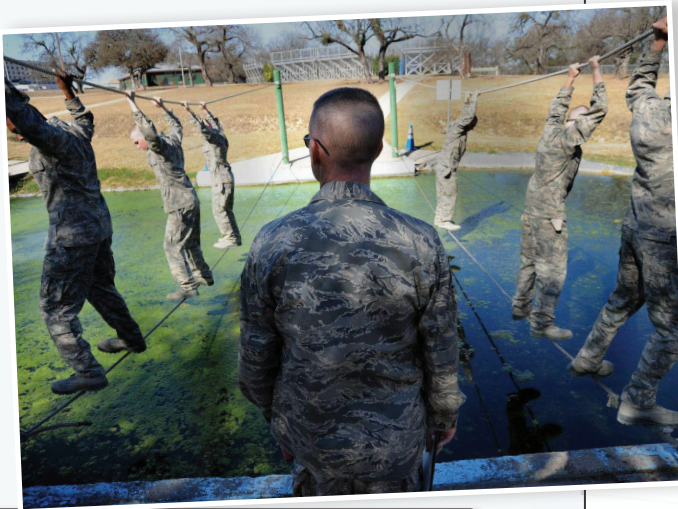


WARM UP | I was having a play swordfight with my son Gabriel - I had recently bought him a top quality foam sword. As I graciously “allowed” him to take me out with his weapon, he did something I had never shown him before - he grabbed the sword by the blade, and finished me off with the handle! It served as a humorous but sobering reminder that my son will take what I teach him to a whole new level of his own, in both the physical and the spiritual realm. However, the degree to which he is able to do this relies so much upon how faithful I am to fulfil my duty as a father, and coach him along in the things of the Lord.



2 The second half of verse 4 teaches us that it’s the father who bears the primary responsibility to train his children. Discuss what this would actually look like in a family, in contrast to the father leaving the task up to his wife.

3 In your opinion, what are the three greatest challenges Christian fathers face in today’s culture? Take a few moments to discuss how you can help each other overcome these challenges.

READ | Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4

BACKGROUND |

Like all of us I make mistakes, get distracted and feel overwhelmed at times with the mental and physical demands of being a father. Thankfully, I know God is with me in this task and He helps me to get up again when I blow it. As a father, it’s not really a case of whether you want to be the coach or not – you ARE the coach! The verses in this study identify for us our **goal**, our **challenge**, and our **responsibility** as fathers.

QUESTIONS |

1 The original language of Proverbs 22:6 gives the idea of selecting a piece of wood to make a bow and being careful to shape it according to the “way it should go” rather than against its natural bent. What does this tell us about the goal of child training?

CONSIDER THIS |

I heard a story a few years ago about a Christian father who was a highly paid CEO of a successful company. He decided to quit his job and live on less than a quarter of his previous salary, just so he could start a lawn mower business with his sons and be with them more in the years they had left at home. I believe a man like that will look back on his life with minimum regrets. Few Christian men will look back on their life and wish they had done more overtime. However, there have been many that desperately wished they had been there for their children when it mattered most. We have an opportunity to avoid these kind of regrets, and it is the decisions we make today that make all the difference.

MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER |

What do I need to apply from what I have learned from this study?

IT’S TIME FOR PRAYER |

WRAP UP | Why not plan to have a movie night with your families, and watch the movie *Courageous* produced by Sherwood Pictures? Don’t make it a “men only” night, as you will be more challenged by watching the film with your wife and children present!

