



Clear Path Bible Studies Understand the Bible with clarity and confidence.

# What Proverbs 22:6 Says — and What It Never Promised

For every parent quietly asking, “Did I do this?”

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Proverbs 22:6 · WEB

## 1 A proverb is not a promise

Proverbs is wisdom literature: it describes how life *generally* goes, not a guarantee for every case. Proverbs 10:4 says diligence brings wealth — yet Scripture knows faithful, diligent people who suffered loss. Proverbs 22:6 tells the truth about the deep, lifelong power of godly training. It never promised that every trained child stays — so it cannot convict every parent whose child left.

## 2 The perfect Father’s children rebelled

*“I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me.”*

Isaiah 1:2 · WEB

God’s parenting had no flaws — and His children still walked away. If a child’s rebellion proved a parent’s failure, Isaiah 1:2 would indict God. It doesn’t, because the premise is false. Children are souls with wills, not products of manufacture. Samuel’s sons turned corrupt (1 Samuel 8:3); Scripture never blames Samuel.

## 3 The ledger runs one name per line

*The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.*

Ezekiel 18:20 · WEB

Guilt does not transfer between generations — in either direction. You were responsible *to* your child (love, teach, model the faith, tell the truth). You are not responsible *for* the independent choices of a grown soul.

### False guilt — put it down

- “The verse promised they’d stay.” It didn’t — it’s a proverb.
- “A better parent could have prevented this.” Isaiah 1:2.
- “Their choices are on my account.” Ezekiel 18:20.
- “If I find my mistake, I can fix it.” You cannot repent someone else’s will.

### Real responsibility — own it

- Keep loving them visibly, without conditions.
- Confess any specific real harm — once, cleanly, no defense.
- Stay findable: same number, same door, no ultimatums.
- Pray — and let God carry what only God can.

## 4 The posture: watch the road

*But while he was still far off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.*

Luke 15:20 · WEB

The father in Jesus’ story did not chase, did not fund the rebellion, did not pretend truth was negotiable — and never stopped watching the road. “If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men” (Romans 12:18, WEB). Reconciliation takes two. Faithfulness takes one.

## A one-page summary to print and hand to someone.

If the weight ever feels like more than you can safely carry, the **988** Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988, any hour) is there for exactly that moment.

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