

## Train a Child

### Reflection

What do we see as the greatest challenge of a parent? What were our parents' goals for us, their children? As parents, what are our goals for our children?

### Inspiration from the Holy Bible

Train up a child in the way he should go, so even when he is old he will not turn from it.  
(Proverbs 22:6)

### Inspiration from the Holy Qur'an

"And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as), "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up (when I was] small." Your Lord is most knowing of what is within yourselves. If you should be righteous (in intention] - then indeed He is ever, to the often returning [to Him), Forgiving. And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveller, and do not spend wastefully." (Surah Al-Isra 17:23-26)

### Hadith

According to Ibn Kathir, Luqman's advice to his son can be found in the Qur'an in the chapter named after him, chapter 31, verses 12-19: "Lowering my gaze, watching my tongue, eating what is lawful, keeping my chastity, undertaking my promises, fulfilling my commitments, being hospitable to guests, respecting my neighbors, and discarding what does not concern me. All these made me the one you are looking at.

What does It take to train a child?

- a. Consider children as a reward and a blessing from God. We must value them as gifts from heaven, and not treat them as some distraction, nuisance, punishment or problem. The Psalmist likens children to arrows, which are made to shoot at a target. In order for the arrow to hit its target, it must first be made properly from a piece of wood that is shaped, straightened, sanded, smoothened and sharpened. The arrow is then placed on a bow, aimed at a target, and released. This process is analogous to how parents nurture, empower, and guide children as they grow.

Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! (Psalm 127:3-5)

- b. Children need to be trained. No matter how cute they are, their hearts are able to create mischief if they are left to themselves without discipline. An old African proverb says "It takes a village to raise a child." Many people influence a child's training process, such as family, friends, teachers, church leaders, community members. But we parents are ultimately responsible for this, especially the father who is supposed to discipline the child.

A youngster's heart is filled with foolishness, but physical discipline will drive it far away. (Proverbs 22:15)

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

- c. Train children to love, obey, please and honor God, in the same way that we teach them to love, obey, please and honor us, their parents. The best way to do this is to teach by example.

And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. "Honor your father and mother." This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3)

### **Challenge**

What is our most significant learning today? How will we apply it to our own life?

### **Prayer**

Praise God for His goodness and grace in our life. Ask forgiveness for our sins. Thank Him for the blessings we have received.

If we have any prayer requests, let us pray for one another.

We end the meeting with this declaration of faith: Lord make us an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred let us sow love. Where there is injury let us seek pardon. Where there is doubt let us show faith. Where there is despair let us spread hope. Where there is darkness let us shine light. And where there is sadness let us share joy.