

Children & Bible Classes

by Bill Crews

Life is filled with many tragedies, and man, in one way or another, directly or indirectly, by some role near or remote, is the agent and cause of most of them, with Satan as the ultimate force behind all of them.

Some of these tragedies befall the very young, and their parents are the cause behind them. So many times in my life as a Christian and as a preacher I have come in contact with small children who not only are willing and anxious to attend Bible classes where the word of God is taught, but who even begged their parents to take them.

Some of these parents were not Christians, but knew they should be. Some of them professed to be Christians, but made little effort to serve the Lord who died for them. So calloused were these parents, so indifferent, so benighted toward their fearful responsibility to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), and so blinded to the opportunity presented by an impressionable little child begging to attend a Bible class that they turned a deaf ear to what should have been sweet music to their ears. It should have touched and moved them, but it did not. It should have brought shame to their heart and tears to their eyes, but it didn't. It should have brought the only sane response possible from them, but it didn't.

As if given wings, the years flew by. The parents read the Bible neither for themselves nor to their children. The parents were not spiritual examples to their children. The parents did not attend any Bible classes, and they did not take their children. The little children became young men and young women without the only wise and safe foundation on which to build for time and eternity. Other things filled the void which should have been filled by God's eternal word and a right relationship with Him; other interests and other attractions came to the forefront; and the desire to attend Bible classes was gone forever. Young souls became lost in the surging seas of utter disregard for God without even a smattering knowledge of the chart and compass of the Bible -- the only hope of the soul.

The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). And: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). And: "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl. 12:1).

I baptized a girl in her early teens at her request. She had been sufficiently taught, knew what she was doing, and was extremely happy over what she had done. When her mother, who was not present and who was supposed to be a Christian, learned what she had done, she took all of the joy away. She was not happy with the girl's decision, would not take her to any more church services or permit others to bring her. I know of another unfortunate and sad case. A brother and, later, a sister were baptized through visits with and the influence of a godly grandmother. What each needed immediately was to become a part of a local congregation, attend services, and begin to grow and take their place in the spiritual family of God. But the parents would neither come with them nor bring them, and these newborn souls were not given the opportunity to grow. What will such parents say to God in the judgment?

Parents, accept and meet your responsibilities toward your children. Place the matter of the welfare of their souls above such obligations as the welfare and training of their bodies and minds; they need God, Christ, the word of God, and the church far more than they need a secular education and a secular job. If you fail in this, you may well lose your souls, and they theirs.

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