

# *Training the Mind and Character of Children*

Heavenly Minded and Earthly Good

by Bonnie Merkle



Rembrandt van Rijn

*“And do not be conformed to this world,  
but be transformed by the renewing of  
your mind, so that you may prove what  
the will of God is, that which is good  
and acceptable and perfect.”*

*~Romans 12:2~*

## *The Mind and Character - The Relationship*

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” ~Romans 12:2~

- ❑ “Renewing of [the] mind”
  
- ❑ “Prove . . . [what] is good and acceptable and perfect”

“For as he thinks within himself, so is he.” ~Proverbs 23:7~

- ❑ “Thinks” – engages the mind
  
- ❑ “Is he” – end result

## *The Training of the Mind*

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.” ~Philippians 4:8~

- ❑ Teach a working knowledge of the Scripture and its vocabulary
  
- ❑ Memorize hymns



- ❑ Develop devotional skills
  
- ❑ Develop mental capacity for preaching
  
- ❑ Develop righteous convictions that result in Christ-like conduct

“Conviction is worthless unless it is converted into conduct.” ~Thomas Carlyle~

## *Character Training – The Definition*

“Character – the stable and distinctive qualities built into an individual's life which determine his response regardless of circumstances.” ~American Dictionary~

## *Character Training – The Purpose*

- ❑ Wise children – skillful in living what they know

“It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself if his conduct is pure and right.” ~Proverbs 20:11~

- ❑ Christ-like Children – Imaging Christ
  
- ❑ Christ-like Character Qualities
  - I Corinthians 13:4-8
  - Galatians 5:22-23
  - II Peter 1:3-11



## *Character Training – The Process*

---

- ❑ Not inherited
- ❑ Not determined by church or school
- ❑ Not from society
- ❑ Starts with right thinking
- ❑ Thinking determines action
- ❑ Action repeated becomes habit

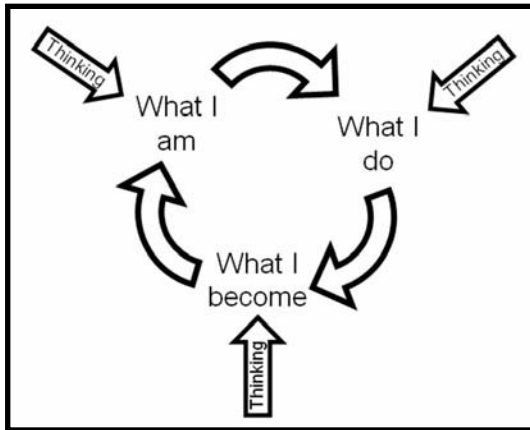
“Character is simply habit long continued.” ~Plutarch~

“If a man has any greatness (character) in him, it comes to light, not in one flamboyant hour, but in the ledger of his daily work.” ~Beryl Markham~

“Watch your thoughts, for they become *words*.  
Watch your words, for they become *actions*.  
Watch your actions, for they become *habits*.  
Watch your habits, for they become *character*.  
Watch your character, for it becomes *your destiny*.”  
~anonymous~



## Character Training – The Process Illustrated



“You are becoming what you will be” ~Minnick~

## Character Training – The Influences

### Secondary Influences

- Church
- School
- Extra Curriculars
- Community

### Primary Influences

- Friends

“Bad company corrupts good morals.”

~1 Corinthians 15:33~

“You are what your friends are or you soon will become what they are.” ~Tom Williams~



- Teach children to stand alone

“Others can, but I may not.” ~anonymous~

“Character is always lost when a high ideal is sacrificed on the altar of conformity and popularity.” ~anonymous~

#### □ Parents

- Should be the primary source  
“Give me your heart my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways.” ~Proverbs 23:26~
- Everything we do teaches our children about life and godliness
- Efforts must be consistent, not haphazard

## *Character Training – The Timing*

“The proper time to influence the character of a child is about a hundred years before he's born.” ~William R. Inge~

“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.” ~Deuteronomy 6:6-7~

- The 24/7 verse
- Seize the moments
  - Traveling
  - At the table
    - Manners
    - Conversation



- ❑ Impressionable Moments
  - Funerals
  - Ordinations
  - Church Discipline Incidents
  - Mission Trips
  
- ❑ “Minor” Incidents
  
  
- ❑ Be observant – “Smell the flesh”

## *Character Training – The Obstacles*

- ❑ The Past
  
  
- ❑ The Present
  
  
- ❑ Lack of Time
  
  
- ❑ Weariness
  
  
- ❑ Loss of the Big Picture
  
  
- ❑ Difficult Issues
  - Don't avoid them
  
  - Give sufficient scriptural reasons
  
  - Get to the core



## *Character Training - An Object Lesson*

- ❑ Character – Root word
  
- ❑ Character Incised
  
- ❑ Character Developed
  
- ❑ Character Impressed
  
- ❑ Character Imaged

## *Additional Resources*

*A Hive of Bees*  
*Another Hive of Bees*  
Grace and Truth Books

*Chapel Sayings*  
BJU Press

*To the Parents of My Grandchildren*  
Bible Truth Publishers

[www.characterjournal.com](http://www.characterjournal.com)

Produced and distributed by: Mount Calvary Baptist Church, © 2006  
All Scripture quotations taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright, ©1960,1962,1963,1968,1971,1972,1973,1975,  
1977,1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

