

Napoleon; and was his a flexible or a trembling arm? No. Be kind and uniform, and act, not from irritation or momentary impulse, but from steady principle, and you need not fear; but if this part of your duty is neglected, there is no hope for the rest. If your child is ungoverned at your fireside, the question of salvation or ruin is as much a matter of mere *chance*, that is, as much under the control of circumstances, fortuitous, so far as human agency is concerned, as anything can be which takes place in this world.

The ascendancy, above described, being obtained—the great duty which you have to discharge, is to establish and to maintain a constant intercourse between the heart of your little one and its Maker. A child is capable of maintaining this intercourse, and enjoying the happiness which springs from it, at a very early period; perhaps before it is old enough to understand half of the fundamental truths of the gospel. There are *some* truths, indeed, which must be fully comprehended and felt, as a preparatory step. If these are understood, the child may be a child of prayer; his morning and evening offering may ascend acceptably to God, from a renewed spirit, while in regard to many of the great truths of the christian dispensation he is entirely uninformed.

One of the first subjects to be presented to the mind of the child, is its dependence on its Creator for life and all that it enjoys. And this is to be impressed, not by making *general* statements, but by pointing to *particular facts*. Direct his notice to his beating pulse, and let him observe that he has no power over its movements, and while his attention is absorbed by the subject, say to him, “You cannot live unless your pulse continues to beat. It is God who keeps it in motion. If he lets it stop you will die.” Or interrupt his breathing for a moment, and let him notice the inconvenience and suffering occasioned. Then say, “If your breathing should cease for a little longer time, you would die; and who is it that continues it while you sleep?”

A few simple instances of this kind will make a far more vivid and permanent impression upon the mind of a child, than any labored and general description of our dependence upon the Creator.

The next truth to be taught the child as a preparation for leading it habitually to God, is, that God is *holy*, and that he is consequently displeased with sin. This, too, like the former, is not to be *first taught* by the general language of a creed or catechism; for this language, however logical and accurate, and however valuable for other purposes, is not suitable for *first communicating the idea*. The child must