

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1997 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

THE BATTLE FOR OUR HOMES
By H. Robb French

Printed Book: No Date -- No Copyright

* * * * *

Digital Edition 12/13/97
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

1
THE HOME

I feel it on my heart in nearly every meeting to speak on the subject of the home. It was almost my mother's dying request that I speak more on this subject. Maybe we can boil it down a little tonight, but the subject is a little hard to condense. I am sure we're all interested in the home. It is the salvation of our society; no nation will rise higher than the average home; our society will never rise higher than the average home. If the home goes down our civilization does down. Our freedom and democracy goes. That's why the devil has his big guns focused on the American home. Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler all knew the importance of the home. They established themselves as absolute dictators by destroying God's first established institution -- the home.

* * * * *

2
A PROMISE TO PARENTS

I am taking for a text tonight the greatest promise that God ever breathed out of heaven for parents. You know where it's found, no doubt. The 22nd chapter of the book of Proverbs and the 6th verse: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." I submit to you again, that's the greatest promise God ever gave to fathers and mothers. The tragic thing about it is that so many parents are ruling themselves out of the bounds of this gracious promise. Training is a strong word. It is a profoundly suggestive word. It suggests the TIME of training. I haven't any children so I can talk, you see. My brother used to say, "Leave it up to Robb to talk on bringing up children." I handed it back to him by saying, "Most parents are ashamed to

preach on it, so it is left up to some of us fellows to say what there is to be said." However, God gave my brother a wonderful family that are a credit to him.

* * * * *

3

CAN'T BEGIN TOO SOON

A lady came to me over in Ohio one time and said, "Brother French, could you give me some advice about rearing a family?" I said, "You have come to a poor one for advice. Why don't you go to someone who has children?" "Well," she said, "My children are little now. I hate to think of them going out in sin even if eventually they get saved and go to heaven." I said, "Sister, I appreciate your earnestness and I am going to tell you that I have discovered one thing. Most parents start too late." Somebody asked an animal trainer one time, one of the greatest animal trainers in this country, "What's the secret of your success in training animals?" He answered, "Simple enough; I get them when they are young. You can take a whelp, you can take a kitten, a little snake, or anything else and when you get it young enough you can do almost anything you want." But the tragic thing about the home of today is that parents are starting too late. We'll have more to say about that as we go along here tonight.

* * * * *

4

SOME FIRST MEMORIES

Now let us notice the instruments of training. Every child has a right to Christian heritage. Every boy and every girl has a right to a Christian father. No wonder Isaac was the man he was. He had a wonderful father. Do you love and appreciate your father? I appreciate mine. I have a picture on memory's wall that you couldn't buy with all the money you have in this state. The first recollection I have, the first flash of memory is of being in my father's arms in the church. I appreciate that memory. I remember that I had dresses on. I was in his arms in the house of God. The next flash of memory that I recall tonight is of my mother leading me down the aisle to an altar of prayer in an old-fashioned Methodist meeting. You couldn't buy that picture on my memory's walls. I remember I knelt with my mother at the altar and when I got up from there the altar was wet with my tears. I just seemed to sob out my heart. I still had dresses on. I must have been between two and three somewhere.

I said something about that in a meeting here in the state of Indiana and a friend of mine said, "Brother French, the first flash of memory I have, my father had my mother down on the floor. He was in a drunken stupor, and he had my mother by the hair and was beating her head against the floor trying to kill her. And I had the poker and was trying to beat my father off." I said, "How old were you?" He said, "I was probably around two, about two years of age." But thank God he got saved. You can get saved whether you have a Christian home or not. Whether you have a praying father or mother or not. you can get saved. But the greatest heritage a boy ever had was a Christian father and a praying mother.

* * * * *

5

CHILDREN MARKED FOR HELL

It takes a godly mother to do this job of training. I think of some of the mothers of the Bible. I have spoken on this subject a number of times, but it is usually about the same line of truth. I'm a little bit like Vice-President Marshall. He made a statement one time: he said, "I've made no speeches in this campaign." His wife said, "That isn't so; you've made the same speech 160 times." Well, I usually cover the same line of truth when I am talking on the home. But it's a burden on my heart. It is a tremendous burden. Friends, we've got to do something. I hope I won't say anything to offend you tonight, but I intend to preach the truth. I hope you won't get huffy at me. But the argument is on my side! You'll have to acknowledge we are losing our children. We're losing the young people. I've traveled considerably and I have been a pastor. Maybe this figure sounds a little too erratic, but I got to figuring one day, and I said I believe we are losing on an average of nine out of ten of our children, that is, children growing up in Christian homes, in holiness homes, if you please. Well, if that's too strong a figure, we'll say two-thirds. That's bad enough. If this is true, you can put a black mark on two-thirds of the children in this congregation; that is, you can mark them for hell. I don't believe that ought to be. I believe God wants us to take our families to heaven with us. And I believe if parents will meet the conditions in this Book they can claim this wonderful promise I am talking about tonight.

* * * * *

6

ENEMIES OF THE HOME

Here is a wonderful mother who says, "Brother French, you don't understand the battles we have to fight in this awful day." Yes, I know something about it. I know something about the liquor traffic that's determined to make drunkards out of your boys and girls. They don't care for the virtue of your girl. They don't care for the health and manhood of your boy. If they can congeal their drops of blood into shekels to put into their coffers, that's all they care. The tobacco trust of America is pitted against you. The motto of the great tobacco trust, this satanic monopoly, is: "A cigarette in the mouth of every man, woman, and child in America." And they are bending every effort to achieve their goal. I know you're pitted against that organized foe. In some places the schools are against you. Brother, it is astonishing how many communists are teaching right in our grammar schools. I tell you, it is a sad situation, and I am not blind to that situation.

* * * * *

7

A BIBLE MOTHER

I want to call your attention to a little Bible mother that I refer to often times. She was a slave woman. A boy is born in her home. She looks him over. She says he is a proper child. Why, every parent thinks that. "That boy is a proper child," and she hides him. The great king, the

Pharaoh of Egypt, had decreed that every boy of a certain age was to be slain, every Hebrew boy. She knows that law, that rule, that edict of the king, but she finds a hiding place for her baby. Say, did you ever stop to think there's a hiding place for your child? Behind the family altar is a good hiding place. Finally the little fellow grows up and he is lusty and loud and she can't hide him anymore, but she has faith in God. She's pitted herself against the great king of this ancient empire. What do you think about that? I don't suppose she knew her ABC's. She is illiterate, she is obscure, she is a slave woman. But she gets an ark of bulrushes and pitches it within and without. I always get encouragement out of the words there; it says she "daubed" it on. You know, I am awkward. Everything I do, it seems, is awkward. Well, bless God, if you can't be artistic DAUB it on, and God will bless you! She daubed the pitch on. She made it unsinkable And then she laid this precious cargo, the youngest pilot that ever manned a ship, she put him in the ark and then pushed him out into the putrid waters of the Nile infested with crocodiles.

* * * * *

8

HOLY HUMOR

You know the story of course. Pharaoh's daughter comes down to bathe in the river and discovers the little ark and opens the lid, and the little fellow cries on scheduled time and touches the mother instinct of her heart. She said, "This is a Hebrew boy." And the sister of Moses walks up and said, "Would you like me to get a nurse?" Why, I just laugh every time I read that. Brother, that's a holy humor in the Bible, did you know that? Here's a great king decreeing that these Hebrew boys shall be slain, and God laughs in the face of Pharaoh and picks out a Hebrew boy and puts him right in the palace and makes Pharaoh board him and educate him, and even pay his own mother for taking care of him.

* * * * *

9

JOCHEBED'S SUCCESS IN REARING MOSES

I'll tell you, He's a mighty God. He's bigger than all the organized forces of earth and hell; He can help you. He helped Jochebed then. Sometimes I have told the people over the country I wished we had some Jochebed societies. My, my! So she takes this little boy to nurse him -- his own mother. She is being paid by Pharaoh's daughter. I imagine she reasons like this; he's going to go to an idolatrous, wicked, sensuous school; he'll be surrounded by idolatry and sin and crime of the lowest order. I've got to instill in his mind the principle of the true religion. And I imagine day in and day out and night in and night out she's getting into the warp and the filling of that little boy -- TRUTH, the Bible truth, God's truth. The miracles of the true religion. She succeeded! Why, that's encouraging. Moses went through that heathen school; he lived in that pagan court. God only knows the contamination of that court, but he came out with his soul untainted by the filth of Egypt. He still worships his mother's God. Oh, that's something to think about.

* * * * *

OUR PRESENT DAY WEAKNESS

Brother, there's something wrong with us. Something is radically wrong. My cousin said to me, "Robb, I went to the state teacher's college when I was seventeen years of age. The first day I was in the classroom I lost every spark of faith I ever had." I tell you, parents are falling down somewhere. Why, that skeptical professor is trained in an approach that just shakes young people off their foundation. They started out like this: "Now your parents were good folks. They meant well. We appreciate them. But they didn't have the privileges of higher education. They knew nothing about the sciences." They approached my cousin so subtly that he said, "I walked out of there a confirmed skeptic the first day I was in that teacher's college." That's happening all over this country.

Say, the greatest boon a boy ever had is a Christian mother. I've told the mothers over this country, "You haven't got time to fuss. Let the other folks do the church fussing, you stay out of it. You've got a bigger job on your hands. Get on your prayer bones, match swords with the bloodhounds of hell that are trying to rob you of your children." I guess I'll say quite a bit about my mother tonight. I don't think it's a good idea for a preacher to talk too much about his kin folk, but my mother's gone to heaven and I feel more free to talk about her since she's gone.

* * * * *

A MOTHER WHO PRAYED

I had a praying mother. She used to pray one night of every week. I think I've mentioned it before. I've come in from a meeting maybe one or two o'clock in the morning, wondering if I would catch my mother in bed on Saturday night. I'd slip to the window and there with that little kerosene lamp turned low, my mother would be prostrate or often in her characteristic pose with fist clenched like she was in mortal combat, her eyes turned heavenward and two streams of tears pouring down her cheeks and splashing on the floor. She was fighting with the demons of darkness and hell. All through the wee hours of morning I never caught her in bed. I've gone into her room on Sunday morning and found the carpet around her wet with tears.

* * * * *

MOTHERS WHO ARE LOSING THE BATTLE

Oh mothers, some of you are losing the battle. You are spending too much time listening to the radio, too much time listening to soap operas, too much time looking at television. May God have mercy on us. Hollywood piped right into our own parlors. I don't know what you mean. I told the folks one place, "You might as well get down and pray for God to keep your children healthy and well and then let a sewer pipe run right through your house and turn loose the filth and the disease germs, as to turn Hollywood loose right in your parlor and then ask God to keep your children pure and holy and clean." This is an awful day, brother. The devil is trying to wreck your

family. "But I don't see any harm in it." Well, the closer you get to God, the more in love with Jesus Christ you get, the more inhibitions there will be in your life, don't forget that. Love is the most restrictive thing on earth, my brother! Amen. It isn't legalism, it's love! Hallelujah! I tell you we're living in a day when the devil is putting every invention he can get hold of on the market to try and wreck and ruin this generation.

* * * * *

13

PREACH MORE ON THE HOME

My heart is heavy tonight. When I preach on this subject I feel like it is almost pulling the life out of me. But my mother would say, "Oh Robb, preach more on the home." And then God seemed to begin to burn it on my soul after my mother passed away. I didn't get to see her in her last moments; I'd have given everything in the world I had if I could have outrun death, if I could have gotten to her side before she passed away. I was trying my level best. I was fighting my way across the country. When I stepped off the train in Alhambra I said, "How's mother?" They said, "Mother's gone." That was the darkest hour I had ever known up till that time. Brother is seemed like the sun went down forever. The birds quit singing. I staggered into that station, and the next time I was to see my mother she was in her casket. That arm that had enfolded me so tenderly was stiff and cold and lying on her breast. Those eyes that had looked so affectionately into mine were closed in death.

* * * * *

14

MOTHER LED THE WAY

It might interest you to know that the thing I appreciated about my mother most was NOT the meals she cooked for her children. We all think our mothers were the best cooks on earth. I can taste that ginger cake yet. You women can't bake pumpkin pies like hers. Oh, I guess I'd better leave out Sister Billheimer. She made some wonderful pumpkin pies today. I'll tell you my mother could make pumpkin pie -- not these aristocratic kind, just little thin things you hardly know whether you are putting it down your coat collar or putting it down your throat. She made these big, thick heavy kind. But it wasn't the meals that she cooked It wasn't that she would sit by that little kerosene lamp in the wee hours of the morning darning our socks, mending our clothes, although I appreciated that. It wasn't the fact that she would get up on a cold night and take a quilt from her own bed or a blanket maybe, and come over and tuck it around us to make sure that we were all warm. I appreciated that also. But that was still far in the background. When I walked up and looked in her casket the first I said was, "Mother, I'm glad you led the way."

* * * * *

15

A COSTLY CONSECRATION

She stepped out away back there when people used to get persecuted for following Christ. Ho, ho, brother, people THINK we're persecuted today, but what do we know about persecution? My father turned the fire on her. He was a proud man. She got saved in a little Salvation Army meeting back there when the Salvation Army was rotten-egged and Salvationists were thrown into prison. She took the pilgrim way of the cross, and it offended my father. He persecuted her. She didn't know whether she'd have to leave home or not, but she consecrated. I'll tell you those old-time saints used to consecrate deeply. She consecrated to go to the poor house if God would save and call her husband to preach and make preachers out of her boys. You say, "Did she go to the poor house?" She went to heaven, brother! Bless God, she's living in a mansion tonight that would make the White House look like a doghouse in comparison. Oh, it pays to serve Jesus! I looked at her cold and stiff in the casket; I said, "Mother, I'm glad you led the way."

* * * * *

16

NO COMPROMISE

My father came home one evening and said "Nellie, I'm taking you out for a ride tonight. I may meet some of the judges of the court and some of my associates in the law business, and I want you to quit this foolishness. I want you to curl your hair like you used to." So he went to his office and my mother said, "Well, I must keep peace in the family so maybe I ..." so she started for the mirror and the Lord jumped between her and the mirror and said, "God or Baal!" Brother, my mother turned as white as a corpse. She said, "Oh, God, I'll never bow to Baal." And when my mother stood for something, you might as well try to dam up the Mississippi River with broomstraws as to try to stop her. I'll tell you, Brother. Ha! When my father came home she met him at the door and said, "Husband, don't ever say anything to me again about curling my hair. I nearly lost my soul. God said as I walked to that glass, 'God or Baal'." He looked at her and said, "I believe you look better that way anyhow." Bless God! She won out. I'm glad she stood her ground.

* * * * *

17

A CHALLENGE TO SATAN

Then the next thing I said, "Mother, thank God for your prayer life." Oh, she built a wall of prayer around her family. I used to put it this way, she turned the heavy artillery of prevailing prayer loose on the powers of darkness. She challenged the devil to take one of her children. When the smoke of the battle was on the band wagon riding down the hill, shouting the victory, and her husband and all her boys preaching the gospel. And her daughter was in gospel work.

* * * * *

18

TRAINING BY THE WORD

Praying mothers -- praying mothers, Godly mothers, calluses on their knees, in the closet of prayer fighting back the demons of darkness trying to run away with their children. Brother, we've got a mighty God. We have some wonderful promises. We'll have to come back to the text again here. "Train up a child in the way he should go." How should he go? The Bible tells us here. Train him up in Bible knowledge, in the way of Bible truth. I like to read those verses back there in Deuteronomy, the eleventh chapter, isn't it? Yes, here it is, the eleventh chapter. eighteenth verse. All right, you parents listening, are you all awake here? You say, "I want to get my children to heaven." All right, take the Book down. God has given you a promise, train them up in the way they should go, they won't depart from it. How should you train them up? Here He tells you: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them up for a sign upon our hand." Bless God, instead of putting on a lot of junk from Kresge's store, Bind the Word of God around your hands. That would be something, bless God. "For a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes." "Thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house." Bless God! Pull down the old Coca-Cola signs and put up a good motto in your house. "And upon thy gates."

Say, brother, it means something to follow the God of heaven. Here is the instruction pure and simple. Thou shalt teach them to your children. "When thou sittest in thine house." Brother, we're sitting down and listening to some fool thing or looking at some fool thing. God says teach them the Word while you are sitting in your house. Get it in their minds. Get it in their hearts. It will be a bulwark that will save them from this storm of skepticism that is sweeping over the country. My mother used to say, "Robb!" -- I was out there playing a game with the boys, having a big hilarious time -- "I want to talk to you." My, I thought it was pretty hard, but she would take me in there, "I want you to learn this Psalm now by heart before you go out to play. And then I want to have prayer with you and talk to you." Oh, my brother, I thought my mother was a little hard. But I have lived to see the day I wished she had called me in oftener. I've got those Scriptures in my mind and they stick there; what I learn by heart now kind of goes through like a sieve. But say, she got the Word of God in my heart. I praise God for that.

Here it is: "Teach them to your children while thou sittest in thine house, while you walk by the way." What are we talking about? My, my, there's a little fellow that the devil is determined to wreck his body and blight and damn his soul. I've got to get the Word of God in his heart. As you walk by the way. "When thou liest down." The last thing at night, talk about the Word of God. "When thou risest up," the first thing in the morning. I was in a home here some time back, and they handed me a report card of the little girl in the home. They said, "Look there, she's a straight 'A' student." I looked at it and said, "That is a wonderful record. I know you're proud of that little girl." But I was in that home on Sunday morning and we were on the way to church. I turned to the little girl and I said. "What's the Sunday School Lesson about?" "I don't know, haven't looked at it." Brother, those parents are a little mixed up. Ruling themselves out of the promise of God. Think of that! More interested in getting grammar and arithmetic in the child's brains than in getting the Word of God. I am not saying anything against education. You know what I mean. I'll tell you friends, it's astonishing. I expect I could embarrass some people right here tonight, maybe some preachers, by calling your children out and asking them Bible questions. It is surprising the ignorance there is on the Word of God today. Yet that's the thing that God has wrapped up in this promise that I'm talking to you about here tonight.

* * * * *

19

TRAINING BY REVERENCE

Train them up in the way of reverence. My, how much the Word of God has to say about irreverence. Two men were struck dead because of irreverence in the sanctuary. I tell you I thank God again for an old-fashioned mother. Brother, she taught me reverence for God's house and it sticks with me yet. I tell you, there is just something that comes across my very soul when I see children run around the church house, talking out loud. She said, "Now children, we're going into the house of God. If you want a drink, get it before you go in. We don't want to leave the house of God and disturb unless we absolutely have to." I tell you she wasn't sitting clear across the church. She was either sitting with us or mighty close by. Nowadays down in Alabama where we lived for so many years, the parents take cookies and candy and sweet potato to keep their children quiet. You know what my grandmother took? She took a hatpin! You say, "That's pretty tough." Well, it beat sweet potatoes. Parents seem to think their children are idiots. They've got more sense than you think they have. Some of them may have more sense than some of us here. They are MASTERS of psychology. If you don't believe that, just watch them and they'll pull a psychological gag on you before you know it. I've watched babies pulling gags on their parents until I have been perfectly astonished! They know logic, I tell you.

One mother said to me, "I taught my six-months old baby reverence in the house of God, and I'll challenge you to find any grown person that's more reverent in God's house than my six-months old baby." I know that father and mother; no mother loves her children more than that one. That little girl is a picture. It would be so easy to spoil her. You parents -- do anything else, but for God's sake don't spoil your children; you'll turn a mess loose on the world. They'll be out of joint with everything. This mother said, "Brother French, my husband would come around when I'd have my baby in my arms, and when she'd see her father that baby would throw a fit. She'd screech and scream and squirm, and then my husband would pick her up and just as soon as she would get in his arms she'd begin to coo and laugh" -- psychological gag. She wanted a little ride, and she was getting it. And he would take her out the door and walk up and down in front of the church on the sidewalk, and she'd have a time.

The mother looked on and finally said, "Now husband, the next time you take that child out of church I'm going out with you, and I'll give her a genuine spanking." She said, "Brother French. I've forgotten whether it was five or six times I spanked that baby; that was the last." Now if that isn't logic I don't know what it is. She had a little syllogism in her mind: Cry, get a ride; get a ride, have a nice time. She got to getting spankings out there; she changed her syllogism: Cry, get a ride; get a ride, get a spanking -- I ain't goin' to cry! Hallelujah!

Why, the Catholics put us to shame. Some of our holiness churches are almost a bedlam, friends. Children run around, no respect for God, no respect for the preacher, no respect for the church. Just making a play house out of the house of God. God help us to begin to train them! They can understand what you're talking about. Train them in the way of reverence.

* * * * *

I would say train them in the way of industry; that's the Book! This writer of the text, this inspired writer, the wise man, has more to say about laziness than I suppose any other Bible writer. Slothfulness! He describes the laziest man that's ever lived. Here it is: "The slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom and it grieveth him to bring it to his mouth again." Brother, when a fellow gets too lazy to feed himself, he's going some! Now that's a tragedy. We're growing up in an age when children are growing up indolent, lazy, nothing to do. You pardon me, God has given my brother seven children. Is anybody here from Marion College? I think those that you know would prove it -- a marvelous family. I have been amazed at it; I have sat and thought about it, prayed about it, thanked God and shouted. One thing that kept them this way: Just as soon as those children were able to get out and get around he had them pulling weeds on the grounds. Working! Why, I went home there one day and Helen and Evangeline had gotten back from Marion College, I believe it was, and they were putting a cement floor in the basement, and they were down there, hands and faces all smeared, working in the cement. They stuck their heads out and said, "Uncle Robb, we're putting a cement floor in the basement here." I said, "I see you are. And you're getting a cement coating on your face, too." College girls working! Girls growing up today. God have mercy on them. When they get married they're in a bad fix. They know how to primp but they don't know how to wash dishes. I wouldn't have them if they were on a Christmas tree. Industry. Laziness.

Why, we talk about a depression. My, my. You know what people are doing? They are looking for a job; they're not looking for work. I am thinking of a woman down in Alabama, she didn't own a mule even. You know in Alabama they go by mule farms, they don't go by acreage. A one-mule farm is about eighteen or twenty acres. She didn't have a mule; she didn't have an implement that I know anything about. And the government wanted to step in and give her some farm aid. She said, "I won't have it. If we can't make our own way, we'll starve to death." We've got a few plucky people left. What if our forefathers had sat down in the primeval forest, the pilgrim fathers, and said, "Oh, if the government would only give me a handout I believe I could make it." God have mercy! They shouldered their axes and waded in and laid the foundation of this great democracy. We need something of that today. If we had some of that rugged pioneer spirit we could save what's left of our democracy. Amen. How are you getting along back there? Everybody keep in a good humor here. Bless God. You know what that boy did? She had a boy; she was a widow woman, one son. The boy would go over and work for the neighbor and take his pay out in the use of the mule. And they raised a good crop, and those fellows in Washington, Ph.D.'s, complimented her and sent her a little silver cup or something. That's the spirit that characterized our forefathers. God help us. I know men who bought farms and paid for them right in the depression. I came up that way.

Just to show how my brother's family worked, they said, "Uncle Robb. it's disgusting. The children come from all over this community here, just sit around by the hour and watch us work." When Wardie was just a little fellow (I tell this sometimes to illustrate) when Wardie was just a little fellow I wrote to them about a friend of ours dropping dead, and Wardie got excited. He didn't know what it was all about. But he got Bobby off in the corner, his little brother. He said,

"Now Bobby, the only thing you have to do when you want to die is just to lie down, you'll die. That's all there is to it -- just lay down and you'll die. But," he said, "we haven't got time here, we're too busy." Praise the Lord!

People talk about the high cost of living. I was over in Massillon, Ohio. Mrs. French and I, and we saw an ad in the paper where you could pick up these Delicious apples and other kinds of apples for fifty cents a bushel. We jumped in our car and went out there. Eighty acres of apples, and the ground was covered with grass -- soft grass, it didn't hurt them. The finest apples, almost you ever saw. Great big, beautiful Delicious apples and Jonathans and we thought, "We'll have to hurry out there. The people will swamp that orchard." We went out there and there wasn't a soul there. We went to picking apples and I got to talking to the fellow around there. I said, "My, don't people come?" He said, "No, they would not come if you'd give them to them.. People are too lazy today; they don't want them." I said, "When the American people get so lazy and indolent that they can't pick up apples they ought to starve to death." Roll up your sleeves. Get your children something to do.

* * * * *

21

TRAINING BY SELF-DENIAL

Train them up in the way of self-denial. I've been talking about that in the day meetings. Oh, my, isn't it astonishing? Here is a little child that is in a formative age. One psychiatrist said, "Six months of age is an important age; there's where they are going to form character, or soon after two." That formative period, that important period most parents let slip by. Why friends, my mother, who was the personification of self-denial, instilled it in my mind as a child and I've got it in me today. Why, I can live and save money on what some of your folk would starve on. Bless God forever! I wish I could preach an hour on that. I'll tell you, brother, if we're not careful, some of our garbage cans are going to rise in judgment and condemn us. Some preachers have had a hard time getting along; the wife can throw more out the back door with a spoon than he can shovel in the front door with a scoop. That's the sad thing. I thank God my mother taught me to be economical. I wish I could teach economics in this school. I tell you, if I wouldn't blister these young people. I'd keep in a good humor while I was doing it, too. I laugh at Mrs. French sometimes. We stay in hotels when we don't have our little coach with us; it is cheaper than tourist camps. Sometimes in a big million dollar hotel Mrs. French will be snapping out the lights and saving the electricity, or turning off the water, and maybe wiping on one towel and saving the other one. Well, thank God for an economical wife.

* * * * *

22

TRAINING BY MODESTY

Train them up in the way of modesty. Every child is born into this world with a beautiful flower blooming in their hearts. It's the most beautiful flower that ever draped over the walls of paradise; it is the most fragrant flower. God planted it there. It's the flower of modesty. It's just

natural for a child to be modest, to be shamefaced, to be reserved and modest. And a lot of parents are murdering, killing that little flower that is hidden in the heart of their children. Sending them out in broad daylight on the street half naked, wounding the modesty. No wonder there is a tidal wave of immorality sweeping the country today that is astonishing everybody. I was talking to an old preacher in the state of New York. He said, "Brother French, in our high school the parents got scared, and hired a doctor and he went into that school and found that there wasn't a single virtuous boy in that school and only three virtuous girls." Some of them ruined right on the bus coming to school. It's an awful slimy age in which we live. If you save the morals of your child you've got something to fight against. Sister Billheimer and I were talking about that today. But I tell you, the fight comes right out of our public schools and our tax-supported institutions. Why, they are teaching immodesty in the schools. The psychiatrists are teaching that these inhibitions are what's causing your nervous trouble. If you want to be healthy and well give full reign to your passions. Let them go. If you want to rape a girl, do it. Some terrible things were taught right here in Purdue University. When I was here one time I read something from one of the professors over there. I wonder if you Indiana Hoosiers have done anything about it. You ought to start a holy war. A man sitting right behind his desk instructing the future school teachers, telling them a child isn't normal if he doesn't steal and lie. He said, "If my four year old boy doesn't come home, with a pocket full of loot nearly every day I am alarmed." Brother, that is the doctrine of demons belched right out of hell. I tell you, I know you've got a fight. I know, too, we've got a mighty God. Hallelujah!

* * * * *

23

TRAINING BY DISCIPLINE

Train them up in the way of discipline; train them up in the way of obedience. Oh, my friends, I know my time is gone, but I tell you my heart is aching tonight. You may not feel it but I am burdened. If we can't save our homes we'll never save our nation. We'll never save our society. You talk to the deans of the schools as you go over this country and you'll get the shock of your life. Coming out of Christian homes, children undisciplined, untrained. Have you been reading in the newspapers (I mentioned about it, wasn't it last night) that awful child vandalism that is sweeping over this country? People are amazed. My, my, boys going right into the schoolroom on Friday evening after school is out, turning on all the faucets, closing up all the drains, and letting them run all day Saturday, all night Saturday and all day Sunday, and by Monday thousands of dollars worth of damage has been done, plaster falling off the walls, water seeping down. It's happening all over the nation. When I was in Canton, Ohio, a boy eight and a girl ten or a boy ten and a girl eight went into a home in Massillon and the police estimated they did \$2,500 worth of damage. They went down into the cellar and broke the cans of fruit and vegetables. They knocked out the lights. They took steel of some kind and scraped the Frigidaire and pulled the unit out and destroyed it. They took the clothes and put them out in the middle of the floor and poured catsup and peanut butter on them; \$2,500 worth of damage. Just little youngsters. They have taken special enmity at the schools and the churches.

In one church they broke every window light out. They took the pulpit Bible and tore it to shreds and stamped on it. In another city they went into a Catholic Church and tore the images down and wrote across the face of Christ, "We hate Christ." Little six, seven, eight and ten year

old children! Brother, if you don't think it's serious you'd better read the papers. Educators are throwing up their hands. I said in one place, "My, it looks like you've had an air raid here." Down in Oklahoma they woke up to find FIVE CHURCHES either wrecked or burned to the ground by children. Smoldering ruins of churches! God help us, friends! Where did it start? In the homes! With careless parents! Some of those children that committed those crimes were arraigned in court, and when they brought a father in he was indignant. He said, "What are you bringing me in here for?" "Why here are your children; look at the record here of your boy." "Well," he said, "I feed them well, I clothe them well, I educate them; what more am I supposed to do?" That old police chief said, "Bring them up. Train them."

I tell you my friends, I thank God for an old-fashioned mother. My father preached the gospel but my mother preached the law. And she laid down the rules. Bless God. You talk about playing fast and loose with her? You've got 'nother think a coming. When she said "yes" she meant "yes," when she said "no" she meant "no." Thank God. I learned obedience. Anyway my mother won a reputation (you'll pardon my telling this). My father was head of a school there, and they sent children from as far west as Colorado over the country, incorrigible children. My mother was just a little short woman, but she had a backbone like Daniel. One mother brought her seven or eight year old boy to her and said: "Now I can't do anything with my boy. You take him." He'd just lie around the poolrooms; I don't know how many crimes he had been into. I can see him now. When they met my mother they met their "Waterloo." Those little fellows would stand there and my mother said, "Now boys, here are the rules. We all obey the rules here." They came under just as meek as kittens.

Oh, what a serious theme we have tonight. Train them, Oh, my brother, if you lose your children what good has your life done you? I never knew how my father loved me until one day he was preaching and he looked out of sad eyes and looked over that audience and he said, "Oh, my friends, if we lose our children we have lost everything!" What good has our life done us if we lose them. I said, "My, my father must have loved me." Parents on the inside of the church serving God and their children on the outside serving the devil, and the children doing more harm than the parents are doing good. I don't believe God wants it to be that way. I want to spike a lie while I'm at it. Some people say, "Well, my children had too much religion crammed down them when they were little children." That's one of the blackest lies the devil ever turned loose on society. You keep the anointing of God on you, live close to God, live on your prayer-bones, bless God, and then be firm, be kind, sweet as heaven but firm as a rock.

Don't play fast and loose. Take your stand for the right and don't waver. Hallelujah! Your children will rise up to call you blessed. How my brother's children loved him! When he passed away, those children gathered around and said, "Daddy to us was the greatest preacher we ever heard." They'd say before he passed away, "We'd rather hear our daddy preach than any other preacher on earth." His wife said, "When we were first married I would take issue with him about the children, but I'd find out he was right." Helen said, "I wish my father could have lived longer -- but I'm glad of one thing, he died when he was master of the situation." When I was with Bobby in the field (I went out to help them plant a little rye), he said, "I appreciate my father. Oh," he said, "I'm glad for the training I had. I don't know where I'd have been if it hadn't been for my father's training."

Oh, they will rise up and call you blessed if you live up to this Book. What does Solomon say on that point? Solomon says here in this 22nd chapter of Proverbs: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of the child." You read the newspapers and the psychologists say, "Leave that decision up to your children. Don't punish them. Just let them have their way. Let them express themselves." Well, they're expressing themselves, they surely are. Which are you going to take, the newspaper or God? To whom are you going to listen, to an old atheistic psychologist or the inspired Word of God? Solomon said, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction ..."

Brother, you can't beat the board of education, I don't care what you do! Amen. Here is the next chapter, "Withhold not correction from the child." You may be afraid they won't love you when they grow up. They will love you more than they do if you pamper them, I've found out. "For if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die." Here is the Book. Get the Book down and read what He says about it. He's given you a promise; if you want to claim the promise meet the condition. "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell." I know what you're thinking about. You think that Solomon and French are hard-boiled. No, he's talking about whipping them until they are conquered, not tapping them enough to make them mad. That's what beating means. Oh, God help us. Train them for heaven; train them for heaven; don't train them for hell; train them for heaven if you want your family with you when you sit down on the banks of sweet deliverance.

My brother's children are all devout and interested in the things of God. Why, some time back a woman asked my brother's wife, "How do you keep your children going to church so much?" Going to church? "Why," she said, "my problem is to keep them from going more than they are able." Trained up that way. Trained, up that way. Trained, trained. You say, "Because so much religion is crammed down children while they are young, they rebel." We had it crammed down us from morning till night, then mother wakened us in the night and crammed it down us again. Mrs. French and her sister had the same experience. My brother's children are still going after it; they were trained that way.

Train them up. They will go the way they are trained, by the grace of God and the power of the gospel and the blood of Jesus Christ. When the battles are all over and we meet my brother, Will, on the banks of sweet deliverance, I think I can hear him say: Why, thank God, Katherine, you are here. God bless you. Wife, we've fought the battle together and now you're here. Why, here's Evangeline, my first-born. Thank God, Evangeline, I prayed for you, I consecrated you to God before you were born. Why here's Helen, God bless you. And here's Junior, praise God. Say, have you seen Bobby? Where's Bobby? Oh, here's Bobby. Praise God, we are all here!" Oh, bless God, if you can take your family to heaven with you. friends, you've won a wonderful victory. If we could get half the children of holiness homes saved, we'd have the greatest revival the movement has ever had. And yet I believe God wants them all to be saved. I hope we'll have some children here at the altar tonight. I hope you'll bring your children.

There are young people that are literally murdering their parents! Fathers and mothers that are dying by the inch; boys and girls living a life of rebellion and sin. Those parents are going to a premature grave. Oh, young people, do you have a praying mother, do you have a praying father, whose heart you are breaking? God help you tonight! Some of these days you will stand over a

fresh grave with the consciousness that, "I murdered my mother; I murdered my father." Young people tonight, hear me. Don't stout it out.

* * * * *

24

BACK COVER TEXT

MRS. WESLEY'S LETTER TO HER SON JOHN

Dear Son,

According to your desire, I have collected the principal rules I observed in educating my family.

When turned a year old (and some before) they were taught to fear the rod and to cry softly; which means they escaped abundance of correction they might otherwise have had; and that most odious noise of the crying children was rarely heard in the house, but the family usually lived in as much quietness as if there had not been a child among them.

In order to form the minds of the children, the first thing to be done is to conquer the will and bring them to obedient temper. To inform the understanding is a work of time and must with children proceed by slow degrees as they are able to hear it; but the subjecting the will is a thing which must be done at once, and the sooner the better. For by neglecting timely correction, they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy which is hardly ever after conquered; and never, without using such severity as would be painful to me as to the child.

In the esteem of the world they pass for kind and indulgent, whom I call cruel parents who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterwards broken. Nay, some are so stupidly foolish as to do in sport what they afterwards must beat them severely for doing.

Whenever a child is corrected, it must be conquered and this will be no hard matter to do it if he be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of the child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertencies may be passed by.

I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents till its own understanding comes to maturity and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind.

I cannot yet dismiss this subject. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherished this in children insures their wretchedness and irreligion afterward; whatever checks and mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident if we further consider that religion is nothing else than doing the will of God and not our own; that the one grand

impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness being this self-will, no indulgences of it can be trivial, no denial unprofitable. Heaven or Hell depends on it. So that the parent that studies to subdue it in his child works together with God in the renewing and saving a soul. The parent who indulges it does the Devil's work, makes religion unpracticable, salvation unattainable and does all that in him lies to damn his child's soul and body forever ...

Susannah Wesley

* * * * *

THE END