Introduction:

A. As a rule, even evil parents, know how to give good gifts to their children. (v. 13).
   1. Freely give them a living and care until they can provide and care for themselves.
   2. Freely give them good gifts even beyond necessities - even after they are “on their own.”
   3. Rarely give them anything harmful -- if they knew it to be harmful.

B. Often, even good parents, do not know how to give the best gifts to their children.
   1. May be able to afford all the gifts money can buy, but still not what child needs most. (cf. “Buy him one”)
   2. May focus too much on child’s temporal needs and wants, not enough on spiritual needs.
   3. May not understand greatest need of child: To be equipped to live in present world and the world to come.

C. As Christians, let us encourage young parents to give priceless gifts that money cannot buy.

Discussion:

II. The Gift of Oneself. (Duet. 11:18-21).
   A. Not by rare appointment, but ready access. (walk, talk, sit).
   B. Not as a “pal” or peer, but as a mature parent.

III. The Gift of a Stable Home.
   A. A peaceful home. (Jas. 3:16; Mt. 12:25).
      1. Children don’t need constant crisis.
      2. Parents need to settle and/or forget disputes (cf. 1 Cor. 7:15).
   B. An orderly home.
      1. Well-defined rules based on Bible.
      2. Well-defined roles based on Bible.
         a. Father’s role (Eph. 5:28)
         b. Mother’s role (Tit. 2:5; 1 Tim. 5:14).
         c. Child’s role (Eph. 6:1).

IV. The Gift of a Godly Influence. (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15).
   A. Good personal influence.
      1. By being “an example to the believers.” (1 Tim. 4:12).
         a. “In word” - Watch language, choose words carefully.
         b. “In conduct” - “Monkey, see, monkey do.”
         c. “In love” - (cf. 1 John 3:18) For God, family, neighbor, brethren (church).
         d. “In spirit” - Disposition.
         e. “In faith” - True trust in the Lord.
      2. By keeping priorities straight. (Mt. 6:33) - cf. S.Hall’s story of homecoming.
      3. By “confess(ing) your sins to one another” - even to your children.
   B. Good outside influences.
      1. Their associations, your associations. (1 Cor. 15:33).
      2. Their T.V., literature, entertainment and yours.

V. The Gift of an Understanding Heart. (cf. 1 Thess. 2:7-11; Heb. 2:18;5:2)
   A. Understand child’s limitations and feelings. (1 Cor. 13:11).
   B. Understand child’s need and desire for guidance and authority.
   C. Understand child’s pressure from peers, give the an out.

   A. Refuse to accept disrespect and rejection of authority.
   B. Refuse to give permission for what you disapprove.
   C. Refuse to be swayed by child's tears (Prov. 19:18 KJV), society’s standards, or too much “free advice.”

VII. The Gift of an Independent Adulthood.
   A. Avoid extremes: Make them adults too soon nor let them be children forever.
B. Gradually prepare them to stand alone - Morally and spiritually. (1 Cor. 16:13)
C. Encourage married ones to “leave and cleave” (Mt. 19:5).
D. Don’t expect them to “pay their dues”.

Conclusion:
A. Your child is free agent, may turn away in spite giving all these things.
B. Your child has much better chance, if carefully reared.