

RAISING AND EDUCATING CHILDREN

Taken from “*What the Church Fathers say About... Volumes 1 & 2*”

Raising a family and educating children is an art. Sadly, it is an art almost lost today, amid the myriad of voices of secular “experts” and so-called “family advisors”, who support much knowledge that is either based on world values, or even directly opposed to authentic Christian teaching.

Centuries ago, St. John Chrysostom spoke to a pan world and fully realized that it would belittle his advice. Today, much of what the Church teaches is seen as “outdated” or terribly naive. Yet the Church’s teachings, no matter how maligned, endure. Succeeding generations of faithful (and even non-faithful), after all the secular “experts” have failed and their “knowledge” has been found wanting, turn again to the enduring teaching of the Church Fathers, who teach a God-given wisdom: a wisdom which makes worldly teaching seem vastly foolish in comparison.

“Hear this, ye fathers and mothers, that your upbringing of children shall not lose its reward... It was on account of his children that Eli perished. For he ought to have admonished them, and indeed he did admonish them, but not as he ought; but from unwillingness to give them pain, he destroyed both himself and them.

Hear this, ye fathers, bring your children up with great, great care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Youth is wild, and requires many governors, teachers, directors, attendants, and tutors; and after all these, it is a happiness if it be restrained. For as a horse is not broken in, or a wild beast untamed, such is youth. But if from the beginning, from the earliest age, we fix in it good rules, much pains will not be required afterwards; for good habits formed will be for them as a law. Let us not suffer them to do anything which is agreeable but injurious; nor let us indulge them as being but children... Let us admonish them.

Let us employ sometimes advice, sometimes warnings, sometimes threatening. In children we have a great charge committed to us. Let us bestow great care upon them and do everything that the Evil One may not rob us of them. — St. John Chrysostom