

Be Strong #20

*“I want to be a lawyer,
the president of the United States,
go on a man space flight,
and then one day,
spend the rest of my life colonizing Antarctica.”*



This is the dream of one of our ninth grade girls at Tallowood. As I listened to her share this vision for her life, my face beamed with excitement for her as I heard her zest for life and passion to fulfill her purpose! Don't you love it! The sky is the limit! The creative mind of a teenager that has the world before her! And you, as a parent, have the awesome privilege of preparing your child for a lifetime of dream fulfillment, helping them accomplish what God placed them on this planet to do. In fact, that's what this proverb tells us to do.

**“Train up a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not depart from it.”**

Proverbs 22:6

Many times in today's society the parent has a plan and a vision for their children based on the world's expectation of success. They begin at an early age to help shape them and mold them in that direction so that when they become adults they will be set for life, as the world sees it. But, that's not what the wisdom writer is implying here. What the Hebrew actually means and what we have always interpreted it to mean may not be the same. We as parents have taken this verse as a great promise – to know that if we train our kids in spiritual things, they will not walk away from their faith when they are old. The Scripture is filled with the mandates for parents to teach their children the Word and ways of God, but this proverb does not appear to be one of those. The implication with Proverbs 22:9 is to observe your child and consider who they are---their personality, disposition, their abilities, their talents, and when they receive Christ, their God-given giftedness. As you observe who they are, help lead them in the way they are going with their natural God-given abilities. The Hebrew meaning actually says, “Train (start) a child according to his way.” Many times we as parents do our best to fit them into a mold we want for them. How awesome is it for them to have parents who know them and see their unique abilities and encourage them along those lines. If that were the case, there would be less frustration and fewer blowups in families. How great will it be for our children to be really satisfied in what they are pursuing in life! And, God has created them with that pursuit! Let's stop squelching their God-given uniqueness and make sure we are helping facilitate the direction in life God has ordained for them. That will bring glory to God and great satisfaction to your children. John Piper's most famous quote is this,

“God is most glorified in me when I am most satisfied in Him.”

When our greatest joy and satisfaction are in Christ, it is a result of knowing Him and fulfilling his purpose in and through us in every area of life; social, mental, spiritual, and vocational.

Over the years I hope to see the vision of this 9th grade girl come to fruition. Wouldn't it be cool to one day visit Antarctica and see her dream fulfilled! Well, what are your kids' dreams? Where are their greatest interests? How can you add water to the seed God is planting in them?

Be strong in that and in the Lord. **You are the parent**, and He is using you to shape your kids' lives for his glory!

In His Joy!

Jerome

Eph. 2:10