

Salvation: By Grace or By Works

It is a part of the child's nature to desire control while at the same time seek the freedom to act independently. This is especially true when the child has no real understanding of the consequences of his actions.

Ignorant of consequences, the child seeks his own way. He interprets any parental control as being overly protective and unnecessary. Then when the child's decisions lead to some difficulty or problem, he wishes he had been restrained by his parents.

From these principles we can easily see why conflict is inevitable. Parental right to rule will ultimately come into conflict with the child's sinful nature's desire to rule. Thus, at the moment of the child's physical birth, the stage is set for a war of the wills!

The child is issued a volition and has the independent power to make decisions. Absent any principles of right and wrong, he assumes a position of extreme self-centeredness. Every decision is based on serving self.

Any parental control which limits self-satisfaction must be removed. This leads to revolution, misbehavior, temper tantrums, and the like. Further, the sinful nature seeks to obtain its desires with no resistance. Again, parental control presents an obstacle which must be removed and if necessary, ignored.

Obviously, conflict is going to be a common thing and therefore it should be considered by parents as normal. You see, if the child was ready to enter society, God would have imputed all the necessary data into his stream of consciousness, including his conscience, at physical birth. But He didn't. What He did do was assign to the child two parents whose responsibility it is to mold the child's soul into a vessel of honor.

Knowing the child has a soul created tabula rasa and a body infested with the sinful nature, the parents would have to be completely naïve to assume there will never be any conflict. In fact, conflict is necessary and each episode should be regarded by the parents as an opportunity to alter the child's thinking.

Every time the child comes into conflict with parental policy is an opportunity for the parents to confront the error with corrective action. The more confrontation that occurs, the more opportunities for effecting changes of behavior.

Parents must stay the course. There is only so much energy in the child's sinful nature. Eventually, parental power and authority will break the back of arrogance and rebellion.

Remember, you are adults; you are smarter, you are wiser, and you have the power and authority delegated by God to establish your right to rule. Once this battle is won the child becomes stable and secure. He is confident he can trust his parents to protect him and do what is best for him. The child has learned that it is futile to kick against parental goads and, in fact, it is far more beneficial for him to adjust to their policies.

We must now examine the third step which is biblically approved methods of problem-solving. But before addressing that issue it is important to note the major expression of conflict encountered by parents.