



SESSION ELEVEN Training

In our consideration of God's Blueprint for Parenting, we find ourselves right in the *heart* of what is usually called the parenting process. I have included in *my* concept of parenting many *other* things which I believe are vital. But now we're in that very *heart* of the issue. What do you *do* with your child? Now, the blueprint is very clear to *me*. In My Father's house this is what *He* does with His children. I hope you *will* never forget this: that what God does to *His* child, God does *two things* which constitute what we know as salvation. It's *always* there.

First—and it must come in priority, and it must be maintained or the second will never take place—God comes in an *amazing* way. He brings us back to Himself and He establishes a relationship between us and Him, and He *maintains* that. And it's *all* through the Old *and* New Testament, and there's the first thing He does. He *must* have this. Don't let anything interfere with your relationship to the living God, or the second will *never* take place.

And so down here I have set before you the first thing that you *do* with your children. And we as Americans need to be reminded constantly, we're awfully short on this. That these parents who are now relating to each other *must* establish and maintain an intimate, warm relationship with their children or they will be *lost* in humanity! Don't misunderstand me. Without that warm relationship with another human being he *will* not become what we think of as a human being. If it's not there—and I know because I've been through it—it leaves something missing. There's a *hole* there. And I talk to so *many* young people who come out—. It's almost—and I ask them, "Don't—?" "Yeah! There's something *missing* inside!" They've *never* been saved and that's—I'm not talking about *spiritual* salvation; now please understand me. You *must* have that relationship. We've dealt with that in previous sessions.

Now God, having established a relationship here at great *cost* to Himself, and He invites us to come and relate to Him. And then He says, "All right my child, I want to begin the long process of changing you into My own image, making you act like I do." And that's what the theologian calls "sanctification." "I want to *change* you." And I just praise God; He's still working on me, and not through yet. But He began a *long* time ago and He's changing me, and He's changing me, and I hope in my old age He'll keep on doing it. It's encouraging even to be here to see God keep on working on me. And some day, when I step into His presence I'll be like Him. That's the second aspect of this. He *perfects* me. And even Paul, at the end of his journey, remember he said, "I have not *yet* attained, I am not *yet* made perfect, but I'm pressing on." And that process of sanctification continues.

Now let's come down to this. This is the other side of the *actual* parenting process. And this is where the *books* are written; this is where the theorists are divided. Some will emphasize this, and some will emphasize this. And I tell you; you must do *both* because God does! And now we're in this process. You not only *relate* to your child, and this must continue, and if anything interferes with this, this will *not* take place. You *cannot* do it. And this is what we call—. You're going to *change* his behavior. We call it training. You're going to *train* this child. You're going to *teach* him. You're going to *really* change his behavior—and I hate to say it—so that he will then act like you. You say, "I don't *want* him to act like—!" Well, you'd better change *your* act! I want him to act like *you*. I want him to act like *me*. And then eventually, as I turn him over to my heavenly Father then he will begin to act like his *heavenly* Father. But the training process, the moment you begin it, you're changing his behavior. Now that's where we are on this session. How do you do that? You do it the same way *He* does it.

I've told you on several occasions I have dabbled a little in psychology. When I went back to the university in my old age, God gave me an unusual opportunity. I blew it the first time and He gave me another opportunity. I went back to the university and I studied a little psychology and I got into the psychology of learning and educational psychology. And I was thrilled again and again as these great authorities tell me how to train another person, how to *teach*. And I wanted to learn how to teach. And then I was *amazed* to come back to Scripture time and time again! I said, "Well, that's what God's *always* been doing. That's the way He *always* trains. That's what He *always* does." And I've never found anything that an educational psychologist tells me how to do, how to teach or train another person,

that God hasn't already been doing. And some of the more recent [psychologists] have discovered *new* principles. Well God's *always* said that. So I'll just drop you another nugget. If you want to know how to train your children, how has God trained you? Search the Scriptures. See how *He* does it. Then say "Father, do it again in me! Help *me* to train *my* children the way *You* have trained *me*!" It's amazing. How has *He* *done* it? Has *He* done a good job? Is *He* a good teacher? Is *He* a good trainer? He's *perfect*! All right then, *you* do it the way *He* does it.

Now the Scripture talks to us about this. There are several great Scriptures that tell *us* as parents to do this for our children, such as Deuteronomy chapter 6. You're familiar with that passage. "Teach them diligently unto thy children...talk about them when you walk... put them on the doorposts of your [house]." Ephesians 6. "Bring up your children in the nurturing and the admonition—" He does that. But I *love* this word and I'll pick up on it: Proverbs 22:6. Some of you are familiar with that. Say it with me in your heart. "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart." Train up a child in the way that he should go, and even when he's *old* he will not—!

Now several have asked me already, and I had planned to say a word about it: What does that last part *say*? Can you be *absolutely* sure that if you train up a child, he will never turn away from you? Now may I just drop this little hint to you? That is found in a book of the Bible. The name of that book is what? It is Proverbs. Do you know what a *proverb* is? A proverb—now I'm not tampering with Scripture—but a proverb is not exactly the same as a *promise*. When God says, "If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you *shall* be saved" there's *no* exception. Nobody has ever come to Jesus Christ and taken Him *really*, as the Bible describes it, and God didn't save him! It's *never* happened! That's a promise. But a proverb, by definition, is a general principle of truth. This ordinarily, usually happens and you can find it in any training process that *generally* it is true, that if you train up this person, then he'll continue in it. But to say *absolutely* that *every* person who is trained up, I don't think fits the Scriptures, you see, because you're dealing with a child who has to *decide*. Now if that troubles you, I'll just drop that for you.

But now I want to concentrate on the *first* part. *Train* up a child, *train* up a child, *train* up a child. Do you know what the word "train" means? I like that better than "teach" because "teach" in our society gives a different idea. There's a man up here, you know, like I've been doing—yakking all of the time and drawing beautiful pictures—and you're sitting there and I can't tell what's going on. You know, and I can't get much interaction with you, and some of you are asleep, and some of you have got that glassy stare my students have, you know. And they think I'm impressed with that. I *know* where they are; they're down at the beach somewhere! I can't tell what! So teaching sometimes gives you the wrong connotation in *our* culture. So I like the word "train." The army *trains*. *They* don't teach.

What does "train" mean? The etymology of the word "train" just means, "to pull along." You get the picture? You can lead, you can pull, but you can't what? Push or drive. So He says, "Just lead them." It's kind of like a shepherd, sheep. Pull them along. Lead them along. You can lead them along, but you can't push them, you see. That's good. That's good. Good for your educational philosophy.

Let me get a little more closer to that. Do you know what "train" means? This is what it means. I'll draw you a picture. Do you have your cameras? I wouldn't mind if you.... Do you know what that is [laughter, clapping]? At least you can *recognize* it! Come on; tell me. What is that? That is a—*train*. Why do you call it a *train*? Same etymology. Because you what? Pull it along. Let me ask you again. What is that? [*A train.*] No, it's not a train! Do you know what that is? That's a family. That's a biblical family. Look: Mom and dad, and four boys. That's a biblical family—no girls [laughter]. I'm serious. I think I can take the *great* principles of training that I see in my Father, that I've seen confirmed by the educational psychologists. *They* know it. I think I can illustrate them with this. May I run through them quickly with you? Give you a course in child training in ten minutes? Fifteen minutes? Twenty minutes? That's a *miracle*. It's never happened on the face of the earth—yet. But it will. Now watch. Do you know what it means to *train*? Train your children?

Number one. Suppose you're getting ready, you're headed for Miami, and you want to go to Miami for a little mid-winter vacation. So you go down to the station to get a ticket on the train to Miami and you ask this conductor who's got his engine there, and he's ready to roll, and you say, "Where are you going? Where is this train *going*?" And he says, "Well, I'm not quite sure. We're just going out for a *spin*." Let me ask you; would you buy a ticket if you wanted to go to Miami?

You'd better know where you're going before you crank up the engine. We've talked about that once. No training process will ever proceed successfully if you don't know what you're trying to get out of it. It is *utterly* ridiculous. The army *knows* what they want those soldiers to be when they get out. The communist *knows* what they want those people to *be*. Somehow we flounder. Do you know where you're going?

Now we know—and I've set before you the ultimate goal—we want to get to Miami. But if you're going from Columbia to Miami you know you've got to go through Dixiana. Now y'all don't know anything about this. You've got to go through Dixiana, and then you've got to go through North. Do you know North, South Carolina? There's a little town called North, South Carolina. You've got to go through North and then you've got to go through Savannah, and then you've got to go through Jacksonville, and then eventually you'll get to *Miami*. Do you know what that means? That means you've got to hit Dixiana first before you get to Miami. You can't jump to Miami.

You don't make them saints the first day. Do you know what you want to do? Do you expect me to tell you in 15 minutes? "But you'd better..." *No*. You'd better ask God for wisdom. What do you want [to do] to train them here? What do you want *next*? What do you want *next*? And if you don't know what changes in behavior you want to *produce*, you will never *produce* it. Ain't no *way* you can plan your technique.

Number one. "Sir, where are you going?" "We don't know. We're just going out for a spin." Well you'll just go around and around in circles. You won't know *where* you're going.

Number two. Now watch carefully. Do you think *God* knows what He wants you to be? He's made it clear. "I want all of you to be" what? We're going to be like Jesus Christ, but we're going step by step; it's a progressive series. He knows where He wants to go. He wants *us* to know.

All right, let's move on. Number two. Suppose you get on the train and you say, "Sir where are you going?" "We're going to Miami?" "Great!" And you buy a ticket and you get *on* there, and then you sit there and you wait an hour and after a while the conductor comes around and he says, "Are you going to Miami?" "Yes." "Well, I just happen to have some pictures of Miami I'd like to show you." So he sits there for two hours and shows you pictures of *Miami*. Then he says, "I'll be back in a few minutes." And then he brings in a slide presentation. I wonder if you know what I'm getting at. What would you tell him? "I don't want pictures, and I don't want talk." I want what? "I want to get to *Miami*."

Now look. The second great principle of training is you'd better understand what training *is*. Training is not talking. Now, I hate to say this; training is not talking. Have you ever heard anything like this? "How many times do I have to tell you?" Have you ever heard that? How many times *do* you have to tell them? Training is not talking! Now most of us teachers, that's about all we do is talk, talk, talk. And that's all I've done here. I've talked, talked, talked. Well, talking is not teaching. I don't want to *talk*. Well you say "Well, I've got to—" Yes, talking *must* be involved. It's one little *aspect* of it. But if that's *all* you do, then be sure to realize you're not anywhere near training. Training is not just *talking*. Training is what? Get the picture here. Training is what? Taking *these* from Columbia and *changing* them to Miami! It's a *changing* of behavior. That's what I'm after. I'm after changing of behavior. I'm not after hitting something on his head. I'm not after an attack. And if I only talk, I'm not going to change his behavior. Anybody understand? Try to change your *own* behavior! Now you've got the responsibility of changing the *behavior* of another person. That's what training is. Well, that's what this *is*! I'm going to *move* these [train] cars from Columbia. I've got to *move* them; I've got to *change* them! And to change the behavior of another person.... Now, don't be surprised if it's going to be hairy.... It's not a matter of just *talking*.

All right, let's move on quickly. Look up here and tell me this. Which is the most important *unit* in this operation? *Caboose*! Boy, don't you love that little ole caboose? We had a caboose; he's about six years down the pike from the others. Man, he's a great guy *now*. Don't you love that? What's the most important unit? Right there. Educational philosophy used to say the *teacher* is the school. The counter-revolution turned it around and the *student* is the school. It's still true with God. In all training processes, the teacher is the school. The key to the training process is not down here. It's up here. And I'm sorry, but that's where it is.

Whether they get to Miami or not depends on here—from several aspects. Now *watch* it. Let me say it again. Do you see what this is? There's the engineer. That's the father. And this is the mother. This is the engineer and what's she? She's the fireman. She's back there with a red-hot poker. But now, all joking aside, let me just tell you; nowhere will the unity of husband and wife be more critical than in the training process. You'd better stand together. You can see what would happen if this fireman, she says, "I don't like to Miami. I think we ought to go to California. The oranges in California are better than Miami. So let's go to California." And he says, "No, we ought to go to Miami." So she gets *another* engine and heads for California. And he's headed—. Now watch it. He's pulling these cars towards Miami and she's pulling these cars towards California. I'll tell you my friend; the training process is *over*! They *must* be one, headed both to Miami. And if you can't agree, and one of the problems in *marriage* so often is, "How do you handle these kids?" Well, you had better agree on it, even if you have to give *in*.

That's one thing about this thing. But the *other* thing is critical. You see, this engine doesn't tell these cars, "Y'all go on to Miami. Ya'll roll on to Miami. I'll meet you there later." You know that's folly. God does it. Here's what He says; listen: "Be holy for..." what? "*I am holy.*" Follow *Me*. Follow *Me*. Do you get it? Follow *Me*. And these parents don't say it; they show it. "Follow me. Come on, let's go to Miami." And the psychologists have just recently—I say recently, in this last generation, this recent generation—have come to this conclusion, that the best way to *teach* is not to *tell* it but to *show* it. Well, that's what God has had all of the time. He showed it and said, "Follow my Son! Watch Him. As He walked, *you* walk that way."

Now watch—anybody who knows anything about this—a little child, he'll look up there and he'll imitate what his *daddy's* doing. And He'll imitate what his *mama* does. And when he sees his daddy go into the bathroom and put all of that sloppy stuff on his face and he scrapes it off, he wants to put some on *his* face and scrape it off, though he doesn't have anything to scrape off. And he wants to do this. Somebody said children are like vacuum cleaners; they just suck up everything in front of them. Do you want to teach your children to pray? Don't tell them. What? Say it. Let them *see* you pray. Do you want to teach them to trust God? Don't tell them. Just show them. *I can't tell you what that has meant.* Now that's the *awful* conflict that young people see. The parents say one thing and they see them doing something else. "Don't you lie," but they see them lying.... I'll never forget one time I said, "Jim," I forgotten what I was saying. I said, "Jim, you ought not to do that." And he said, "Daddy, Daddy, *you* do." The lesson is over.

The *great* point here is we're modeling. "Come on children, here's where we're going. We're going to Miami! Come on and go with us." "Follow *me*." It's an awful responsibility. But that's the reason *God* says He's *got* to work in *you* first to do it. And then you follow them. If you don't do anything else and just show them, I'll guarantee they'll pick up something. They'll amaze you down the road. You've got a model. There's the key to it.

Now let's move on quickly to some other principles here. Do you know what you call this in a train? What do you call this in a train? What do you call that? A coupling. I don't know how the modern train works, but the old ones, they back up and there's a coupling there and it just couples and it hooked. Can anybody—I told you I was going to give you an exam today—can anybody tell us what that is when you couple? Well sure! It's a *relationship*. Now, suppose they're not coupled. And you get up a head of steam and say, "Boy, we're going to Florida, to Miami, come on." And you head down. And when you get down to about Savannah, and you look around and [say], "Where are those kids? Oh, we forgot the—!" No relationship. Now let me press this a little further. My illustration breaks down because there ought to be a relationship to *this* one, and a relationship to *this* one, and *this* one, and *this* one. But then you get something *else*. You get an *amazing* thing! This one is related to *this* one and your children will begin to relate to *each other*. And when you've got a *big* family—six or eight children—then this one, you see, will begin unconsciously to train this one. This one will follow *this* one. I've seen it in families. This is a fellow, and this is a little ole boy, and this is his little brother. It's almost like he's got two daddies! And if this is a girl and this is a little ole girl, it's almost like she's got two mommas. And boy, that relationship between children begins to develop. Boy, it's so essential in the training process, and in the family situation.

Now let's move on. Number four. One of the big principles of training, and I am amazed at what I see God doing; He does it so beautifully. You know, even though you're coupled—. Do you know what that coupling is *really* for? It's not just to be pretty. It's not an ornament. It's so that when we start this movement, and the engine begins to *pull*, you get some *pull*! Because if you don't get some *pull*, you're never going to move them! And every psychologist who understands the process of learning will tell you one of the critical things about learning [is that] if there is no motivation you will never learn. You've *got* to make them *want* it! Now, how are you going to make a ten-year-old boy want to keep his face clean? "There's no way." Oh yes, I'll tell you this: If you cannot motivate him, you'll never train him. You've got to *pull* him; he's got to feel that *pull*! How are you going to motivate him?

Now, listen to me. The way God motivates, and then you come down here and the psychologist, he says there are only two ways you can motivate him. And I'm not going into specifics, but we call them positive motivation. There's a new whole development in psychology called behavior modification. If you've heard that term it's just emphasizing positive motivations instead of always negative—beating them. Always praising them, giving them a reward. How many times, when a child *does* wash his hands, he just *happens* to *stumble* on it and he *does* wash his hands before he comes to supper, what do you say? Nothing. "Well you should have done *that*, you dummy." Try *this* some time. When he does do something right, "Boy that's great!" You know what he will do next time? "Boy, that felt so good; maybe I'll do it *again*. That's positive motivation. God uses positive motivations and He also uses negative motivations. "If you don't, we'll have to discipline you."

Now I'm troubled by this. This thing you call discipline, which is just one half of one principle of many principles of training. That in *our* society is taken to be almost the whole. You talk to them and then you spank them. That is *not*—! I can't rule it out; I told you I was going to tell how to spank them. But it's just one *half* of it—of *one* principle of training. You've *got* to have some kind of motivation! And *God* does it. "If you don't repent, you'll..." He uses motivation. He says, "Cursed is the man..." He *always* does this. They're *negative* motivations. But I'll tell you; you've got to motivate them. Try to emphasize the *positive* as *well* as the negative. You don't *have* to have some negative. Try to emphasize the positive! And I'll tell you, one of the greatest, most *positive* motivations is this relationship and the fact that you love them and they respond in that and you just—. Boy!

All right, let's move on quickly. There's another one. I'm sorry; of course this is in bygone days. I remember when I was a young fellow, about 100 years ago; my father travelled a lot. He would go to New York and occasionally he'd take me with him. We'd sleep on one of those ole sleeping cars, you know, crawl up in one of those berths, you know, in the ole train, and try to sleep. And that old thing [would make a] *k-ch-k-ch-k* all night, all night. Would you enjoy that? May I just tell you, in the training process there's a lot of *ch-k-ch-k-ch-k*. Do you know what that means? Do you know how many times he's got to go through this? Do you know how many times he's got to practice this? "Practice," they say, "makes perfect." He's got to go over it. I don't mean—. You don't have to *tell* him over and over and over. But he's got to go through it. He's got to fail. He's got to go through it, and he'll fail. He's got to go through it and he'll fail, and one time he might get it right, and then the next time he might—. He's got to go on, and he's got—. If you think by *one* experience and *one* telling and *one* doing it right *once* and that's it. *Learning, training, changing* behavior is a *long* process and it takes a *lot* of experience. John Dewey said experience is the best teacher. Experience is the *only* teacher! He's got to go through it; he's got to fail. He's got to—. Let him, *let* him! Stand *with* him as he goes through and struggles with some of these things and then *finally* you'll get there.

My last word. Do you know how far it is from Columbia to Miami? It'll take you about 21 years. I say this to encourage, not to discourage. Do you know how long it's going to take you to get your children to where you want them to be? Some of you have five year olds? Boy, you've got a long *road*! When ours were five, seven and nine we thought, "They'll *never* make it." Never! Wait 'til they're 30. *Please*. Wait until they're 30 and then you'll have the joy that my wife and I have had in tasting now, when they all come home. Praise to God, they're in Miami.