



lengths to receive praise, acceptance, and parental approval. By the same token, young children do not want parents to be displeased with their conduct or disappointed when they have not met our expectations. We certainly don't want our

children to think they can never "be good enough," but balancing open communication of disappointment with loving acceptance of good behavior will shape healthy self-esteem and respect for others. What we must do is look to Scripture and determine from God's word the kind of behavior He expects of His children. We must then have the courage to exercise the loving yet forceful influence we should to help produce that behavior in our children. The Hebrew writer tells, regarding proper discipline, "**Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it**" (Hebrews 12:11).



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BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

August 15
2011



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia

Preserving the Conscience of the Young

By Kyle Pope

The nightly news is filled with tragic stories of young men and women who at an early age have committed acts of brutality and rebellion. On a recent broadcast one expert was observing that more and more even after being convicted and sentenced for serious crimes many of today's young people demonstrate no remorse or sense of shame when called to account for their deeds. I'm afraid that this tendency is not limited to the hardened criminals of our society but even among young people in the church we may see lies told casually, immorality embraced, intoxication delighted in, laws broken, authorities mocked, and



rebellion admired. While young people of all ages of history have struggled with such things, I'm afraid that some of the things parents, teachers, and older influences in the lives of today's young people allow them to struggle with in this generation may be much more threatening to the eter-



Olsen Park church of Christ

nal welfare of the young than the rebellious of the last generation ever dreamed of. There are certainly many factors that account for this (some within and some outside of our control). However, it seems to me that there are a few things we can do while children are very young to help preserve a tender conscience within them.

1. Nurture within them an understanding of their accountability to God.

Behaving a certain way because a child's parents demand it has its limitations. As soon as a child realizes that Mom and Dad don't always know what they do when they are alone may cause all of the instruction in the world to "go out the window." The human soul must realize that God watches over our actions at all times in order to govern our own behavior as we should. The wise man wrote, **"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good"** (Proverbs 15:3, NKJV).

2. Don't treat rebellion lightly. When a little child looks in the face of his or her parents and defiantly tells them "no," or deliberately disobeys a parent's clear instruction they are planting the small

seeds of behavior and conscience that one day may produce the kind of spirit that looks in the face of God and rejects His counsel. Certainly there will be rebellions, and I'm not saying we should treat each incident as if it is the "end of the world." However, we must let children know that it is a serious matter for all people to reject the authority that God has placed over us whether it be parents, teachers, our elders, civil authorities or Scripture itself. Paul taught the Romans, concerning civil authority, **"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God"** (Romans 13:1).

3. Don't let the world dictate what you will tolerate from your children.

I'm not sure why it is, but over the last few decades there has been a dramatic change in our expectations of the kind of behavior of which children are capable. The world tells us "you just can't expect little children to behave themselves." A wild and reckless child that may disobey, throw fits, hit

parents or other children is now ignored with the excuse—"Oh, he's just being a child!" What is the result of this kind of thinking? When parents, grandparents, teachers, or other adults in charge of children don't expect a certain kind of behavior it doesn't occur! I am not saying that children are capable of the same behavior, understanding, and reasoning as adults. We do need to recognize the limitations of youth, but children are capable of much more than we often think they are. The difference is often not an issue of *capability* but adult *expectations*. A child will go to great