

Train Up a Child In The Way He Should Go, May 9, 2010, Proverbs 22:1-6

^{ESV} Proverbs 22:1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold. ²The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the maker of them all. ³The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it. ⁴The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life. ⁵Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked; whoever guards his soul will keep far from them. ⁶Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

What are most Lutheran Sermons miss? It is not the cross, it is not Jesus, it is not forgiveness. It is sanctification, it is vocation, it is our responsibilities or our duties.

Luther wrote this in 1534. "See to it first of all that you believe in Christ and are baptized. Afterward concern yourself with your vocation.(calling)...(Sermon on Luke 5:1ff from 1534, quoted in Hans Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God: An Introduction to Luther's Life and Thought*, 139)

The call of the Gospel does not draw the Christian out of the world bur rather out of self so the call leads us back to the world to serve our neighbor.

Shepherds returned to their fields, Lydia opened her home. God calls on us to live our faith first and foremost in our home. I love the way Luther put it when he said, "We are daily bread to one another." In other words God provides for us through mothers, fathers', neighbors & fellow members.

What we believe should be evident in our lives and in our actions. Having been forgiven, like Lydia, having been healed, like the man by the pool of Bethesda we seek to serve God within our homes, congregation and community.

Our Text says, "Train up a child in the way he should go." First, I need to say that these words are not a promise or a guarantee. They are words of wisdom. They do tell parents (S.S. teachers, grandparents, neighbors, aunts, uncles, and others) what to do when children are small and they tell children what to do when they are older.

The first point these words of wisdom make is that we need training. It specifically says that training is important for children.

Keep in mind that Jesus said we should all receive the kingdom of God like a little child. . All of us need training because we share the same nature. What would a dog be like without any training? They say that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. In reality you can but it is very difficult. The sooner you train them the better. What are people like without training? Godliness doesn't come naturally. If you want to find out what sin is all about just let children go and see what happens.

It is not enough to train children they need to be trained in the way they should go. I'd like for you to note the words **TRAIN UP** a child. I'm going to suggest that it means we train them so that they are always looking **up** to God and the home they will share with Him in eternity.

Rev. David Schmitt had a memorable sermon at the seminary this week on Revelation 21:1-7 where John sees the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Sometimes what you see in the sky can shape how you live on earth. Billboards are meant to attract our attention and keep it. Most would agree that if you look up and the sky is clear and the sun is shining you feel better. If you look up and all you see are clouds it is depressing.

In the midst of all the pain and suffering John is experiencing and speaks about in Revelation he is given a glimpse of heaven, a glimpse of glory, a glimpse of our future in Christ. It is so great all John can say is, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Pastor Peters said that he had a difficult time visiting nursing homes. He remembered one visit in particular. When he came in he said there was a woman going whoop, whoop, whoop. He went into a room to visit his member and all of

sudden there was all kinds of commotion and celebration in the hallway. He looked out and what had transformed the nursing home and even the lady's whoop was a bride.

She had come in her wedding dress because her grandmother couldn't make it to the wedding. He said that day Lola remembered the she was a bride and talked about her wedding day.

Why does God reveal this to John and why it is so important for us. We need to look up and remember who we are – the bride of Christ. Remember you can't make yourself a bride. You become a bride because Someone loves you. Even when the bride turns herself into bridezilla. (**Bridezilla** is a difficult, unpleasant, perfectionist bride who leaves aggravated family, friends and bridal vendors in her wake. She is often called greedy, selfish, and spoiled; not caring about the people that she hurts to get exactly what she wants on her perfect day.) Even when the bride turns herself into bridezilla because we are greedy, selfish and spoiled by nature even then the Bridegroom loves us. Even though we murder the bridegroom He loves us for better for worse, for richer for poorer in sickness and in health.

Train up – turn away from yourself, look up to Christ, look up to the One Who makes all things new.

I know many who stress the uniqueness of each child when they read the words in the way he should go. I do believe each child is unique but I want to stress - train **up** a child in **the Way**. There is only one Who is the Way , the Truth and the Life. Everything we do in our teaching, our example and our discipline should lead to, point to, influence toward Jesus.

In love He became man and died to forgive us. On the third day he rose again. He is the Way to forgiveness, the Way to God, the Way to life, the Way to heaven. (Get back over here)

There is no doubt that we need to teach our children to button their coat, brush their teeth, tie their shoes, make their beds, but most important we need to teach them the Word of God.

Some lessons we see in Jesus that the Word teaches are: V. 1 says, "A good name is to be more desired than great riches, ... Other translations say, Reputation and friends are more important than money. Money is not the source of life or joy.

John Croyle was an outstanding football player at the University of Alabama. He played in three bowl games and was offered a lucrative professional contract, but he turned it down. His Christian faith led him to open a home for boys and later a home for girls. At the time of the article he had helped more than 1,200 children.

Jesus wasn't here to make money. He made Himself of no reputation that you might have a home.

V. 2 The rich and the poor have a common bond, The Lord is the maker of them all. All were created by God. All are sinners. All are condemned by their sin. All need the forgiveness offered through the cross. All have equal worth in God's eyes.

V. 3 A prudent man see evil and avoids it. This says that a wise person plans. He does so on the basis of his/her knowledge of good and evil. To plan is great but our plans must always be God's plans, seeking good and avoiding evil.

V. 4 The rewards of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life. How do you get to where you want to be? The world says you grab for it, you fight for it, you step on others. As we are trained we see that the things others strive for, fight over, quarrel about are blessings we receive from God. We are taught that the way up is down (humility) It is found on our knees, before the Lord, before His cross.

V. 7 says The rich rule the poor, and the borrowers become the lenders slave. Borrowing is not the way to life. When you are in debt someone else is going to be making decisions for you.

v. 9 says He who is generous will be blessed. Generosity pays. It doesn't cost. Christ is the perfect example. He only lived for the good of others. He says "all that is mine is yours." No one can be more generous than that.

There is so much to learn. There is so much training that is needed. We definitely owe a debt of thanks to those who have trained us in the way we should go. And we pray that God would continue to train us His children in the Way He has provided namely Jesus Christ.

The choir selection summarizes this message well. Train up a child in the way the he should go the he will never depart. Train up a child in the way and she will grow with the Word in her heart Feed them truth, guide the way, teach them promises God has made that they may live in God's love and grace

Many voices call, many voices may draw them away Though their paths may go far away from home, the Word shall remain.

Train up a child and they will live in God's love forever. Amen