

What Should Have Been

A wise man wrote, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). A proverb was not law commanding action, or prophecy predicting the future. It was wisdom advising what was beneficial. Wisdom is knowledge immersed in common sense and experience. For this writer, "the way he should go" was the way of Israel's God (22:19). It was wise to train a child in the word of God. To do otherwise was foolish.

That was then, this is now. The wisdom of this present age has essentially rejected the word of God as foolish—a 'dead letter' for an unsophisticated age far removed from the realities of today. It is now the collective wisdom of "experts"—who have not only abandoned the word of God, but the very concept of God—who determine how a child should be trained. The training of children has left the family for the "village," the church for the classroom.

Has the abandonment of God's way worked? Are children more or less respectful of authority? Are they leading more or less disciplined lives? Are they more or less selfish? Are parents looking at their grown children more or less while thinking, "What could have been?" Perhaps they should be looking at themselves while thinking, "What should have been."