

A Parent's Ambition (Motive)

Proverbs 22:6

* Question ---

> Why do we want our children to turn out right?

* Our motive, as parents, is a vital concern.

* Please consider several things:

1. Children are Precocious - They have more intelligence than you think.

2. Children are Perceptive - They can see more than you think they can.

3. Children are Proficient - They use their intelligence and perception to manipulate both people and situations to their own advantage.

* We must make sure that our children know that our motive is proper and pure.

* Notice in our text: We are to train up a child in the way "he should go".

* God has a perfect plan for our children.

* It is our job as parents to help them find it and embrace it.

> Consider:

I. THE FOCUS OF OUR AMBITION.

There are several directions our motive can turn;

The focus of our ambition could be on:

A. Self - *Our Desire (Parent is in control)* - I Samuel 19:1

> With this focus the emphasis is upon the parents goals for the child. - **We want them to make us proud!**

> Parental authority dominates.

> Any question by the child is considered to be a challenge to parental authority.

* There are three possible approaches from this direction;

1. The *Vain* Approach - "Make me proud" - "Don't let me down".

> *A Child's failure is a matter of disgrace to the parents.*

2. The *Vicarious* Approach - Some parents try to live their lives through their child. They demand that *the child fulfill their unfulfilled dreams.*

> *A Child's failure is a matter of disappointment to the parents.*

3. The *Vindictive* Approach - The primary goal here is to demonstrate to the child who is boss. The child must not dare to question the authority of the parent.

Note: If you have to constantly reassert your authority as a parent, you have no authority.

* Many times a parent in this situation develops a very angry attitude towards his child because he feels threatened.

> *A Child's failure is a matter of disrespect to the parents.*

B. Son - *Child's Desire (Child is in control)* - I Samuel 3:13

> Here the focus rests upon the child reaching all of **his** goals.

> Parental affection dominates.

* This focus is generally characterized by;

1. Unwise Permissiveness

Discipline is scarce because the child is never at fault.

2. Unwarranted Patience

There is very little concern for personal responsibility.

The child enjoys multiple opportunities to correct wrong behavior without severe consequence.

3. Unrestrained Pleasure
The ultimate goal is the fulfillment of all of the child's dreams and wants, no matter how selfish or extravagant.

C. Sovereign - *God's Desire (The Lord is in control)* -
I Samuel 1:28

- > The focus is on doing the will of God.
- > Parental *assiduousness* dominates
Webster - assiduousness - "marked by careful unremitting attention or persistent application"

II. THE FUNCTION OF OUR AMBITION

Our desires will have an affect on our children, though not always positive. One of three things will happen:

- A. He will be Subdued (*Inhibited*)
 - > His desire will be weakened by a sense of inability to live up to what is expected of him.
- B. He will be Scared (*Intimidated*)
 - > The consequences of failure will be so great that he will be terrified. Some have even resorted to suicide.
- C. He will be Strengthened (*Intensified*)
 - > If our motive in training him is right, he will be challenged and encouraged to do what he should, and to do it for the right reason.

III. THE FULFILLMENT OF OUR AMBITION

- * Why do you want your children to turn out right?
 1. So you can be proud? - Wrong
 2. So he can be successful? - Wrong
 3. So that the Lord will be glorified? - Right

Note: 1 and 2 above are the pleasant result of number 3