

## Parents that Actively Teach & Train Children

Making your Family Function Articles

Easter Shore Post – Spring 2015

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MAKING YOUR FAMILY FUNCTION will be a product of the unique values your family holds. BUT – the question is, how does a family determine values and how are those values impressed upon the different members of the family? Some families allow the values of the home to be set by the educational system. As thankful as we are for our schools they do not have the responsibility to determine the values of the home. Other families look to the church and religious education to set the values of the home. As important as the faith community is to society, at its best can only set a standard of values and support a home to establish values. Sadly, when it comes to setting values, some families are like a boat that has lost its rudder, floating and moving wherever the latest wind or would tide take them. Without question the values in a family must be set by the parents. Parents must work for those values to become the driving force of the functional family by actively teaching and training their children.

The ancient Greeks viewed parenting as a twofold function that had to work hand in hand: teaching and training. The Greek origins of the verb *to teach* literally means “to put into the mind.” This would be primarily though verbal instruction but also includes the practical and hands on kind of learning that helps words better stick in our minds. The Greek idea for *training* always involved action: either nurturing or chastening the child depending on the child and the circumstances. No two children are alike and each one needs different action from the parent in different circumstances. For the Greeks, teaching and training were looked at as the two wheels of a chariot that needed to be rolling together and in the same direction for a child to receive the values of parents.

While I am no mechanic, I do know this about wheels that turn on an axle: there can be a lot of friction as the wheels turn. Friction, if left unchecked will result in damage to the wheel and possibly lead to the wheel even coming off. In our homes teaching and training can produce a lot of friction in the relationship between parent and child, and that friction can damage the relationship so that the values of the home are lost. How can parents prevent this friction when teaching and training their children? To prevent friction between a wheel and axle oil and grease are liberally applied to keep the moving parts from damaging

each other. In the home the grease that counteracts the friction from teaching and training is LOVE. Both teaching and training need to be given to children with generous amounts of love.

When it comes to actually teaching and training children with love it must be recognized that each child is unique and will respond to different expressions of love. Dr. Gary Chapman in his book “The Five Love Languages for Children” provides help for parents to better understand their child and how best to show love to them. While it is worth reading this book, I have also provided on **myzbc.com** some free resources that can help you better understand your child’s love language. If your family dynamic is characterized by friction and frustration it doesn’t necessarily mean you are a bad parent or that you don’t love your child. It is never too late to make a new beginning. It could just be that you are not communicating love to them the way they need to receive it? Learn their Love Language so that when you are teaching and training your children the friction is compensated with generous amounts of love they can actually receive.

To borrow from another ancient culture, the Hebrew nation strived to make teaching and training a natural part of life. Hebrews would creatively look for teachable moments in the natural course of life: around the dinner table, when they woke up, when they went to bed, when they walked and when they rested. Hebrews also displayed the values of the family on the door posts of the home so they would be reminded as they came in and out of the home what was important to the family. This mindset by the Hebrews made for an environment conducive to creative instruction. This Sunday at Zion Baptist Church I will be speaking on creative approaches parents can take to instill their family’s values in the lives of their children. Be the kind of parent that is actively and creatively teaching and training your children. No one else can do it better than you can.

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