

Raising Children In The Christian Family

Notes by Franklin

Psalm 127:3 **Children** are a **gift from the LORD**, they are a reward from Him. NLT

❖ Jesus loves children, and gives a stern warning:

Let the little **children come to me**, and **do not hinder them**, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. Matthew 19:14

1. **Parents** must do all that is in their power to raise their children in such a way that they will "**come to the Lord**" very early in life and remain with the Lord. And . . .
2. To not "**hinder them**" we must **raise** and **train** our children according to the Lord's **instructions** as found in **His Word, the Bible**.

This is a GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, and therefore:

- I. Fathers must take the LEAD and RESPONSIBILITY to TEACH and TRAIN their children.

Ephesians 6:4 ***Fathers**, do not **provoke** your children to anger, but bring them up in the **discipline** and **instruction** of the Lord.*

The correct and proper order for the home is: **the father is the head** of the family (Eph. 5:23 *the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church*) and therefore the Lord holds the father responsible for being a good **leader**, **teacher** and **example** for his wife and children.

- As the above verse shows, the father either **provokes** or he **instructs** and **disciplines**. The family will prosper or suffer by his choices.
- The father may delegate some teaching responsibilities to his wife. There are some things she can teach much better. They are a team.
- Father and Mother should discuss and come into **agreement** on what they teach and how it is taught. They should search the Scriptures and pray together to find the answers and **come into agreement**.

Proverb 22:6 ***Train** up a child in **the way** he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

- A child is trained by what he **sees** and **experiences** from his father and mother and their reaction to each other and to life. What mom and dad **do**, their children will do. What is important to mom and dad will be important to the kids.

What dad and mom **do**, or **the way** they relate to each other and their world, is far more **effective training** than what they say. The philosophy, the culture, of the parents is what the child accepts as the way life is to be lived.

- There is a difference between *teaching* and *training*. **Teaching** is education with **words** and **illustrations**. **Training** is education by **action** and **example**. Lessons taught by **teaching** will only produce **limited success**. Lessons taught by **training** will produce **lifetime success** that *"when he is old he will not depart from"*.
- Rarely will children depart from their **training**. In most cases, they will even take it to a more extreme level. It often follows the pattern of Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you**. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For **by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return**.

What you give to your child (good or bad) will be returned in their life in a greater measure.

Jacob deceived his father, and as a result he had years of hard labor, marital problems, and family conflict. In the same way that Jacob dishonored his father with lies and deception, **his sons dishonored him**. (See Genesis 37:31-33.)

- If father and mother are not in **agreement** about what and how to teach the children, or on any subject, a spirit of dissension, argument and anger can enter into the family causing many severe problems. And, as the children are trained, "they will not depart from it" in their marriages.
- At an early age, children begin to learn from the **television** and from their **friends**, often with far greater impact than what their parents are saying or telling them to do.

- It would be best if television was not watched except for news and a few good programs. It can bring a very foreign, and most of the time, an evil culture into your home. King David said: *I will set no worthless thing before my eyes.* Psalm 101:3
- Introduce your children to good books and encourage them to entertain themselves by reading and not the TV.
- In the evening the family could play games or other activities together. This will help strengthen family bonds and give opportunities for more Godly training.

The Question is: "What should be taught to our children?"

The Answer: The Teachings and ways of the LORD from the Scriptures. Our Heavenly Father loves us and gave the BIBLE as the INSTRUCTION MANUEL for a blessed life.

Deuteronomy 4:40 *So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you AND with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.*

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

Being a parent is a **full-time job**, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
 Being a parent is a **ministry** given you by the LORD.
 Being **faithful** in this ministry qualifies you for future ministries.

Parents have a "John The Baptist ministry" toward their children:

- *Prepare the way for the LORD, make straight paths for HIM.* Luke 3:4
- Prepare the way for the LORD to have a straight path into your child's heart.

II. Children must learn to OBEY.

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, OBEY your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (2) HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER which is the first commandment with a promise, (3) SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

- We MUST TEACH our children to OBEY!
- Parents are the **first AUTHORITY** children **MUST** learn to Obey. Fathers and Mothers create a covering of protection – like an umbrella over their children to protect them from physical and spiritual harm.

The Bible teaches that the '*Chain of Authority*' is first the father, then the mother over the children. This order brings peace and blessings.

- Young **children must learn** to simply and **instantly obey** without talking back. This is important for their safety today and so they will later instantly obey the initial promptings of the Holy Spirit for their safety.

Proverb 29:15 *The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*

- *The rod and reproof give wisdom* – both are necessary.

Reproof is to teach your children the REASON WHY they should obey:

- (1) So that everything will go well for them (Eph.6:3)
- and -
- (2) Not giving satan an opportunity to attack them (Eph. 4:17).
Sin gives satan a legal right to attack us. (Luke 22:31).
- (3) "*a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*"
Brings shame on his parents because they did not teach the child to obey. **You will know them by their fruits**
(Matthew 7:16)

Proverb 22:15 *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*

- Children **MUST BE DISCIPLINED**, if not foolishness remains in their life.

Proverb 23:13 ***Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.***

- The **degree of discipline** should be according to the degree of the disobedience. You can discipline by:
 - Taking away or not allowing **privileges**, for 15 minutes, one hour, one day, or one week.
 - Sending the child to his or her **bed** to calm down their anger.
 - Doing extra **work**
 - Giving a **spanking** is not just permitted by the Bible but is required. But **ONLY for a defiant, willful disobedience.**

Proverb 13:24 *He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who **LOVES HIM** disciplines him diligently.*

Let **all that you do be done in love.** 1 Corinthians 16:14

- You should **NEVER** punish **while you are angry.**

Explain to your child:

(1) **What** they have done. This helps to establish their guilt.

(2) **Why** you are going to discipline them – because you love them, and Jesus loves them, and what they did was wrong. Tell them that the Bible tells you to discipline them. Tell them that they must learn so that they will not have problems later in their life.

(3) Then wait and **pray** until you are no longer angry and you will then punish under control and in concern for your child.

(4) **Explain how** they are going to be punished. Father and mother should prayerfully agree together as to what disobedience receives what type of discipline or punishment. It is **VERY** important that father and mother are **always in agreement** and **support** the actions of one another. This will require some 'give-and-take' from both.

(5) The paddling should be done in **private**. It should be hard enough and long enough to outweigh the pleasures of the sin.

(6) When finished, allow enough time for the child to calm down and then **discuss the offense** with them so they clearly understand and know what you expect from their behavior.

(7) **Assure the child of your love and forgiveness** which means you will not bring up this offense again. **Pray together**. Patiently wait and encourage the child to pray also. Lead the child in their own prayer of repentance for the offense. This will train them to respond in the same manner toward the Lord.

- You should **NEVER** discipline or spank by striking or hitting your child with your hand. Use an object such as a small leather belt, a long wooden spoon, or small flexible limb from a bush on the child's **bottom only**. Be consistent with the item you use so that they fear it when they see you take it up. But you do not want them to fear your hand which should only be for touching to communicate love and tenderness.
- Your discipline should NEVER INJURE YOUR CHILD. Your spanking SHOULD NOT LEAVE BRUISES or any other injuries.
- We **discipline** our children **BECAUSE WE LOVE THEM**. Our children should **know** and be **fully convinced** that we discipline them **because we love them dearly**. We KNOW the LORD Loves us because of the sacrifices He made for us. FATHERS DO THE SAME for your children. Hold them / talk with them / spend time / show them respect so they will know they are extremely precious to you.

IF THEY DO NOT KNOW YOU LOVE THEM, or if you are to LEGALISTIC or STRICT with them YOU ONLY "**provoke them to anger**" (Eph.6:4) and **produce rebellion** in their heart which will be seen in their life.

Hebrews 12:6-8 *For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children. (7) As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? (8) If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all.* NLT

Hebrews 12:11 *No **discipline** seems pleasant at the time, but **painful**. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness (right living) and peace for those who have been **trained** by it.*

1 Samuel 15:23 *For **rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry***

- **Rebellion** is knowingly turning away from and disobeying the authority over you.
- **Stubbornness** is insisting on having things or doing something in your own way and/or in your own time.
- **Manipulation** is shrewd or devious management to obtain one's own way. Children, as well as most of us are very skilled at this.
- Rebellion, stubbornness and manipulation are serious sins and **give satan a legal right to attack**. Because children naturally try to get their own way from an early age, these sins must be addressed and disciplined out of their hearts.

Proverb 22:6 ***Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.***

Let **all** that **you do be done in love**. 1 Corinthians 16:14

III. Children Must Learn to Obey All Authority

They will learn to Obey All Authority by seeing Dad and Mom
OBEY ALL AUTHORITY (children learn what they see their parents do).

Romans 13:1-7

***Obey the government**, for God is the one who put it there. All governments have been placed in power by God. (2) So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow. (3) For the authorities do not frighten people who are doing right, but they frighten those who do wrong. So do what they say, and you will get along well. (4) The authorities are sent by God to help you. But if you are doing something wrong, of course you should be afraid, for you will be*

*punished. The authorities are established by God for that very purpose, to punish those who do wrong. (5) So you must obey the government for two reasons: to keep from being punished and to keep a clear conscience. (6) **Pay your taxes**, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid so they can keep on doing the work God intended them to do. (7) **Give to everyone what you owe them**: Pay your taxes and import duties, and **give respect and honor to all to whom it is due.** NLT*

Matthew 22:19-21

*Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" 21 They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, " Then **render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's.**"*

Matthew 8:8-10

*But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. (9) "For I also am **a man under authority**, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." (10) Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, **I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.**"*

John Wesley was one of the greatest preachers to ever live. He and a few other preachers are credited with turning England around from a social, economic, moral, and military collapse that saved it from the revolution that later destroyed France. The Wesley revival spread to America in the 1740's. It produced the moral climate in which the young George Washington and other great leaders grew up and set the United States of America on the path to becoming a great nation.

Wesley was **totally dedicated** to doing God's will in God's way during his eighty-seven years of life. His life is a testimony to what a dedicated mother with a **vision** for training her children can accomplish. **Susanna Wesley** had nineteen children. She ran the family farm and taught Bible classes as a pastor's wife. She was her children's elementary school teacher. The **KEY** to her child training was to bring each child to **accept authority** as early as possible. In a letter she wrote: "**I insist on conquering the child's will because when this is thoroughly done, then a child can be governed by the reason and piety of his parents, until their own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of the Bible have taken root in their mind. I cannot yet dismiss the subject. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, whatever promotes it in children ensures their wretchedness, and whatever brings it to death promotes their future happiness and piety.**"

A major and very important reason for strict discipline and child training is to teach the child to conquer and bring under **control his SELF-WILL**.

John Wesley's mother wrote: "*the parent who allows the child's **self-will** to grow does the devil's work.*"

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- ❖ One means of accomplishing this is to set **firm** and **secure boundaries** that the children clearly know and understand what they can do and what they can not do. And, that they know the punishment for breaking or going beyond the set boundary. Then it is **Very Important** that you, the parent, are **ALWAYS CONSISTENT** with the set punishment when the boundary is broken. Your consistency will not only help the child learn to **control his self-will** but will also bring a needed sense of **security** and a clear conscience to him/her.
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Susanna Wesley knew that her children would not recognize or appreciate her love for them, benefit from her wisdom and grow to good moral character without **accepting her authority**.

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IV. Family Devotions

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ***All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.***

2 Timothy 2:15 ***Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.***

- The children need to see and know that the **Bible** is extremely **important** to Dad and Mom.
- Sometime during the evening the family should **read a portion of Scripture and discuss it together** with Father leading the discussion. He should involve everyone by asking the children what they think, what we can learn from the passage and how can we apply it. Singing of Christian songs should be included. And, as they say, "the family that prays together stays together."
- The whole family should work together on **memorizing a verse** or a passage. As soon as the Wesley children could speak they were taught the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) and the family said it together every morning and evening. They were taught to be still during prayer with closed eyes to help them think only about what they were saying.
- The Wesley children were taught that the Lord's Day is different from all the other days by very little work and rest together as a family.
- **THE GOAL IS TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN ESTABLISH A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST** and begin a **DAILY WALK WITH THE LORD**.
 - A Relationship **requires** communication, talking with each other. You spend time and talk with those you love. With others . . . ?
 - The more **time** you spend listening and talking to your kids the better your relationship with them will be.
 - The more time they spend talking and learning to 'hear' the voice of the LORD the better their relationship with HIM will be.
 - Teach and Train your children to have a time of **PRAYER** first thing in the morning and the last thing before sleep.

Teach them to **GIVE THANKS** for every little thing – every beat of their heart, eyes to see God's creation, ears to hear His birds, their mind to understand His creation, their mom and dad, brothers and sisters, food, health . . . every little thing.

Matthew 6:5-8 **When you pray**, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, **when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door** and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. And **when you are praying**, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

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V. Developing Moral Excellence Is The Goal

2 Peter 1:5 **applying all diligence**, in your faith supply **moral excellence**

Proverb 11:3 *The **integrity** of the upright **will guide them**, but the crookedness of the deceitful will destroy them.*

- **Integrity** – the quality of living an excellent moral life
- The word **integrity** basically means “**to live uprightly**” and not just doing what is right for show.
- A person of **integrity** has **inner convictions** which **control outward behavior**.

1 Timothy 1:18-19 *keeping **faith** and a **good conscience**, which some have **rejected** and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.*

- Help your children maintain the JOY of a **good** and **clear** conscience by first obeying, but if they do not, then recognizing the **conviction** of the Holy Spirit and **confessing** wrong behavior (1 John 1:9) to parents and the Lord.

1 Timothy 4:2 The hypocrisy of liars **seared in their own conscience** as with a branding iron

1 Timothy 1:5 *But the **goal** of our instruction **is love** from a **pure heart** and a **good conscience** and a **sincere faith**.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 **Love is patient**, love is **kind** and is **not jealous**; love **does not brag** and is **not arrogant**, does **not act unbecomingly**; it does **not seek its own**, is **not provoked**, does **not take into account a wrong suffered**, does **not rejoice in unrighteousness**, but **rejoices with the truth**; **bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**. . . . LOVE NEVER FAILS

Romans 13:9-10 *whatever other commandments there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."* **Love does no harm to its neighbor**. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN TEACH/TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN IS:

YOU SHALL **LOVE THE LORD** YOUR GOD with ALL YOUR HEART, and with ALL YOUR SOUL, and with ALL YOUR MIND. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, **YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF**. Matthew 22:37-40

To develop good character traits in children, the parents should have good character traits demonstrated in their life for the children to see, learn from and follow.

A note to parents:

God's grace and help is available to whosoever will call upon Him.

2 Corinthians 9:8 *God is able to make **all grace abound to you**, so that **always** having **all** sufficiency in everything, you may have an **abundance** for every good deed.* The LORD WILL HELP YOU train your children.

Ephesians 5:2 **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us

Colossians 1:10 **walk** in a manner worthy of the Lord, **to please Him** in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work

1 Thessalonians 4:1 you ought to walk and **please God** (just as you actually do walk), that you **excel still more**.

- **A disciplined life lived by the parents is the first step in training a child** who will . . .
 - **Do what is right**, in the right way, at the right time, with the right attitude even when it is difficult or not popular.
 - **Do right** even when it is difficult or costly to do so.
- **Children must be taught to do what is right** – and made to do it - until they do what is right naturally or automatically.
- The ultimate goal – and absolute necessity - is to have the child **discipline themselves** through means of their **own character**.

1 Corinthians 9:27 *I **discipline** my body and make it my slave*

Colossians 2:5 *rejoicing to see your **good discipline** and the **stability** of your faith in Christ.*

1 Timothy 4:7 ***discipline** yourself for the purpose of godliness*

The LORD knew Job was **a man of integrity** when He told satan that in spite of Job's troubles . . . *"there is no one like him on the earth, a **blameless** and **upright** man **fearing God** and **turning away from evil**. And he still **holds fast his integrity**."* Job 2:3

Job **never** quit trusting the LORD and **doing right** even when his **family**, his **possessions**, and his **health** had been **taken away** from him. HE HAD INTEGRITY OR CHARACTER. **He continued to do right because it was deep within him.** That is INTEGRITY.

➤ THE WORLD NEEDS MORE PEOPLE LIKE JOB!

Romans 5:3-4 We also **rejoice in problems** and **trials**, knowing that they bring perseverance; and perseverance, **proven character**.

As the saying goes – Squeeze a lemon and lemon juice comes out. The true test of what is inside is what comes forth under pressure.

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Let **all** that **you do be done in love**. 1 Corinthians 16:14

VI. Important Character Traits needed in every person:

Character - who you are when no one but the LORD is watching.

OBEDIENCE - doing what those in authority request or want.

- It is the opposite of “doing your own thing” or self-will.

Luke 9:24 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

- True obedience involves doing what an authority asks or wants. And doing it immediately, respectfully joyfully and completely.
- Obedience to the authorities over us is obedience to the LORD. He is the One who commands us to obey the authorities, whether they are good or bad.

John 3:36	obey the Son
Acts 5:29	We must obey God
Ephesians 6:1	obey your parents
Colossians 3:22	obey those who are your masters on earth
2 Thessalonians 1:8	obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus
Hebrews 13:17	Obey your leaders and submit to them
1 Peter 1:2	obey Jesus Christ

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RESPECTFULNESS - genuine honor and high esteem given to others.

THE GOLDEN RULE:

Do for others what you would like them to do for you. Matthew 7:12

Respectfulness is:

- Recognizing that **others** are extremely **valuable** and loved by the LORD. Their **value** as a person is determined by the price Jesus Christ paid to redeem or purchase them for Himself.
- Dad and Mom must show high **RESPECT for each other** and other people in their words and attitude and teach the children to do the same. **Never** allowing any disrespectful, hurtful words or actions.
- Dad and Mom should **always** respond to their children in a **respectful** way that reinforces the child's worthiness as a person, even during discipline.

Colossians 4:6 *Let your speech **ALWAYS be with grace**, seasoned with salt (makes food taste better) so you should respond to each person.*

- Dad and Mom **must not** have any prejudices toward any other race, people group, caste or class.
- **Boys learn RESPECT** for ladies when they see their father stand up when a woman enters the room, or seat their mother and daughters at the table, open doors for them, and whatever honors them. Boys should be taught to do the same.

Leviticus 19:32 ***Rise** in the presence of the aged, **show respect** for the elderly and **revere** your God. I am the LORD.*

Romans 13:7 ***Give to EVERYONE . . . respect and honor***

- **Children must be taught to RESPECT:**
 - **Their own things** by keeping their room clean, clothes and toys picked up and returned to proper place when finished. Bed made up in the morning.

- Respect the **property and things of others** by not taking or using something that belongs to another without asking. And if given permission, take special care of it and always return it to its proper place.
- Respect for **others space** and **privacy**, beginning with their family.

1 Peter 2:18 *be submissive to your masters with all **respect**, not only to those who are good and gentle, but **also** to those who are unreasonable.*

Luke 18:2 *In a certain city there was a judge who **did not fear God** and **did not respect man**.*

- Our **fear** or **reverence** for the LORD and our **respect** for others goes hand in hand.
- **Children must be taught** reverential fear of the LORD and respect for all mankind.

Leviticus 19:30 ***Observe** my Sabbaths and have **reverence** for my sanctuary. I am the LORD.*

- **Reverence for the LORD is taught by:**
 - Bowing our head and closing our eyes during corporate prayer like at meals. Closing eyes helps children focus on the Lord and the prayer rather than the other children or the food.
 - Dressing nice for a church meeting and attentiveness and participation while there.
 - Susanna Wesley had her children dress nice for meals and observe good table manners which shows respect for others.

Luke 20:13 *What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; **perhaps they will respect Him**.* Did they???

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GRATEFULNESS

Luke 17:15-17 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, **glorifying God with a loud voice**, (16) and he fell on his face at His feet, **giving thanks** to Him. And he was a Samaritan. (17) Then Jesus answered and said, "**Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they?**"

As with all of these traits, GRATEFULNESS is not natural with most.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ***In everything give thanks**; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 ***But we should always give thanks** to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord*

Hebrews 13:15 *Let us **continually** offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips **giving thanks** to His name.*

Children should be trained to say "**thank you**" as soon as they start to talk. Thanks should be given for food, for anything which is given to them or done for them. Develop thanksgiving in all forms.

1 Corinthians 4:7 *What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*

When we try to answer the above question we begin to realize just how much has been **given to us** from the LORD and from others.

- Help your children see and understand this and develop a **grateful attitude**.
 - Saying "**thank you**" for everything given to them and done for them.
 - Writing "thank-you" notes
 - Help them learn to be grateful that they are a girl or a boy. NEVER say "if you were a boy . . ." or "if you were a girl . . ."
 - Help them learn to be grateful for the way God made them, their eyes, nose, their hair, their height, the color of their skin.
 - Let them learn by giving thanks at meals

Feeding the five thousand: *Jesus then took the loaves, and having given **thanks**, He distributed to those who were seated* John 6:11

- Teach your children that **all prayer** should include **gratefulness** and **thanksgiving** to the LORD. Psalm 30:12; 44:8; 79:13

Philippians 4:6 *in **everything** by **prayer** and **supplication** with **thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God*

Developing an attitude of Gratefulness and Thanksgiving is extremely important to developing a heart that is sensitive to the LORD.

Romans 1:21-24 *For even though they knew God, they **did not honor Him** as God **or give thanks**, but they became futile in their speculations, and their **foolish heart was darkened**. (22) Professing to be wise, they became fools, (23) and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (24) Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity . . .*

***Train** up a child in **the way** he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it. Let **all** that **you do be done in love**.*

TRUTHFULNESS / HONEST

Truthfulness is the way we **earn trust** from others by **accurately** reporting facts and events without excusing our self, covering up or exaggeration.

Ephesians 4:25 ***put away lying**, let each one of you **speak truth***

Ephesians 4:15 ***speaking the truth in love**, we are to **grow up** in all aspects **into Him** who is the head, even Christ*

- Only in speaking the truth are we growing or maturing in Christ
- When we are lying, we are choosing to act like satan.
John 8:44 " . . . the devil . . . does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. . . he speaks a lie . . . from his own nature, for **he is a liar** and **the father of lies**."

- Help your children understand this and the whole family (parents also) **make a commitment to never tell a lie**. This is extremely difficult to do but must be seriously worked on and improvement will slowly come. Help each other, confess your failures (lies) to each other, and be forgiving where you can after a self-motivated confession of a lie. As they make you say in the court room: *"I promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."*
- It is important for parents to **speak and encourage good character traits** in their children by saying such things as, *"I so appreciate that you nearly always tell the truth."* *"I appreciate that you are telling the truth more and more and that you are not a liar."*
- With **positive encouragement** children will try hard to live up to what you say. DO NOT say such things as, "You are a liar." Your child must never hear or begin to believe "I am a liar" but must begin to believe "I tell the truth."
- **Never accuse a child of lying** unless you are absolutely sure. When you suspect a lie pray and ask the LORD to convict or expose the lie.
- A real aid in developing truthfulness is to help your child realize the truth and reality of Number 32:23: ***be sure your sin will find you out.***

Proverb 12:22 The LORD detests lying lips, but **He delights** in those who are **truthful**.

- Make **your own life** an example of **truthfulness** and **confession** of failure before your children. Do not lie to them about Santa Claus or any other fable. It could make them question if God is real.
- Make a rule that the punishment will be reduced if the child confesses the truth and promises not to do it again. This will go a long way in encouraging the children not to lie and if they do, to confess.

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

Faithfulness – always doing what is RIGHT, what you are ASKED TO DO, what is EXPECTED of you, what SHOULD BE DONE even if you are not asked to do it.

- A person with this quality sees those things that need to be done and will take care of it.

This is a rare but sought after Character trait.

Luke 12:42 *And the Lord said, **Who then is the faithful and sensible steward**, whom his master will **put in charge** of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?*

FAITHFULNESS brings **rich rewards** and opens doors of **opportunity**. A TRUSTWORTHY person will take care of even the **smallest** of details and always **do what is right** without neglect or taking a shortcut.

Luke 16:10-13 ***He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. (11) Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? (12) And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?***

This quality will bring **advancement, success and prosperity**.

Matthew 25:23 *His master said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.**'*

Faithfulness qualifies and **promotes** you to higher rank and usefulness.

1 Corinthians 4:17 *For this reason I have sent to you **Timothy**, who is my beloved and **faithful** child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.*

The Apostle Paul used and **gave opportunity** to those he could **TRUST**.

Ephesians 6:21 **Tychicus**, the beloved brother and **faithful minister** in the Lord, will make everything known to you.

Colossians 1:7 *Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a **faithful** servant of Christ on our behalf*

Colossians 4:9 *Onesimus, our **faithful** and beloved brother*

1 Timothy 3:11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, **faithful in all things**.

2 Timothy 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, **entrust these to faithful men** who will be able to teach others also.

Hebrews 3:5 *Now **Moses** was **faithful** in all His house **as a servant**, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later;*

1 Peter 5:12 Through **Silvanus**, our **faithful brother**

Revelation 2:13 **Antipas**, My witness, My **faithful** one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

True Character Traits are a way of life EVEN WHEN IT IS NOT EASY.

Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer . . . you will be tested, and you will have tribulation . . . **Be faithful** until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Dependable / Trustworthy

Fulfilling what I was asked to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice.

Psalm 15:4 He swears to his own hurt and does not change

Loyalty

Using adversity to confirm my commitment to those whom God has called me to serve.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

Serving or Being A Servant

John 13:14-15 *If I then, the **Lord** and the **Teacher**, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.*

- Jesus Christ, LORD GOD Almighty, our Redeemer, **was a Servant**.

Therefore be **imitators of God**, as beloved children; (2) and **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. Ephesians 5:1-2

- A **servant** does not see any job or position as beneath him. He **looks for and sees things that need to be done and will do them**. He will 'wash feet,' pick up trash, wash the dishes or whatever needs to be done as soon as he sees it and without being asked.

Matthew 20:25-28 *But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. (26) It is not this way among you, but **whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant**, (27) and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; (28) just as the Son of Man **did not come to be served, but to serve**, and to give His life a ransom for many.*

Forgiving others of their offenses as a means of expressing to them Christ's Love. Training your children to forgive is a must for a joyful, peaceful life.

Matthew 6:12 **Forgive us** our debts, as we also have **forgiven** our debtors. (14) For if **you forgive** men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also **forgive** you.

Luke 23:34 (as they were driving the nails into Jesus' hands) Jesus was saying, "Father, **forgive them**; for they do not know what they are doing.

Ephesians 4:32 Be **kind** to one another, **tender-hearted, forgiving** each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Endurance the inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish the best for the LORD and others. Train and encourage your children to **not give up**, to **not quit** until the task is complete. Encourage them along the way. Be their cheerleader.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Orderliness - Preparing myself and my surroundings so that I will achieve the greatest efficiency. Train your children to make up their bed as soon as they arise in the morning, to pick up their clothes, toys and their things. Train them to always return an item to it's proper place when they are finished with it or find it not in it's proper place even if someone else left it.

1 Corinthians 14:40 But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

Self-Control - Instant obedience to the initial promptings of the Holy Spirit. Sufficient, proper discipline is absolutely necessary to help a child learn that they can and must learn and use self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:5 so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of **self-control**.

1 Corinthians 9:25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises **self-control** in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

Galatians 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Humility (the opposite is pride)

Recognizing that the LORD and others are actually responsible for the achievements in my life.

James 4:6 God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Compassion - Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.

1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

Luke 10:30-37 The Good Samaritan

Child Training is Absolutely Necessary to overcome our 'fallen nature' and to experience all that LIFE can be as Christians.

And this ministry, this work, is given to parents.

The future of the next generation is in the hands of parents.

Galatians 5:22-24 But THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness**, (23) **gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law. (24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

2 Peter 1:2-11 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; (3) seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. (4) For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (5) Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence**, in your faith **supply moral excellence**, and in your moral excellence, **knowledge**, 6 and in your knowledge, **self-control**, and in your self-control, **perseverance**, and in your perseverance, **godliness**, (7) and in your godliness, **brotherly kindness**, and in your brotherly kindness, **love**. (8) FOR IF THESE QUALITIES ARE YOURS AND ARE INCREASING, THEY RENDER YOU NEITHER USELESS NOR UNFRUITFUL

in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. (10) Therefore, brethren, **be all the more diligent** to make certain about His calling and choosing you; **for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble**; (11) for in this way the **entrance into the eternal kingdom** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

REMEMBER:

What one generation accepts in moderation – there is a strong possibility that the next generation will take to the next level.

Therefore, it should be no surprise that good and evil are growing further and further apart. The Church becoming more righteous (if we as parents are doing our job) and the world more unrighteous.

Are we becoming more like the world, or is the gap growing wider?

It should be growing further apart because:

where sin increases, **grace increases** all the more Romans 5:20

As God's fellow workers we urge you **not to receive God's grace in vain**. 2 Corinthians 6:1

The **LORD gives you** the GRACE, and the INSTRUCTION FROM HIS WORD, to TRAIN your children to walk "*in the paths of righteousness.*"

In other words, **HE WILL HELP YOU** to:

Train up your children in the way they should go (Proverb 22:6)

And HELP YOU TO:

Let **all that you do be done in love**. 1 Corinthians 16:14

Therefore YOU CAN DO ALL THINGS through Him who gives you strength. Philippians 4:13

PRAY – ASK – SEEK- KNOCK – STUDY HIS WORD – TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN

Acknowledgments:

Growing Up God's Way, by John A Stormer; Liberty Bell Press
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