The second heaven is the celestial space. The third heaven, none of us has ever had an opportunity to take a glimpse of that because that's in an area where God Himself dwells in His supremacy. The apostle Paul one time spoke in the third person. He may have had an opportunity...he writes about it...he says, "I knew a man once who was taken into that heavenly range." He says, "I heard things, unspeakable words," he says, "whether in or out of the spirit, I can't tell." He says, "I don't know what fully happened there." The apostle Paul was given great insight into things. He had to bear a lot of heavy responsibility because of the terrible things that happened in his early years *prior to conversion. But the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth, or "hold back the truth" is the concept here. They are not giving you the full scoop. They are not telling you everything. They are holding back the truth in unrighteousness, (verse 19) Because, notice, that which may be known of God...okay, we want to put God to the test. How can we learn about God? If you want to know about God, it's made manifest...for God has shown it to them. What has He shown us? He has shown us, (verse 20) For the invisible...oh! There is an invisible realm! There is a supernatural realm! There's a lot going on in a place that we don't even know and comprehend because we live in the natural world. But the scripture bumps it up one higher and says, "Hey! There's something going on here you need to be aware of. For the invisible things of Him from the creation...oh! That's what we see! So the invisible realm is made aware or visible through the physical realm. How did it get this way? Where did this all come into being like this? How did it all happen the way it did?*

Children ask questions. What is the big one they ask when they are growing up? "Why?" The parent gives an answer. "Why?" Another answer. "Why?" They just, "Why, why, why, why, why?" They want to know everything! Why this? Why that? And God wants us to understand and know why. And he *says that these things are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. All you have to do is take a look at something like the Discovery channel and see "Wild Kingdom" and see all these marvelous animals, insects, creatures, birds, that have been marvelously engineered and designed, of which man steals God's secrets, steals the ideas and puts it into his war-making capability. If you go back 50 years ago, and the famous Corsair of World War II fame, the Navy Corsair, got the idea for the design of that when the guy was walking down there and he saw these gulls with these kind of bent wings; and so they said, "Well, why don't we make an airplane like that?" So the Navy came up with the Corsair, which was a very fine and dependable aircraft form during those fighting years of World War II.*

There are many other things: bugs that shoot out a spray, so you gas the enemy with a certain type of device. All these little things are back and forth, back and forth, elements that show what kind of intelligence did this. It's hard to say this little bug evolved this design. You know, this little bug's brain inside said, "Well, I'm going to be up against some big beetle out there, so I'm going to have to have some kind of device. I will evolve into a stink bug; and when something else comes up, I will shoot out this spray and stink it up good." Isn't that little bug smart? It figured all that out by itself. No! Being facetious,



obviously. God took great pleasure in making one thing where it has an advantage, but then He makes something else that has the ability to undo the other one. And it's back and forth and back and forth. What's the reason? So that no bug can glory in His presence! Yeah! Even the bugs can't glory in His presence. They get humbled like man does, same way. Everything has it's good point and then it has it's weak spot, where one thing can outdo the other.

Fire ants. Man can't control them. God made anteaters. They come in there, stick that gooey tongue down there, and they can eat up a whole fire ants' nest. It doesn't hurt him. Now, how did that anteater say, "I just love fire ants. I'm going to develop a sticky tongue so that I can stick it into this nest here and let these fire ants come. They think they're going to get me, and I'm going to get them instead"? It just goes to show there's a lot to be learned; and man is still in the very, very beginning stages of learning. The supernatural world must be revealed in the context of faith to those who come to want to know about God.

**Hebrews 11:6** tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please God, because you have to believe that He is, based on all that you see. You have to know that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. If you are asking Him for understanding and for wisdom and knowledge and the things that the scripture advises you to seek Him for, you're going to receive that blessing. If you don't put your heart into that, if you don't believe that, you don't receive that. The more you do, the greater the reward, the blessing, according to the scripture.

The other side of that equation is the fact that in the context of faith, we have to remember, like the apostle Paul said in I Corinthians, chapter 2, if you will turn there with me, please. Chapter 2, verses 9-10. There is another component that brings about an awareness of the spiritual world. That is called the Holy Spirit of God, the very Spirit that Jesus said would come and bring comfort into the minds and hearts of God-fearing men and women, called to see and understand through the Spirit, this spiritual world that *exists*. *And so:*

**I Cor. 2:9-10** - But as it is written, concerning *the natural world*, notice, "*Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither can it enter into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.*" They haven't got a clue where God's coming from. Ask them! They can't tell you. They don't know. But how are we *blessed to know*? Notice, **verse 10**: "*But God has revealed them,*" to whom? "*To us...*" Paul is talking...to those who have received, *had access to the Spirit of God*, "*by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God.*" And God's things do go deep, in a righteous and a sound and a proper way. So, with this in mind, the belief in a transcendent, personal God is necessary, is absolutely necessary, if one is to establish ethical laws that are absolute and universal to help a child when you are teaching that child principles of life.

We live in a world today where they say there are no absolutes. They say there is no universal truth. That's what we're being told. That's what children grow up hearing all around them, so unless you counterbalance that and say, into the young child's mind at an early age and make them, as I said last time, God-conscious...don't try to convert them. Remember, we can't convert them. Only God can. We can't make them perfect. God will ultimately bring perfection in the lives of His sons and daughters; but the best we can hope for is to have great kids, great kids by giving them a hope and a purpose and a future to live for. There's something wonderful about knowing what your destiny is as a human being, and our destiny is far greater than most people ever dreamed. In this particular case here, we see that a child has to have that exposure because without God, there is no basis for objective ethics. There is no basis for it. Somebody will question you. As soon as you put on the table and say, "Well, we'll live by this," somebody else will challenge you and say, "Now, wait a second. Who do you think you are and what gives you the right to say this is how we should live?" I mean, this is what the Russians say to America. "America, why are you trying to impose your standard, your ethics, your values on us, as a Russian society?" Well, we could say the same to them. "Why are you busy trying to impose yours on..." And other nations feel the same. So with human beings, it's impossible; but with God all things are possible.

What does God show? The scripture gives us a universal standard of ethics that applies to...no matter what nation you live in, you're all under that code of ethics and behavior and will be judged accordingly. It's called the laws of God. It is interesting. I think *it's David Stern in his book, The Jewish Old Testament and New Testament. He put those out together, David Stern, and he points that out. He says that what the scripture in parenting is dealing with is teaching children how to become children of the commandments, children of the living God, because His commandments are the ones that guide and direct man on the right and proper path toward life. Without them, we are going the broad way that leads to destruction.*

Let's take a look at something else here; but, first of all, before we get there, biblical morality serves to reveal God. This is why we have to teach children the moral values of God's way of life as early as possible. They reveal God's calling to, what? That your destiny is to be, like the scripture says, to take time and be holy, to walk as an individual in a Christ-like manner. That's an everyday job and responsibility.

Also, what that biblical morality demonstrates is that it establishes a standard of acceptable behavior, acceptable behavior where God says, "If you do this, you are going to be blessed. If you do this over here, you're in trouble." God's standard also defines sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. God's law was given to show us and guide us and keep us on track. All the ethical systems that man comes up with in the world...there are some good elements in them, and then it's a mix. You know, you're always going to get a mix in man's world. That's just the way it is. But there is no higher standard in directing moral behavior than that which comes from the Bible. There is no other place that you will find a higher standard given.

The standard of God tells us, reach for the standard. Children have to grow up to the standard. We don't water down the standard for the sake of the child. When the child does something that is wrong, wrong behavior, a loving parent has to move in and show the child why that is wrong. Not just say, "It's wrong," but show why it is wrong, because that doesn't bring the blessing of God to you. The blessing of God from that supernatural world comes by adhering to what God says, by being obedient. What basically it keeps us mindful of is a very important thing that I would like to stress at this point.

When you are talking about parenting, in rearing a moral child, please remember...boy, this says it all in a nutshell. It is God who invented parenting, not man; so whatever man puts on the table and says, "This is the way you should rear your children," take it with a grain of salt. But when God speaks, make sure you've got both ears attuned because God has it absolutely the way it is. Remember, He is our heavenly Parent. He is in the job, the responsibility, of parenting.

What does a parent do when a child comes on the scene. You provide the child's needs—every need. You take care of it. What has God said He is? Our heavenly Parent, and He provides our every need—not only physically, but the scripture shows, spiritually. He has that capability. This is a wonderful thing that the scripture reveals that you won't find written in books by men, leaving God out of the picture. Training children should be characterized by the same standard of moral excellence. Children should all be evaluated by that same standard. You don't water it down. Today sometimes you'll hear people make statements like this. If the boy *does something* wrong, they say, "Well, {chuckle}, you know, he's all boy." That's excusing wrong behavior. It needs to be corrected. Sure, he's all boy; but "all boy" means he can either do it the right way or the wrong way. If you let him do the wrong way and you don't correct it, if you just say, "He's all boy," you haven't done your job of parenting.

Are we going to do that in the millennium? If somebody starts going the wrong direction, we say, "Well, spiritually speaking, he's just like a little boy. We'll just let it go." No. He says, "No, no, no, no, no, no. This is the way, walk you in it. And here's the reason why. This is how God's blessing comes to you. Not going the other way." This becomes very important in terms of how God is going to establish ethical systems of morality through the entirety of the world tomorrow in the Kingdom of God. Without that, the nations are lost. The so-called "millennial Kingdom of God" would be exactly like it is in this world today. It would be nothing but chaos and confusion. And, so, it's important to keep the broad picture in mind.

Virtue and values of life have got to be the same and apply to all at all ages. God's virtues and values apply to all ages, young and alike. Nobody is exempt from it.

Now let's take a look very quickly at what that standard is, found back in the book of **Deuteronomy, chapter 6**. Moses speaks God's words *to Israel, and he says:*

**Deut. 6:4-5** - *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love...this is where your heart needs to be...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. In the New Testament, Jesus added, "with all of your mind," the thinking apparatus of your mind. He came to magnify the commandments, and this particular one He magnified. It is very important. And he (Moses) says:*

**Verses 6-7** - *And all these words which I command you this day shall be in your heart, and you shall teach them diligently unto your children. Why? Because children need them. If children are not given these words, then they grow up during the formative years in a natural world, totally void of a spiritual world. Then what happens when they come up to adulthood? Well, when they come to adulthood, and then they start making decisions for themselves, they are suddenly thrown into this natural world with all this stuff swirling around them; and they have to make decisions, such as, "Do I go sit and watch a program like 'Crossing Over'?" {This is} a new TV show where this guy looks like a nice basic fellow, and he supposedly has this gift. He talks to the dead on the other side; so if there is somebody you would like to talk to, you go to him. And so, he's got this show now, apparently. People sit there and they ask him questions, and then he tells them all about these things, what the person on the other side is trying to say. Now, see, if a child had been reared with a scriptural admonition, what would the child immediately spot regarding that?*

First of all, judge not according to appearance. The guy maybe looked like a nice guy on the outside, but no way is he talking to the dead on the other side. How do I know? That's what he says, but God says, "The living know they shall die, but the dead know not anything." Who do we believe? What God says, or what this guy says he is telling you comes from the other side. He's talking to somebody, but he's not talking to dead people who once were alive. He's got spirit problems. He just doesn't know it. He's becoming familiar with a spirit, and seducing spirits are everywhere.

It's all done in the context of fun. You see it on television. Advertisements for, hey, call in and get your horoscope read. Hey, you know, this is just done for entertainment. You can have a taro card reading, and you can have those taro cards read on your behalf. They'll tell you about your future. Would you rather have a future read that way, or like the Japanese right now. They're just totally mesmerized by astrology. It's big stuff over there now. They want to know about the future and how things are supposed to be. And you see why God says, "They know not the Eternal." They've got all these ideas. Something that was never translated in their rearing and their upbringing. They were taught other things. We know why, according to the scripture, and how God is going to reverse that equation in the process of time. But God is the one who shows very clearly here, that children need this. *He says:*

*Verse 7 (continuing) - ...and you shall talk to them when you sit down in the house, when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

Now, what do we learn from this? We learn basic elements that children need to know when they're growing up. If you are going to build a moral fabric into a child, the child's got to know as he is growing up who made the sun, who made the moon. You make him God-conscious. You don't tell him evolution caused it to evolve. "It was just a fluke, child." No. You tell him exactly, "A supreme God, Creator of all things, made the heavens and the earth. The sun is one of His handiworks. The stars, all the beauty, everything you see..." You make that child aware of that spiritual world, and that there is one God-not like people today who are going back to the old ways, the old worship of nature, the old pantheism and the Druidic principles of past religions and ideas.

No wonder God says there's nothing new under the sun. If people knew their history, if they would go back and check, they could find out, "Hey, this is the same old same old." Instead, they dress it up with a new suit of clothes. They bring it on the stage of life, and they say, "Hey, we've got something wonderful to tell you. This is brand new." Bologna! It's not brand new. It's the old stuff that's been handed down. It's just dressed up and served up on a different platter. And God says, "Don't be fooled by that," because seducing spirits are out there. Timothy warns about that in his writings, when Paul writes to him. What is stated in there? He says that people will not endure sound doctrine. They will leave the very sound, rock-solid instruction of the scripture. It says, "And they will be turned away to fables." They will be looking for people who will tell them anything and everything, but just don't tell them about God. Like this one gentleman who claims to be a minister, Episcopalian Bishop Spong, and then here, he turns around and says the Bible is wrong concerning a certain area. To have the audacity to say that God is wrong is really showing how far people are getting out of hand and why God's wrath is going to come in the process of time.

So, one thing we learned in this standard, people are going to have to learn there's one God, one God family, and that Most High God is called the Father. Christ came to reveal the Father, and the Father, likewise, to reveal His Son. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And so, Jesus came to show us that God is a family and that we are all the children of God, the sons and daughters of God, to become His eternal family members. What a destiny to be a part of!

Then, number two, we learned here in verse 6 that all these words have to be in your heart, *so if you're* parenting, notice what we do. Not only {do we} parent our own children with these words in our heart, but we're going to have to, in the world tomorrow of God's Kingdom, we're going to have to have God's words in our heart to parent and re-parent the world. They're going to have to learn God's standards and values. We can't teach them the errors. See, we've all made our mistakes in this life. No one has been a perfect parent. Only God has the solution in parenting. That's why it must be launched from a biblical perspective and not from a human perspective; and if kept in mind, you

can produce great children. Not perfect children, but great children. Children that God can work with in the process of time because they have already had the pre-programming and instruction that is necessary to send them down the right course through life. It's a straight and narrow course that leads to life and few there be that find it, because a lot of people will not subscribe to what God says.

All right. Parents have to have it in their hearts. Notice **Malachi's** warning. Parents, the fathers have to turn their hearts to the children; the children have to turn their hearts back to the fathers. We've got to get involved from the heart, not just words; and that brings us to the *third thing that we learned here in verse 7*:

*Verse 7 - And you shall teach them diligently unto your children...merely what that means is, teach them through the normal everyday activities of life. So, when a child is very small and the child looks up and says, "Who made the sun, Mommy? Daddy?" You say, "God made the sun." "Why?" You know, here comes the question. "Because it's a very important part of God's plan. Without the sun, we wouldn't be able to have the nice things we have here on the earth. We couldn't grow food. We have to have light, and light is very important in being able to live." And you just go on and on, and the child is just sucking this up like a sponge, you see. Just drinking it in like a sponge, because this is what the mind needs. It needs to be fed the things of God.*

All right. Once those things are learned, then we come to an awareness, as we draw to conclusion now, that do's and don'ts are both part of moral training. We've all been exposed to "do this, don't do that." Do's and don'ts are both part of moral training. However, it is very important as parents never to get preoccupied with trying to suppress evil in the life of a child at the expense of elevating good. You've got to elevate good constantly in the mind of a child. "This is why you did it because this is good. This is the better way to do it." If you are always worried, "Well, if I let the child do this, the child might do this and the child might do that; and I don't want him to get in trouble, so I'm going to protect him. I'm going to make sure..." We are assuming something. We are assuming they are going to do wrong. If they do wrong, we correct the wrong. That's the job of parenting. God has means for dealing with that. But we don't want to be always assuming and trying to govern every little action so that it suppresses the child. We are not trying to suppress the child. We are trying to elevate the child to a higher awareness of God's great purpose for life.

Too many times parents have told children what is wrong and what not to do, but they haven't told them what was right and what they should do. They haven't given the rationale behind them. "Well, why?" "Don't ask me why. You just do what I tell you." That leaves a void in a child's life. If they don't get answers, they're going to look for answers elsewhere. Where should they be getting answers? From you, as parents! Where will people, where will God be causing people in the world tomorrow, the babes in Christ that will be coming...where will they be getting their answers from? According to the scriptures, from the saints of God, because the Kingdom will be under their auspices and

governance, according to the book of Daniel. Their Kingdom will have no end. Jesus Christ will be the King of that Kingdom, in Jerusalem; and the saints of God will be involved in a massive reeducation of the whole world, teaching these principles that are words of life that affect everyday life. Not these things that go on today all too often, trying to guide people, telling them this, telling them that, and then, low and behold, the poor individual is messed up at the end of the road of life.

Negative moral training leaves a void that can cause serious problems when a child becomes a young adult. For example, if they don't know how to view money from God's perspective, somebody comes along later and asks them to carry out some unethical behavior, what do they do? Well, they might compromise. They might look the other way when somebody says, "Hey, I'll give you all this money if you will just look the other way and pretend you don't see what's going down." That happens all the time. It's called corruption within even the police departments and other areas where individuals are bought off by criminal elements.

What happens to an individual's morality when he goes to college. Parents are being warned today about sending kids on these "senior trips," like to Cancun and places like that. Parents have to be on top of things. Why? Because, low and behold, what ends up happening is people go down there and guys and gals get into morally compromised situations. But then, on top of that, what is even worse is, who foots the bills because the parents didn't take note of that? They're being scammed off with all kinds of huge debts and bills that are coming in that these kids have charged up in foreign countries, and it's creating quite a stir right now in some circles.

Restraining waywardness must be accompanied by righteous instruction and encouragement. If you're going to hold back waywardness where a child might be doing something he's not supposed to be doing, he's got to be taught the right balance in the context of righteousness and encouragement. That's what we're going to do in the world tomorrow when God's Kingdom is established. People are going to have to know why it is better for them to do it a certain way.

If a child grows up into adulthood and doesn't have a right concept, a healthy concept, of right and wrong, good and evil, then guess what happens-he is subject to compromising his virtue. It's happening every day, and I hate to say it. We saw a glaring tragedy of that from the President of the United States of America, something that I wish had never happened; but it did, because something was missing in that man's life that caused a moral compromise and put a terrible, terrible shock, not only to his family but the entire nation. But a lot of people passed it off, said, "Hey, what's the deal? It's private, you know, consenting adults, we hear."

Do you see what a job it is to rear a moral child today? It's a big job. It requires that you are going to have to pray and pray and pray harder; but, as God would have you, enjoy the trip along the way because it's part of life. Child rearing was not meant to be a burden.

It was meant to be a joy, a teaching joy, a learning experience, preparing for something even *greater*.

*One final scripture, Micah 6, verse 8:*

**Mic. 6:8** - *He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*

How is that going to be possible if a parent has not instilled morality in the child at an early age? If a child just grows up kind of in a natural world minus God, I submit it's going to be very difficult. That's why we have a serious responsibility not only to learn from our child rearing...and if we've already had our children, we have to realize there's a big job yet ahead. We are all going to be partakers of it because God has shown us and taught us these basics; and He is going to expect them, then, to be brought to bear in His Kingdom when His Son returns. The whole world will learn how to walk humbly with God, to reach for a standard that, for the most part, they have turned their back upon. They don't want to hear about His commandments. They don't want to hear about His laws; and God says when that happens, "Your house is left unto you empty."

You will never understand the joy of parenting that God intended from a biblical perspective to bring happiness and joy to your life...because God knew that none of us could rear perfect children. Many parents have tried. It's been one terrible frustration, and the reason why? The sin question. You can't leave God out of the equation because only God can deal with that final element that will turn a human being around from what is potentially lost apart from God to what has great potential for the future and can be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. That great High Priest is at the right hand of the Father, working for you, working for me, and working for anyone who will turn to Him and walk the moral code of ethics that God has set for us all.