

THE BAPTIST LANDMARK Editor J.C. Settlemoir 708 South Mississippi Blue Grass, Iowa 52726 January-March 1987

Brother J. C. Settlemoir states, 'This article is especially timely in the age of permissiveness in which we live. Children now control parents! Discipline in the home, school and society is almost non-existent. The biblical injunctions have been thrown overboard and nothing but anarchy remains unless we speedily repent and return to the Lord and His ways, (Prov. 29:15). We hope to have a series on this important subject in the upcoming issues.

Mrs. Wesley had nineteen children. The most famous of the boys were John and Charles, the founder of Methodism and the hymn writer. Without approving of the Arminianism of her boys we do recommend her discipline which she has described in the following letter.'

THE TRAINING OF A CHILD – By Susannah Wesley

When a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly; by which means they escaped an abundance of correction they might otherwise have had, and that most odious noise of crying children was rarely heard in the house. The family usually lived in as much quietness as if there had not been a child among them.

In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to be done is to conquer their will and bring them to an obedient temper. To in form the understanding is a work of time and must, with children, proceed by slow degrees as they are able to bear it; but the subjecting of the will is a thing which must be done at once, and the sooner the better, for by neglecting

timely correction they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy which is hardly ever afterward conquered.

Whenever a child is corrected, it must be conquered. This will be no hard matter to do if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. When the will of a child is totally subdued and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertencies may be passed by. Some should be overlooked and taken no notice of, others mildly reproved, but no willful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children without chastisement, less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the offense require.

I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, with out which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents until its own understanding comes to maturity and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind.

I cannot yet dismiss this subject. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes this in children insures their after wretchedness and irreligion; whatever checks and mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident if we further consider that religion is nothing else than doing the will of God and not our own; that the one grand impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness being this self-will, no indulgences of it can be trivial, no denial unprofitable.

They had nothing they cried for. They were instructed to speak handsomely for what they wanted. They were not suffered to ask even the lowest servant

for aught without saying, "Pray give me" such a thing; and the servant was chided if she ever let them omit that word.

They were very early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days, before they could well speak or go. They were as soon taught to be still at family prayers.