

## Expectations

“Everyone is a genius. If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its entire life believing that it is stupid.” The quote, mis-attributed to Albert Einstein, is still brilliant. The author, whoever he or she may be, understood human nature the way God created it.

God created us and He endowed us with certain talents and abilities that differ, often greatly. If we misunderstand those talents and abilities, we can make life-altering *negative* mistakes in our expectations of others. In reference to raising children, James Dobson once noted that perhaps a father wants in his son to be the high school quarterback, but the boy really wants to play violin. The father thinks the boy’s desire is not tough enough, so he rejects his own son’s desire or even the boy himself!

Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it, (NASB). While it is certainly true that godly parents should raise children to love and follow God, this verse is actually better translated in the International Standard Version, “Train a child in the way appropriate for him, and when he becomes older, he will not turn from it.” The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition 6 is similar, “Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it.

One of our grandsons is a computer whiz and is doing very well in that profession. His brother is a diesel mechanic and works on big truck rigs and heavy earth moving machinery! It would be hard for two brothers, born less than two years apart, to be more different! Yet both are happy, well-adjusted young men (age 28 and 30). Thankfully, their parents raised them according to their “individual gift or bent.”

The choice is God’s, and it falls our lot to both recognize and accept people, everyone, blood kin or not, with the talents God gave them. To do otherwise is to actually reject the work of almighty God, who knows vastly better than we do. I have friends that play instruments in orchestras, and I have friends who raise cattle. Sometimes we all sit together over a nice prime rib dinner and listen to beautiful music, because God created people to fill every niche of His plan.

As we go through the days God has allowed for us, let us be diligent to deeply appreciate the strong worker who built our homes, the gentle artists who painted the art on our walls, the skilled hands who cooked our meals, the truck driver and dock worker who delivered our gas grill, the children whose laughter sprinkles our hearts with joy and the spiritual leader who just asked God to bless our meals.

We must never judge anyone by our own preconceived ideas, but “judge with a righteous judgment” as Jesus, Himself said in John 8:24. And we simply cannot obey that command until we learn to recognize and appreciate each individual person for who God created them to be. Praise God for all of His creations, from gentle spirits to cattlemen, from computer specialists to diesel mechanics... and for fish and for squirrels who all live their lives as God made them!

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