

## **PARENTS—ARE YOU BUILDING WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS?**

### *Note to the speaker:*

Acknowledge that training children is no easy task in these last days. Encourage parents to follow divinely inspired Bible counsel and leave the results in Jehovah's hands. Present practical suggestions on how to apply Bible counsel

### **WHY FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED TO TRAIN CHILDREN (5 min.)**

Child training is a real challenge today

Pressures from immoral world are increasing because of Satan's desperate aim to corrupt human race (1Pe 5:8)

Bad inclinations that are revealed from "youth up" must be countered (Ge 8:21)

Some parents rear a number of children, all of whom turn out well

Testimony to parents' efforts to fulfill their responsibilities

In other families, youths raised in the truth fall away when they get older

What might account for the difference?

Much depends on extent to which parents use fire-resistant materials in building structure of faith in children (Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-13)

Discussion will consider how Paul's counsel can be applied in training of children

Of course, it is a joint project; children have a responsibility to apply in their lives what they learn (*w*98 11/1 13; *w*91 7/1 26-7)

### **WHAT ARE THE FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS? (13 min.)**

At 1 Corinthians 3:12, 13, Paul was contrasting two types of building materials—fire-resistant ("gold, silver, precious stones") and combustible ("wood . . . , hay, stubble") (*w*84 8/1 10-12)

In training children, must build with the fire-resistant materials; what do these represent?

Gold, silver, and precious stones are at times used figuratively in the Bible to represent such qualities as godly wisdom, spiritual discernment, strong faith, loyalty, loving appreciation for Jehovah and his laws (Ps 19:7-11; Pr 2:1-6; 1Pe 1:6, 7; *fy* 55)

These qualities make up the Christian personality structure that we must endeavor to build in our children

Those with such durable qualities will withstand the "fire"

What does the "fire" here represent? (*w*84 8/1 12)

Scripture says *each* one's work will be subjected to "fire"

Not necessarily persecution

Could be any of the pressures or temptations that could destroy one's spirituality—temptation to engage in sexual immorality, invitations to take drugs or abuse alcohol, pressure to share in world's degraded entertainment, the lure of materialism

Parents need to consider: When your children face the "fire," how will they fare? Will they stand firm like a structure built with fire-resistant materials? Or burn up like one built with combustible materials?

Much depends upon whether you have endeavored to build durable Christian qualities in your children

### **HOW TO BUILD WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS (22 min.)**

Of first importance: Parents must *set the right example* (*w*84 8/1 13-14; *fy* 56)

We must have the qualities we want to build in our children

Love for Jehovah has to be in parents' hearts before they can inculcate it into hearts of children (De 6:4-6)

What parents teach and practice must harmonize (Ro 2:21-24)

If we wish to build in our children love for Jehovah and desire to please him, they should see in us by our prayers, speech, and actions evidence of such love and desire

Children pay more attention to what we do than to what we say

Children need *proper instruction* from infancy (Pr 22:6; 2Ti 3:15; *fy* 67-71)

Teach them to pray; example of our own prayers important

Help them know Jehovah intimately, learn about his qualities and ways

Will help them build in themselves a strong feeling of devotion to Jehovah

By your example, let them see wisdom of obeying Jehovah's laws (*w*84 8/1 15-16)

Show them that keeping his laws is in their best interests; will move them to want to please him

Lay Christ as the foundation by teaching children about him

Children should see how Jesus' example and teachings should affect their feelings and actions (1Pe 2:21)

Help them know the qualities and the mind of Christ

Use *good teaching methods* (w01 10/1 8-13; w84 8/1 14-15)

Ask questions to get children to think and reason on what they learn

Use viewpoint questions, such as “How do you feel about this?” or “How can you apply this counsel in your life?”

Such questions can help you to determine what is in child’s heart

Adapt family study to suit needs—problems at school or in home—not just to cover material

The Bible says: “*Listen* to discipline” (Pr 8:33)

Discipline involves instruction and training

Discipline shows that parents care about child (Heb 12:6, 11)

Not to be angry outbursts; such are an evidence of lack of self-control

Be consistent (Mt 5:37; Eph 6:4; *fy* 84)

While others in congregation may help, remember that *your children are your responsibility* when it comes to training

Pray to Jehovah for help to be close to your children and to train them in the right way (Jg 13:8)

Help children benefit from congregation meetings

See that they have their own Bible and necessary literature; sit with them; help them prepare for meetings

Share in field service as a family

### **REWARD FOR BUILDING WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS** (5 min.)

Building fire-resistant qualities in our children brings a reward (Read 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15) (w84 8/1 17)

Paul had the reward of seeing those he aided into the truth enduring in the face of opposition; it testified that he had built well (1Th 2:19, 20)

Similarly, what a joy it will be to see our youngsters stand firm in face of temptations and pressures, to see them endure in the Christian way!

True, individual heart condition is a factor involved in one’s sticking to the truth, but never forget important role played by parental example and training

When children stand firm in the truth, they honor Jehovah and bring joy to parents (Pr 10:1; Ec 12:13, 14)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)