

Re: Religion and Kids

Guest post by Trent Oliphant.

Excellent post, Skyler. I have often had discussions with a friend of mine on this exact subject. He had children that didn't want to go to church and he felt that he needed to force them (cajole or guilt when they got too big to physically force). I tried to help him understand that not only was it inappropriate to force children to participate in religion – it just doesn't work. Ultimately, the children will reach an age and station in life when they will be able to choose for themselves. Force may appear to work for a short time but ends up breeding resentment and rebellion. All people will come to their own set of beliefs.

What is the old cliché? — “A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still”.

My friend's son not only doesn't go to church, he doesn't even believe in God. Perhaps, if my friend had spent the energy in understanding why his son didn't want to go to church, instead of fighting him just to go “because that's what you are supposed to do”, he might have been able to effectively answer the questions that his son had that have gone unanswered. My friend was able to achieve his short-term goal for a while (getting his son to church), but lost sight of the long-term goal (helping his son develop a testimony of the Gospel).