

# Why is It Important to Teach Our Children?

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## 1. We have a duty

Perhaps one of the most important duties we have as parents is to teach our children about God and His love for mankind. As parents we have the responsibility to rear our children as obedient children of God. If we fail to recognize this duty, we jeopardize not only our own salvation, but the salvation of our children and maybe even our grandchildren.

Teaching our children is not a new command. In the Old Testament the children of Israel were commanded to teach their children. In Deut. 6:2 we find

**“That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.”**

In verse 7 of that same chapter we read:

**“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.**

Notice the scripture says to *diligently* teach – when you are home, when you are not home, when you rise, and when you lay down. In other words, don't neglect any opportunity to instruct your children because their salvation will depend on it. This verse illustrates the importance we should place on teaching our children.

In Eph 6:4 God tells us **“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”**

Certainly it is important to teach our children because it is commanded by God for us to do so.

## 2. They Have a Duty

Many places in the Old Testament where the instruction to teach the children was given, we also see a reason given for that instruction. In Gen. 11:21, God said teaching the children would “prolong their days in the land”. (also Deut. 6, Deut. 32:47) This promise was a promise by God to bless future generations of His people, IF they would keep His commandments. Our children likewise have the promise of God's blessings, if they will be faithful to His word; but just as the children of Israel were promised reward for faithfulness, they were also promised punishment for unfaithfulness (Deut. 30:15-19). Our children have set before them both good and reward and evil and punishment, just as the children of Israel.

Our young people have (or will have at the age of accountability) the same responsibilities as we do as Christians.

We should worship – John 4:24, Abound in the work of the Lord – I Cor. 15:58, Study to show ourselves approved – II Tim. 2:15, Teach- Mark 16:15-16, and Present our bodies a living sacrifice – Romans 12:1-2.

Just because our children are young, it does not mean they are not able to be profitable for the Lord. Paul encouraged Timothy in I Tim. 4:12 **“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”**

Our young people must follow God’s command as given by Solomon in Ecc. 12:1 **“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth...”**

There are many examples of faithful youths in the Bible we can learn from. We could study of David in I Samuel, of Joseph in Genesis 39-50, of Daniel and his three friends, of Jesus and His perfect example for all to follow. Certainly, our young people have a duty to God.

There are likewise many examples of both good and bad parents in the Bible.

We remember the failures of Eli in allowing the evil ways of his sons in I Sam. 3, and the bad example Saul was to his son Jonathan in I Sam. 20, and Athaliah, the mother of king Ahaziah, as she counseled her son wickedly in II Chron. 22:3.

We also remember the example of Moses’ mother in Exodus, she must have taught Moses as he chose **“rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”** Heb 11:25. Remember also Manoah, Sampson’s father, as he obeyed the commands of God concerning his son in Judges 13, and Hannah as she dedicated her son Samuel to the work of the Lord in I Samuel 1. Do you remember Abraham? Abraham was to be blessed by God and notice at least one of the reasons why God chose Abraham – **“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”** Genesis 18:19.

As we at Nesbit (and others) leave for camp this week, let us remember how important our children are to God. They are the future elders, deacon, wives, mothers, fathers, Bible class teachers, Christians – of the Lord’s church, if we teach them to be. As the saying goes “We are only one generation away from apostasy”.

We have a duty as parents, grandparents, teachers, as Christians, to teach our children (Eph 6:4).

Our children have a duty fear God and keep his commandments (Ecc. 12:13, 14).

**“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”**

Proverbs 22:6