

## A Mother's Secret

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selected with comments by Wayne Goff

**Someone asked a mother whose children had turned out very well, the secret by which she prepared them for usefulness and for the Christian life.**

**Without hesitation she said: "When in the morning I washed my children, I prayed that they might be cleansed by the Savior's precious blood.**

**When I put on their garments, I prayed that they might be arrayed in the garments of salvation and in the robe of God's righteousness.**

**When I gave them food, I prayed that they might be fed with the Bread of Life.**

**When I started them on the road to school, I prayed that their faith might be as the shining light, brighter and brighter to the perfect day.**

**When I put them to sleep, I prayed that they might be enfolded in the Savior's everlasting arms."**

**No wonder her children were early led to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and became adornments to the doctrine of God our Savior in all things!**

While the above story may be *fictional* or *true*, just the same it illustrates the **absolute truth** that if you wish to lead your children to heaven, then you must demonstrate it in your daily life. Wishing for your children to do well and be successful in life will not make it so, you must "*train*" them, Proverbs 22:6.

The word "*train*" means "to dedicate, to devote an object to deity; to train (morally and religiously)" [Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Aramaic/Hebrew Dictionary of the O.T.]. *Wilson's Word Studies of the Old Testament* even says that the word is "applied to the first instruction or direction given to children" (p. 451). *The Commentary on the Old Testament* affirms the same thing [Keil-Delitzsch, VI:86-87]. It translates the verse: "*Give to the child instruction conformably to His way; so he will not, when he becomes old, depart from it.*"

This is **exactly** what Paul said young Timothy received from his mother and grandmother: "*and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*" (2 Tim. 3:15). The word "*childhood*" (*brepheos*) means "*a child; whether unborn, an embryo, fetus*, Lk. 1:41, 44; or just born, *an infant*, Lk. 2:12, 16; Acts 7:19; or **partly grown, Lk. 18:15; 2 Tim. 3:15**" [Mounce Greek Dictionary, **emphasis mine, WG**]. The earliest instruction Timothy received was from the Holy Scriptures! Lois and Eunice did not wait and let Timothy decide for himself. Instead, they trained him at the earliest possible age for a life that would be God-glorifying. **The results?**

Timothy became the apostle Paul's "*son in the Lord*" (1 Cor. 4:17) who did the work of the Lord just as Paul did (1 Cor. 16:10). Of his character and dedication Paul wrote: "*But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel*" (Phil. 2:19-22).

**A mother's secret?** Train children from the earliest age to love God fervently and to walk through life consciously aware of God's presence.

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