

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XIII

February 1, 2004

No. 5

Spiritualizing Our Children

Jerry Fite

Webster defines “spiritualizing” as: “to make spiritual; to refine intellectually or morally; to deprive of materiality or worldliness”. Creating in our children spiritual mindedness which leads to spiritual living; molding a heart desiring heaven instead of coveting the trappings of this world, and refining the mind into pure moral excellence is surely a worthy goal of all godly parents.

But how do I “make my child spiritual”? Do I force a moral standard upon their young minds in such a way that they have no intellectual energy left to consider any other value system? Do I deprive my child of material things so they only see the heavenly things? I agree that making my child spiritual is certainly the direction I should train my child to go (*Proverbs 22:6*), but just how do I go about “spiritualizing” my children?

First, start *reading* to your children the Bible at a young age. Bible stories are full of spiritually minded people who did heroic and interesting things. Let the young mind marvel at the bravery of

David, the holiness of Daniel, the miraculous power of Jesus, and the steadfastness of Paul. Make-believe bedtime stories have a place in enriching a child’s life, but begin early to introduce to your child’s mind the real-life stories of the Bible. Emphasize how they help us relate to God in a proper way.

Second, begin early to *teach* your children the main focus of the Bible: *The salvation of their soul*. Timothy, “*from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*” (2 Timothy 3:15). From a babe, Timothy knew the sacred writings. At an early age he was able to know that the writings were more than mere historical accounts or distinct stories, but more importantly, they conveyed the unifying theme of salvation. “Wise unto Salvation”, and “faith in Christ” are definitely spiritual foundations for building spirituality in your child.

Begin early to *take your children to worship services regularly and Gospel Meetings*. Do not send them, take them yourself!

They will see that you have put such an importance on worship, and growing in the knowledge of God’s Word, that you place such opportunities to assemble with other believers ahead of your secular activities. This is a powerful way of manifesting by your actions that you “*seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...*” (*Matt. 6:33*).

Yes, some secular activities that are right within themselves will not be engaged in so our family can take advantage of the spiritual feast awaiting us at the next worship service or Gospel Meeting. Do your children have to be involved in every extra curricular activity they desire until they have no time for spiritual activities? Spiritualizing your children may be as simple as making a decision to prioritize the spiritual over the secular.

Avenues of reading, teaching, worshipping, and studying will lead the way unto moral refinement in your children. It will also keep thorns characterized by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches from taking root.