

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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***It runs up and down the leash!*** Some of the most impressive lessons I learned while training dogs in the military. And many of these lessons derived from this simple philosophical statement. I was introduced to this phrase very early into my training to become a dog trainer. In fact, the instructor said that unless we learned the principle behind this premise we would struggle to become an effective dog team. Our instructor would speak these words many times in several expressive and emotional announcements. You would hear it during times when the dog was out of control of the handler. Again these words were loudly spoken when the dog was apparently in control...of the handler. Habit forming practices always guaranteed performance, whether the habits were good or bad. When a training exercise was executed flawlessly, the handler would hear it as the instructor praised the dog team, often prefacing the praise with the phrase. And when you and/or the dog failed miserably in something as simple as a basic command of obedience, you would hear it again...

***It runs up and down the leash!***

It took a while for the truth of what the instructor was declaring to sink into our minds. We all came to understand that the key to understanding was to realize what the “It” was. What was it that ran up and down the leash? What was the thing, that when practiced faithfully, would result in performance that was praiseworthy, or displayed as a spectacle that stunk out loud? Thinking back on it I would have to agree that there had to be one thing that the handler and the dog had to come to understand. It’s the realization of *Who’s the dog* and *Who’s the handler*. I believe the “it” that runs up and down the leash is the recognition of authority. If a dog understood that authority was at the top of the leash things happened very differently than if the handler allowed the dog to dictate the day. And for a handler to realize the full potential of the power of an attack-trained dog, he or she better come to know that the handler was truly in control!

This real life proverb reminds me of another proverb about real life. Familiar to our ears is the one that says, *Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)* Now dogs are not people although some people seem to think so! But a child is a creature that is made in the image and likeness of God. People training can be a little more challenging. Maybe that is why some people spend more time training a dog than training a child.

Let’s look a little closer to the Scripture. To train up the child requires the realization of *Who’s the child* and *Who’s the parent?* Sadly I see it on display in our culture that a lot of parents are training a child in the way they should go but it doesn’t seem to be God’s way. They are given a cultural model of behavior that is increasingly becoming a standard of non-absolute standards. For you see, my friends, this proverb not only gives us a mandate for training children from a biblical perspective, it also gives us a somber prophecy that will be fulfilled if we don’t. Children will be trained...the one true way...or all the others. The connection of a parent, or person in authority, to the child-in-training is as real as a leash to a dog. We are given authority to train up a child by God. Whether it is godly or ungodly authority is the question. And it will train up a child. And they will not depart from it when they are old. Unless the generational cycle is interrupted by the gospel.

I am excited for our future at Mount Olivet as we begin a partnership with a school that is actively engaged in training up a child in the One True Way they should go. **Iron Academy** will occupy the school building on campus this month preparing to pursue their mission to *shape Christian boys into exceptionally educated and biblically-grounded young men who are maximally developed for a life of leadership, self-discipline, and service.* Sounds a lot like making disciples.

We covet your prayers and would appreciate financial gifts to help the church support this worthy endeavor. As Iron Academy would put it, *Because Biblical Manhood Is Never An Accident.*

Blessings to you,  
Pastor Sam