

Proverbs 22:6 - "The Spirit Giveth Life"

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

II Corinthians 3:6 "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but **the spirit giveth life.**"

(This is a more in-depth article. Please read carefully and prayerfully.)

Have you ever vacuumed your floor without electricity? Have you tried driving your vehicle without fuel? What about turning your gas stove on without gas? It can't be done, right? The same is true of training children up in the way they should go: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1).

Jesus is the power that makes parenting work!

In a previous article ("Proverbs 22:6 - 'The Letter Killeth'"), we saw how Prov. 22:6 is impossible to fulfill with sinful man. Alone "the letter (the law/the Bible/parent's commands) killeth". Why?

Romans 8:3 "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,"

(In this article, though, we need to finish that verse:)

"...God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:" **(God's Son is the answer!)**

Our text, II Cor. 3:6, states, "the letter killeth, **but the spirit giveth life.**" Now the spirit of man usually refers to man's volition or choice. In other words, God's Word can't help you if you do not choose to do it. But there is also more to this verse.

John 6:63 "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:"

Your spirit/child's spirit can choose to do right and thereby give life ("quickeneth") somewhat to "the letter"/God's rule/parental training. **Without Jesus' help, though, obedience will be intermittent and inconsistent.** Why? "The flesh profiteth **nothing.**" There is a real powerful truth here; don't miss it! This is why Paul says in Romans 7:18-23 (read carefully!):

18 "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" **(Paul is aware that "the flesh profiteth nothing" so a question comes):** "for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Why are parents failing? Why are so many Christian children turning to the world and the devil? Connect this verse with Mt. 26:41 "**the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**" This verse was written before the indwelling of God's Spirit so it refers to man's spirit. The saved person's spirit is "willing"/"to will is present with me". The problem is "how to perform

that which is good”/“the flesh is weak”.)

19 “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (A familiar verse of not doing what you know you should do and repeatedly doing the sin you shouldn't do.)

20 “Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” (Ah, so there is another law in you?)

22 “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”

So man's spirit and flesh are not enough to conquer sin or raise children correctly. **The spirit of man (“inner man”) gives life (“delights in”) to the letter that killeth, but there is another law in our flesh (“the law of sin”) that still defeats us!** There is a drive to do right in the saved (“For to will”), but “how to perform”/how to get your children to obey over the wicked flesh? This frustrated predicament is why Paul exclaims in the next verse:

Romans 7:24 “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

(Notice the answer in the next chapter:)

Romans 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Then we come back to verse 3 that reminds us how God's law was weak because of our flesh, but now we know that all believers are free through Christ's Spirit of life! “The letter killeth”/God's Word or parental teaching alone is weak through our flesh and our children's flesh. Every command you give your children as a parent killeth because you and they are weak through the flesh. Only Christ's Spirit of life can give the parent's law, commands, teaching, training, and example life. **You (first and foremost) and your children must be saved, and (you definitely must be) filled with the Spirit of life (Eph. 5:18) and walking in the Spirit of life.**

Galatians 5:16 “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

The ultimate reason why Proverbs 22:6 doesn't work for most Christian parents is because most Christian parents are not filled with the Spirit, always in step (walking) in the wisdom and powerful influence of the Spirit. Please remember that “the letter killeth” and “the flesh profiteth nothing”. This is why Jesus came to save us from our sin and ourselves. **The only way to not have your children “fulfill the lust of the flesh” is through your/their “walk in the Spirit”!**