

## They Say: Who Should You Listen to?

Ephesians 4:14 “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and **carried about with every wind of doctrine**, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

I once was reading an old children's book of fables. One story about a poor father and his boy caught my attention. As the story went, the poverty-stricken father and boy were taking their only horse to the market to sell. At first, they walked beside the horse, but passers-by commented that if the horse was worth the money the father and boy would be riding it. So, the father and boy decided to both ride the horse. After awhile, some folks criticized the man and his boy for both riding on such a weakly-looking horse. Why the horse looked so fragile, it should be carried by its owners instead of carrying them! So, the father and boy caved and carried the horse. But as they crossed a narrow, wooden bridge over a ravine, the frightened horse wiggled itself out of the man and his boy's arms and to its death in the canyon below. Of course, **the lesson is that listening to the whims of fickle man will only get you into trouble**. And yet, how many parents do the same thing with their kids today. As relatives, coworkers, friends, and Christians pass you by, you raise your kids on the opinions of man. But, dear reader, your children need you to not be the child, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine (teaching). Stop teaching your kids whatever feels right or sounds right to you and others!

“But who should I listen to?”, comes the sincere question of a truly loving parent. Two areas are given clearly in Scripture:

- Godly older women (and men): Titus 2:3-4 “The aged women...That they may teach the young women to...” Do not seek out just any older person. Job 32:9 warns “Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.” Proverbs 16:31 adds “The hoary head is a crown of glory, **if** it be found in the way of righteousness.” You need to search out and listen to those older than you who have Spirit-filled homes where the Life of Jesus is real and evident, where their marriage has stood the test of time, and where **all** of their offspring “have not departed from” their training. Are the kids fully obedient while at the same time full of life and love and peace? Are the teens full of the Spirit and passionate for God and His ways? Have **all** left the home faithfully continuing the heritage passed down from their parents?
- God's Word: Psalm 32:8 “**I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go**: I will guide thee with mine eye.” In order for any parent to “train up a child in the way he should go” (Pro. 22:6), that parent must first allow God to teach you “in the way which thou shalt go”! Do not base your parenting on “the experts” which are constantly changing with the times. Do everything solely on specific Scriptures from God's Word. Only a house built on the Rock of “hearing

and doing” what Jesus taught will stand when the storms come (Lk. 6:47-49).

If I had listened to every counsel, opinions, and whim of man, I would not be an itinerant evangelist today. Many, many, many have told me I was in sin for being a traveling preacher, that I should pastor, that an evangelist only plants churches, to call myself a missionary-evangelist to receive more support, etc, etc.... At first, I listened, but then I personally studied God's Word for weeks to see what He said about evangelists. You must do the same with your parenting and your marriage. Before Amy and I had our first child, we diligently studied all possible home passages to see what God said on the matter. We have also, even to this day, kept our ears open to counsel from those older with offspring that have not departed God's path. Do not listen to the many voices around you that are not grounded on the Rock of Jesus' wisdom.