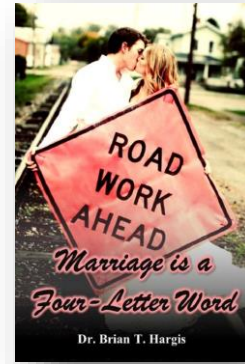


Marriage is a Four-Letter Word

by Dr. Brian Hargis

From CHAPTER 9: Reasonable Rules for Raising Rug Rats



NEGATIVE PARENTAL INFLUENCE

It's mind-boggling to see how many parents negatively influence and encourage their teens children in the wrong way. Moms allow their girls to dress up like red district prostitutes, and stand up for their attire against dad's correction. Dads get kicked out of a t-ball game for arguing and cursing at the referee.

I didn't think that shorts could get any shorter, but then I saw a group of teen girls at a middle school wrestling match with shorts much shorter than the Daisy Duke's, and words across the dairy ire such as, "hottie," "cutie," "booty," and "luscious!"



"What has our society come to?" I thought. It's no wonder that families are in the shape that they are in. Values and constraints are gone out the window. Moms are enabling their daughters to flaunt their bodies and fathers are abetting their sons with condoms and high-fiving them for the girls they're making out with. What a shame.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." **Proverbs 22:6**

This promise works like a two-edged sword. If you train them up in the right way—the Biblical ways of the Word, you have just as much of a promise as when you train them up in the wrong way—the unbiblical ways of the world.¹¹

Moms and dads - you're training your children in one of those two ways. All your training, actions, examples and emphasis are saying, "This is the way to go." You're pointing them in a right or wrong direction, leaving them with your footsteps to follow. One thing is for certain, they will follow in your footsteps. Which direction are you leading them?

You are the parent – the adult - and they are the children. Boundaries need to be set that are already pre-established by God. Parents are there to train and enforce the boundaries.

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."
Colossians 3:20

My mother never had to say, "I can't get Brian up and out of bed." Do you know why? She had two very effective methods of getting me up in the morning,

1. The broom
2. My father

Which do you think I feared most? I'll give you a hint...it wasn't the broom. You see, my father was an active participant in molding my behavior, and my mom used this tool as leverage to make me responsible in words and actions. They worked together without compromise. All mom had to say was, "Do you want me to tell your father when you get home?" That would pretty much solve any rebellion issues.

I cringe whenever I hear parents say, "I can't get my son to do _____," or "My daughter won't do _____." or "My two-year-old won't sit down." It's always a combination of inconsistent discipline and lack of training in the beginning stages.

Your methods are teaching them exactly how to discipline their future children. What you do in moderation your children will do in excess. So, if you let them run all over you like hellions, how will they raise their own kids?

"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;" 1 Timothy 3:4

Without taking this verse out of context, men can benefit from it both doctrinally and spiritually by applying it to our own lives as something well pleasing to God. Let your wife and children see Christ, not the devil, in you. Lead with love and they will follow in submission.

Many children are raised in a home of parental hypocrisy where parents play church on Sunday's only to live like hell through the remainder of the week. They'll dress up, smile, use a Bible, and nod in agreement, yet they'll leave the service and talk about the preacher, the song leader, the Sunday School Superintendent, and tear apart the sermon.

Their attitude doesn't change.

Their language doesn't change.

Their music doesn't change—all because their heart doesn't change.

Children realize it and know it's fake. Hence the reason why so many teenagers rebel and depart the church doors when they turn 18. They've never seen their parents experience a real relationship with God. All they've seen was rules, regulations, false religion and a bunch of talk. It's no wonder they rebel. Like mother like daughter, like father like son.

For more of Chapter 9: **Reasonable Rules for Raising Rug Rats**

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