

WORLD WIDE MINISTRIES

Family Seminar

PEOPLE REACHING PEOPLE

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World Wide Ministries

"...SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE..." EPH.4:11-16

FAMILY

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FAMILY

FOREWORD

Father, we thank You for the wisdom of God, the knowledge of God, and the revelation of God as found in the Spirit of the Lord. We ask that You would teach us, that You would bring us that knowledge and impart to us that wisdom, so we can be examples, we can be teachers, we can be counselors of marriages and families. We release our heart, our mind, and our spirit, Lord, to You, that You might speak to us, teach us, correct us, and exhort us. In Jesus wonderful name, Amen!

This study is designed to give families (fathers, mothers, and children) an understanding of their responsibilities in the family relationship based on the Word of God. All true value is based on the Word of God.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church."

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (Amplified Bible): Hear, Oh, Israel: The Lord our God, is one Lord - the only Lord. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your (mind and) heart, and with your entire being, and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you this day, shall be (first) in your own mind and heart; (then) you shall whet and sharpen them, so as to make them penetrate, and teach and impress them diligently upon the (minds and) the hearts of 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. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets (forehead bands) between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates.

This was a commandment that God gave in the Old Testament. First of all our children have to have an example of what we are talking about, so God said we parents should put these commandments into our own mind, into our own heart, and make them become real to us, and then impress them on our children. God thought so much about the family, He said to do this day and night. At anytime, the Word of God should be the principles upon which we are building our family. Don't tell a child not to lie if you are lying. Don't tell a child not to cheat, if you are cheating. When you walk in the fear of God, you are going to see things begin to happen in your life.

Deuteronomy 5:29: Oh, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever!

If children are not taught about God and about the Lord Jesus Christ from their parents, we cannot depend upon the school system to do it. We see the foolishness in that. We cannot even depend upon the church to do it; they only have them for an hour or so a week. So then it all boils down to this one statement: if we are going to get rid of disbelief in the next generation, it is going to take the parents to instill into their children, the truth about who God really is. It is up to us then to begin to see the seriousness of this study on the Family.

God is concerned about your children. He said, "I want this to happen, so that it can be well with your children." Isn't that great! I want it to be well with my children, but it starts with me. I can no longer blame society. If my children are not living for God, the chances are I forgot to give them the spiritual guidance they needed to make the right choices. Children cannot make right choices if their parents are always making wrong choices. I hear parents saying, "Well, I send my kids to Church." That is not good enough; your responsibility is to take them. Your responsibility is to teach them, not just to rely on the Sunday School teacher or the Pastor, or the Bible teacher. Your responsibility is to teach your children, to bring them to the house of the Lord, and let them grow up in the admonition and the fear of God. Amen!

FATHERS

CHAPTER 1

We are going to deal with fathers in the first chapter. Now here's the reason God put this all together.

*(Malachi 4:5 KJV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:
(Malachi 4:6 KJV) And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

Malachi 4:5-6 Amp.Bible And he shall turn (and reconcile) the hearts of the (estranged fathers) to the (ungodly) children, and the hearts of the (rebellious) children to (the piety of) their fathers, (a reconciliation produced by repentance of the ungodly), lest I come and smite the land with a curse (and a ban of utter destruction).

God said here that the ungodly children and the parents who are not living right, have to repent. If you have not been raising your child right, what you need to do first of all is to repent. You might say, "Well, it is not that important. I can see repentance if I am committing adultery, or robbery, or lying, but I am not doing those." You don't understand that you are investing in your child exactly what you are, and when there is an unrepentive heart in you, it is going to be in your child. When you harden your heart, that child that you have produced is going to have a hardened heart. God said, "I don't want to destroy. I don't want to have a ban of utter destruction. I am going to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the fathers to the children." This is God's desire to keep utter destruction from coming upon you.

(Luke 1:17 KJV) And he shall go before Him (the Lord) in the spirit and the power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Luke 1:17 Amp Bible: And he will (himself) go before Him (the Lord) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn back the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient and incredulous and unpersuadable, to the wisdom of the upright (which is the knowledge and holy love of the will of

God), in order to make ready for the Lord a people (perfectly) prepared in spirit, adjusted, disposed, and placed in the right moral state.

The angel of the Lord told Zacharias that his wife would bear a son (John the baptist) and that he would cause many of the sons of Israel to return to the Lord. When Jesus Christ came, this was the purpose in His coming; not only to save, but to restore. Restoration starts in our family. Our children need parents who are reconciled to God first, so they can have an example of what godliness is all about. Sending your children to Church is nice, but it is not good enough. God is not going to hold the Bible teacher responsible for the other hours of the week that you have that child in your home.

You say, "Well, they took prayer out of school," and I say we need to get it back in the home. I don't worry about it being in the school or not in the school if I have prayer at home. If I am praying with my children at home, and my children are praying at home, I am going to have a greater influence on them than they are going to have all day in that school. Kids are not going to pray if they have not been praying at home. They are going to be thinking about all kinds of things. We have deceived ourselves, thinking that we are living in a godly country. The godliness must begin at home where you have those children with you.

God said, "I have sent this man in the power and the spirit of Elijah, and his job is to turn people back to God, and to turn the hearts of the sons and the daughters back to the fathers and the mothers." God is saying something here we need to get ahold of. I cannot put the responsibility of raising my children off on somebody else. Every one of us will stand before the Lord one day and we will give an account of the children that God has given into our hands to raise.

It is amazing how we are concerned about winning neighbors and lost people to Christ, and our children never get the same privilege at home. Because they grow up in our home, we assume they grow up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. No! You have to make a personal investment in that child to be sure that child knows what you are talking about. I counsel many people who grew up in a Christian home, but the mom and dad were so busy getting people won to Christ, they forgot to instill the principles of Christ and become a missionary and an evangelist to their own children.

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

The New Century Dictionary tells us that TRAIN means: to subject to discipline and instruction; educate, to rear or bring up; make proficient

by instruction and practice, as in some art, profession, or work; to bring a plant, branch, and so forth, into a particular shape or position by bending, pruning, or the like; to give the discipline and instruction, drill, and practice and so forth, designed to impart proficiency or efficiency.

"I just thought you had kids and put diapers on them, then sent them to school, and gave them an education." No! That is a young plant that you have just inherited from the Lord. I don't know if you know anything about pruning, but I will tell you something about an oak tree. When it starts out, when it is about as big around as your little finger, you can dig it out and pick it up and you can transplant it. If you shape and mold it right, it will grow to be a nice tree. But if you take an oak tree and let it grow and then try to transplant it or change it when it is 20 years old, you aren't going to do it.

It is the same with our children. We wait too long to train our children. Our children ought to be dedicated while they are in the womb, not just when they are in a Church. They ought to be birthed in the presence of the Lord, and they ought to know from the minute they draw that first breath, that what they are hearing is about the Lord Jesus. They should be hearing Christian music, and have an atmosphere set around them that is causing a desire in their heart to grow up in the way of the Lord. You had a young plant given to you when you had that child, and God intends for us to be sure that young plant, or that young child, is trained up. God did not say for the Church to do it. He said for you to do it, you fathers and mothers.

Prov 22:6 Amp. Bible Train up a child in the way he should go (and in keeping with his individual gift or bent), and when he is old he will not depart from it.

If that young man in your home wants to be a truck driver, pray that he will be the best truck driver. Don't try to talk him out of what he feels he wants to do. I know many people who say, "I want my son to be a preacher." Maybe God never called him to be a preacher; maybe God called him to be a teacher. You frustrate the young person. You should encourage that individual to be the best at whatever he feels God wants him to be. When you know they are finding a sense of direction on their heart, or God has spoken to them, you need to be sure that gift, or that talent, or whatever it is, is developed for the glory of God.

We try to make children what we want them to be, instead of what God wants, so we write our own manual. Or we raise them up just anyway we want to and what we get is a crop of weeds, and then we are in the prayer line praying for our children. "What went wrong?" "It was the school." "It was the devil." No, it was us. It was not the devil, it was not

the school, it was not society, and it was not the government. It was our lack. We took those children for granted and they just kind of grew up in our home and we did not train them. God said to train him in the right way and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Let's look at some scriptures regarding the men:

Gen. 18:16 And the men rose up from thence and looked towards Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

Gen. 18:17 And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

Gen. 18:18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and a mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

Gen. 18:19 For I know him, that he will COMMAND his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Command = Conc. #6680= put in order, give a charge to, to direct with authority or to exercise power or authority over.

Fathers need to command their children. A lot of times we teach our children; we don't command them. Somebody said, "Well, I don't want to be hard on my kids." There is a way to command with authority that is going to be maybe a little tough on the hide, but you are building inside of that person, respect for the Christ that is in you. God said, "I know him and I know what he is going to do. He is going to command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoke of him."

The blessing of God comes through obedience. God intended for the husband to be the one to obtain the promises. Abraham was the father of the faithful and God said, "I know what Abraham is going to do. He is going to command. He is not only going to teach them, he is going to command them. He is going to see that it gets done."

Do you remember what happened to Eli's sons? He taught them but he never made them do right. He did not command them and they got killed (1 Sam chap. 4). Now they were children of the anointed priesthood, and they should have prospered, but something went wrong. Eli forgot to obtain the promise, didn't he? He forgot to command them.

People say, "Well, you don't want to hurt the little child's hide." Why are we always worried about hurting people. We keep worrying about hurting, but there are other ways to do things without physically killing somebody. If we are an example to that child, when we speak there is going to be some authority there, and God will honor. But if we tell a child to do something, fathers, and they don't do it, you don't argue with them. When you argue with people, it simply means you don't have authority. When you have authority, it is backed up.

There was a doctor who did a great injustice to a generation of people. He wrote a book stating that you should not command your children. You took away correction and you sat down and reasoned with the child. I've got news for you: anytime a parent tries to sit down and reason with a three year old, they've got some problems. We are going to study on God's way of doing it. If you do it God's way, you are going to prosper and your children are going to prosper. God said Abraham would command them. Most of us teach our children but we never command them. We just assume the little darlings are going to go right out there and do what we taught them.

Let's compare Gen 18:16-19 in the Amplified Bible:

Gen 18:16-19 "The men rose up from there and faced towards Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on their way. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham (My friend and servant) what I am going to do, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed through him, and shall bless themselves by him? For I have known (chosen, acknowledged) him (as My own) so that he may teach and command his children and the sons of his house after him to keep the way of the Lord and to do what is just and righteous, so the Lord may bring Abraham what He has promised him."

God has made a lot of promises to you and your family, but they are not working. Why not? You say, "I have these signs all over my refrigerator and on the wall and everywhere else, and the kids ought to know better." Fathers, you have to take the authority that belongs to you and begin to use it. When that child says, "I don't want to do it," you just say, "Let's just step in the back room." Men, there are a lot of blessings that are not coming on our families simply because we are not commanding the children to do what is right. You see, it is one thing to teach them. It is another thing to be sure they do it.

The father must not only be one that obtains promise; he must also be an intercessor.

Gen 25:21 And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was entreated of him and Rebekah his wife conceived.

I believe that if you husbands would really begin to intercede for your wives, instead of telling their faults, and bringing up their shortcomings and making fun of them, making them feel like a second rate citizen, you would begin to see the value that God has invested in that wife. God has given a gift to you men. If you would begin to intercede for that wife, something would begin to happen.

Rebecca had no children, she was barren, but her husband began to entreat God, or intercede, and God heard him and was entreated of him. So many husbands I know, complain about their wives or compare her with somebody else. God said to intercede for her. If you are not going to be an intercessor for your wife, don't blame God for not changing her. If you are not a fruitful family, don't blame God. Husbands, you are the head of that family. You must take on the priesthood role and you must pray for your family.

A father also has to be a blesser. We read In Genesis 27 where Isaac blessed Jacob, thinking he was Esau, and then when Esau came for his blessing, look what happened: (Genesis 27: 31-33).

Gen 27:31: And he also had made savory meat, and brought it unto his father, and said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

We know that Esau was a deceiver because he had despised his birthright and sold it to Jacob for some red pottage (Gen 25:29-34), but he knew that his father had the power to bless him, even though what he was doing was contrary to what he had done. He was going to steal the blessing, wasn't he?

Children ought to have the knowledge that their father has the power to lay hands on them and bless them. The first thing a child ought to really learn is that dad cares. It is not just mom's job to take care of that child, but dad cares for him also. "What does he do?" "He lays his hands on me and he blesses me."

I grew up in a family that was not Christian, but they loved one another. It was nothing strange for dad to hug us and kiss us. When I became a Christian, I came to the body of Christ and hugged somebody and it was alien to them. It is alien to people who have never received

hugs at home, and most boys that I know, their dads have never hugged them.

We used to have young men come to our home with our son to spend an evening to eat with us, and I would hug my son and my son would hug me. One young man went out with my son afterwards and he said, "Does your dad always hug you?" My son said, "Yeah, he hugs me when I come home, and he hugs me when I go out, and sometimes he just walks up and hugs me!" The boy got big tears in his eyes and he said, "My dad never hugs me."

You need to hug your children, fathers. Moms, you know, are hugging them all the time, but I am talking about a father reaching out, even after the son is grown, and hugging him. We ought to be a people that have brought our children up in that kind of a love relationship, so when they go into church, it's nothing strange when somebody comes up and hugs them. So you need to be a blesser, don't you.

Gen 27:32-33: And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest and blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

In your home, it is up to the father and the mother to bless your children. You see, we say, "God bless you," and we never bless them; so if the child got blessed by God he would not know it. You need to start laying hands on them and say, "The Lord bless you, son. The Lord bless you, honey." That is right. A young child and even an adult compares God to his father. We ought to live in such a godly way and such a blessing caring way, that the child does not think it is strange when he gets to hearing about a God that loves him. The child will think, "God must be like my dad, or my dad must be like God, because he cares. He hugs me all the time, and I can tell him anything."

A lot of kids are afraid to tell their dad anything, because dad is going to whip them, or he is going to make fun of them, or he is going cut off any kind of enjoyment in their life. That is wrong. A child has a wrong picture of God then, and he is afraid to come to God. He is afraid that God is going to treat him just like his dad has treated him. He will have a misguided picture of God. But father, if we raise that child in the home, and we begin to bless that child from the day he is born into our care, and love that child, guess what is going to happen? God won't be a stranger to him. He can relate the God that we love to the dad that he has. If you are a single mother, we are going to deal with that later.

In Gen 48:15-16 we see Jacob blessing Joseph and his two sons:

Vs. 15-16 And he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all of my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads...

Jacob's prayers and desire is that the Lord will bless the lads. We pray wrong for our children. We pray that they will have everything in life, and never have any hard times. "Lord, spare them." God says, "Wait a minute; that is how they are going to learn some things. When they get hurt, they are going to come to you, and you bless them, and you pray that I will bless them." You are to be the vessel through which the blessing of God can come to your children.

A father also pities. This is not the kind of pity that is the human pity that buries you; this is a true godly pity.

Now notice this in Psalm 103:13:

Psalm 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

Psalm 103:13 Amp. Bible: As a father loves and pities his children, so the Lord loves and pities those who fear Him - with reverence, worship and awe.

Pitieth = Conc. #7355 = to fondle; to love, have compassion (on, upon), (find, have, obtain, shew) mercy (-iful, on, upon), (have) pity.

The child is going to learn something about God in the way the father treats that child, isn't he? God said he does it, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." In other words, when we want to teach children about God, we have to teach them by example. If I don't have any pity in my heart for my children, if I don't have any compassion for my children, if I don't have any blessing in my life for my children, and I am trying to teach them to become godly, who are they going to have for an example?

Your life needs to be a visual aide. It doesn't need to be just talking. It needs to be lived in such a way, that your children can look at you and say, "That is what God is like. I can throw all my cares upon Jesus, because when I am home, I can cast all my cares upon dad. When I'm home, dad and mom care about me and I can come in and tell them anything, and I know they love me and pity me." But when that child

grows up, if that is not in your home, friend, you are going to find a young man or woman walking away from God. They are afraid of God, because they related God to dad and to mom.

The father is also going to be a teacher.

Proverbs 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother:

In other words, we have to teach our children. Father, you are responsible as the head of your family to see that your children hear the gospel; hear the good news and the instructions of God. We are responsible also to make them understand that they are not to forsake the law of their mother. "If your mom says something, son, I am going to back it up." Too many kids get one answer from mom, and mom didn't give them the answer they wanted, so they go to talk to dad and dad gives them another answer. Dad says, "Okay son (or daughter) I understand. Mom doesn't understand." That is the worst thing you can say, "Mom doesn't understand." You cause that child to forsake the law of its mother.

You need to be a strong force together as a husband and wife. If you have a disagreement, don't disagree in front of the children. Get together later on in the privacy of your bedroom and discuss the decision that has just been made. If that decision is wrong, than you need to correct it. Don't be ashamed to say to your child, "I made a mistake." Isn't it amazing how we never want to admit that we make mistakes as parents? You never had a child before, and you think you are going to be a perfect parent? It is like trying to fly an airplane that you never flew before. You have to take some lessons. For awhile parents learn more from their kids, than kids learn from their parents. It shows us the seriousness of it and we begin to study that.

Next we learn that the father also has to be a reminder.

Joshua 4:6-7 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean you by these stones? Then you shall answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off; and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever.

Your children should be able to come to you and ask you questions, and you should always remind them that God the father through Jesus Christ, is the one that has brought all the blessing into their life. He is the one that cares about them. He is the one that is able

to deliver them in their hour of need. We always ought to be reminding our children of the goodness of the Lord. The children were going to see this pile of stones and they were going to wonder what they were, and they would ask their fathers.

Fathers, we have a big job to bring honor to the Lord in our homes. You must say to that child that it is because of the goodness of the Lord. When that child is going through a hard trial, don't shut him up, don't put him away. Draw him unto you just like Jesus draws you when you are in a trial. Doesn't he always draw you into His bosom? Doesn't He always open His arms, outstretched, and say, "Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That child needs you.

Joshua 4: 21-22: And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean these stones? Then you shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

There are a lot of things going on around us. The enemy does not want your mind on the word of God. The enemy does not want you to be a counselor of godliness when it comes to marriage or families. I believe that too many times we have slacked off in reminding the children of God's goodness in their lives, what God has done for them; so it is going to be the father's responsibility to tell the children.

Fathers, we are not only to be teachers, not only to be reminders, not only to be intercessors, but we have to be men who are witnesses.

Judges 6:13: And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all the miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

Just because things were going wrong, the fathers had not quit talking to them about the miraculous power of God. It was still instilled in Gideon's mind. Everything was going wrong; the nation had become ungodly, but yet he remembered what the fathers kept telling them about the miracles that God had done, the deliverances, the mighty arm of God that was revealed. Now when things are going wrong in your home, don't blame the devil. Just say, "Lord, I know You are able." "Son, God is able. Our God is a God of might and miracles."

When our son was in the fourth grade, he had a hard time with English. They took phonics out of school and made him read by sight and he could not do it. He couldn't get "t" and "h" straightened up. Anything that had "t" and "h" in it was "the." It could be a five letter word, but it was still "the" to him because that was "t" and "h." He and I would stay up until 3 o'clock in the morning, and he would say, "Dad, I can't do it." I said "God can help us," and we would get down by that coffee table and we would pray and we would pray.

It did not work the first time, it did not work the second time; it took about six months, and we prayed. And he cried. And I cried. And he prayed. And I still said, "Son, God is going to do it for you." And do you know one day he began to be able to read. Amen! He began to be able to read. Wasn't that a miracle from God? Wasn't it the same miracle working God that opened the Red Sea? Was it not the same miracle working God that set the Israelite children free from the Egyptian bondage, and brought them through the fiery furnaces, and brought them through the lion's den? We need to instill in our children's minds that they are serving, and have at their just asking Him, a God that can work miracles. God doesn't just work miracles in revivals. God will work a miracle in your home.

Gideon said, "If God is for us for the miracles, now I know they are real, because our fathers talked about them. I have not seen one, but I know they are real. Did not our Lord bring us up from Egypt, and now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Medianite; but the important thing is the miracle that I remember hearing my dad talk about. He brought us up out of the land of Egypt. True, He has to deliver us into the hands of the Medianites and we've got it coming, but the same God that delivered our fathers, is well able to deliver us."

I love that, don't you? Now, when God needs to become real in your home, dad and mom, is when things are going to get tough. Your God has to be bigger than all the world and all the systems and all the ungodliness. Your God has to become so personal in their young lives, that He is more powerful than any problem they can ever have.
So, again we have to be an intercessor.

1 Samuel 12:8 When Jacob was come into Egypt and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

Look at this: "When your fathers cried unto the Lord." Underline that. Many places where I would go to hold revivals and teach seminars, I would find mostly women. It is changing though. Men are starting to get

into the act now. What I am wanting to see, and I know God wants to see it, are ~~Butters often have ears set back out to God.~~ ~~I am at the head of the staff, many of you get the head cut off.~~ ~~all are saved!~~ ~~learn and let the baby!~~ ~~If you get more as liberal, you will get the kids of them!~~ ~~anything~~ without God, especially raising children. There isn't any way you can raise a child without God. Amen! You may jerk them up. You may do a lot of things, but you will never raise them up in Christ without God. You have to be an example to your children.

Proverbs 13:22 A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

That inheritance by the way is not money. It is fine if you can leave a few bucks behind, but I have seen what money has done to people. They inherited, they did not know how to handle it, and it destroyed them. An inheritance means to leave a good name. To leave a godly example of a life well lived.

I can look back now, many, many years ago at my grandfather. He was a preacher. I loved my dad, I loved my mom, but if I had an example, it was my grandfather. When he got in trouble, he did not curse and rant and rave and blame everybody in the world. He went to his knees and he prayed. Even though my dad and mom loved me, they were not saved, they were not Christians, and I knew that if I got in trouble they would hug me but they would not understand me. You know where I would go when I got in trouble? I'd go to my grandpa, because he was a godly man; he was an example. He would say, "Son, let's pray." He left an inheritance that I am still drawing on today.

Prov. 13:22 Amp. Bible: A good man leaves an inheritance (of moral stability and goodness) to his children's children....

What kind of an inheritance do we fathers feel we are leaving behind for our children? I want to leave an inheritance of good moral stability and goodness. Amen!

Proverbs 17:6 Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

If you have grandchildren, your grandchildren are a crown. Isn't that wonderful? But notice this, "And the glory of children are their fathers." You don't hear that today. During the Korean War, in Japan and different areas that I was fortunate enough to go into, they honored their father and their grandparents. They honored the fathers and the mothers. They were a glory to their children. You know why? Because those

parents had spent their whole life raising their children. They respected one another.

The father and the grandfather were examples. The children talked gloriously about their father. He was the head as long as he lived. If the grandfather lived to be 120 years old, he still lived in the same house with them, and he was the one that they finally gave the power to make the decisions. They would discuss it, but when the decision was going to be made, it had to be made by the head of the house. The children had a pattern, didn't they? They saw a glory in their parents. We have to be that to our children. We have to be an example and a blessing.

Proverbs 20:7 The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

If I walk in my integrity (which is completeness; prosperity; innocence; perfect; simplicity; or uprightness) my children are going to be blessed. But in order for me to walk in my integrity, I have to have some; and for me to know what integrity is like, only the Word of God can tell me. Amen? If I line up with God's Word and walk according to it, and act according to it, and speak according to the Word of God, then I have integrity. If I don't cheat, rob, lie, and steal, and give all the glory to God, then I have integrity. If I don't bear false witness, I have integrity. So here, the children have an example.

If I say, "Now be honest," and then I cheat, that is not integrity. How can you do that at the same time? Or, "You have to get away with what you can, because you live in an ugly evil world and there are sinners out there, and the righteous have to prosper. So the way you prosper is you put your finger on a scale." God said, "I hate it." That is not integrity. Integrity means that I will suffer loss if it will bring glory to God. I want my children blessed after me. Amen!

Proverbs 22:28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

In other words, do not try to change the Word of God. We are hearing a lot of that today. "Well, it doesn't really mean what it says. It is old fashioned; it is out of date." Don't try to change it. Establish that word, fathers, in your children's hearts. It means exactly what it says.

Fathers have to be establishers; then we have to be praisers.

Isaiah 64:11 Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

"The house where our fathers praised thee..." We need to see more fathers in the house of God praising the Lord. I mean that. I am talking about fathers that have children. Instead of sending mom to Church with the kids, they would take an active role and say, "Hey, I want to be on that praise team. I feel like God wants me to sing." Or they would stand in the congregation with their hands raised up. The children notice all that. We need more men praising in the house of God. Next we find that Fathers need to be providers.

2 Corinthians 12:14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

Look at that! We reverse that in our economy. "If we get enough kids and get on welfare, we can live pretty good." That creeps into the Church's thinking, but it is not God's way. I don't care if you've got twelve kids, you are responsible for all twelve, not the government. We don't take somebody else and make them responsible for us. Parents are to be responsible for their children and support them. We need godly fathers in the Church that can set an example, providing for their children.

1 Tim 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

Fathers need to be ministers.

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4 Amp. Bible: Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to anger - do not exasperate them to resentment - but rear them (tenderly) in the training and discipline and the counsel and admonition of the Lord.

I have heard people say this to their kids, "If you are not good, you are going to have to go to church with me!" That means if you are good, you get to stay at home and watch television. You may have never heard this, but I have heard it a lot of times. Isn't that crazy thinking? We need to get excited about Jesus and do what God told us to do, and be fathers

that a child can see an example of, see a provider of, see somebody that cares about him. Don't exasperate that kid with all kinds of threats like that.

Don't argue with a child. That is what provokes him to anger. You sit around and you start debating with that kid, about "you are going to church, right?" He says, "Naw, I don't want to go to church." You sit there and start giving him all the reasons why he ought to go to Church. You line it all up. Maybe some of you don't, but as a general rule, most people I have talked to have done it, including myself when I was a young parent, until I found out that was stupid!

You begin to reason with that child, and soon you provoke them to anger. They start yelling and you start yelling. Then you haul off and say, "I am going to knock you right through Sunday if you don't straighten up! Now go in your room and stay there, and I will see you when I come back from Church." And here God is saying, "Wait a minute! That is not the way you do it. You must use the authority you have been given now."

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Colossians 3:21 Amp. Bible: Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children - do not be hard on them or harass them; lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated; do not break their spirit.

If you have ever trained horses, or had anything to do with horses, you know that if you get a horse with a good spirit, you don't want to break his spirit; you want to gentle his spirit. When you break the spirit of something, the life is gone from it. The zeal is gone. The fire is taken out of it. But when you temper that spirit, when you gentle that spirit, the same fire is still there, the same zeal is still there, the same want to is still there, but it is now guided by a gentle spirit.

It's the same with children. You don't beat your child, knock them in the head, step on them, call them idiots, and argue with them, to make you think they are going to do what you want them to do. The only thing they are going to want to do is leave home just as soon as they can. Amen? They are going to split just as quick as they can, because you are not like God at all. They think if you are like God, they don't want anything to do with God. Would you like to have God deal with you like you deal with your children?

Fathers have to be rulers in their homes.

1 Timothy 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having the children in subjection with all gravity;

1 Timothy 3:4 Amp. Bible: He must rule his own household well, keeping his children under control, with true dignity, commanding their respect in every way and keeping them respectful.

In the Old Testament, if you were a rebellious son, your parents took you out to the elders at the gate and they stoned you to death (Deut 21:18-21). That is the Word of God. Rebellion was not tolerated by God, and God expected that rebellion not be tolerated in the house. But, thank God, He sent Jesus. He sent a thing called grace. I thank God for grace! It saved me a lot of stonings, I'm sure. But if you don't rule your house well, you have no example to leave your children of what God is like. I am going to say again to you fathers, especially today you need to live in such a godly way, that your children have an example of what God is like. We need to deal with our children like God deals with us. You need to be a ruler and a teacher.

1 Thess 2:11 As you know how we have exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

1 Th 2:12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

This again is an example that young people should be able to look at their fathers and say, "That is like God." I want to live in that kind of a lifestyle, so that my son and daughters can look at me and say, "That is just like God would have done it." Paul said, "As a father doth his children," so he expected there to be an example in the husband of God-likeness. That child would be dealt with by the father, like God would deal with the nations. How many of us fathers are long-suffering? I want you to look at Leviticus 26:39-42:

Vs. 39 And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

Vs. 40 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

Vs. 41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

Vs. 42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

Deuteronomy 5:9-10 says:

Deut 5:9-10 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

There is even a curse today when men continue to live in darkness. Their children turn out a lot of times like them and they say, "Well, I am like my dad. I am a chip off the old block. He was a drunk, I am a drunk. He was tough, I am tougher. He lied, I do better." They begin to boast on that. I am tired of people saying, "Well, they were raised in that kind of family and that is just the way they are going to be all their life." That is not true. He said there is a way to break that.

He said, "If their hearts be humble, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, will I remember and I will remember the land." In other words, when there is a turning of our heart toward the Lord, I don't care what my dad did, I don't care what my grandfather did, it is broken right here. If I confess my sin, and my iniquity, then God is going to deal with me on a personal basis. Grace came in. You need to begin to let families know this.

There is a false sense that somehow gets into people: because my dad was no good, I am no good, and my kids are no good because their granddad was no good. It is time to break that. That is an excuse. That is a cop-out for not serving God. I have heard people say, "Well, that is my nature." It is not your nature; your old nature died when you got saved. You got a new nature. You got a Christ-like nature. Children have a right to look at their dad and see God-likeness, and they should grow up and not be afraid to receive Christ into their hearts as little children.

We were able to pray all of our children into salvation by the time they were five years old, and had them all baptized in the Holy Ghost the same year, because it was common. We had prayer meetings at our house, and if we weren't praying in our house, we would go to somebody else's house and have a prayer meeting. We went from house to house breaking bread, praying, shouting the victory, so when people started speaking in tongues, they did not wonder, "What is that?" Dad and mom did it at home. Their mom and I got the kids down by the bed and prayed with them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

I am telling you, we are missing it! We ought to have Church with our children at home. We ought to have Church with our children in the car. We ought to remind them of the good and mighty things of God.

FATHERS, WE'VE GOT A BIG RESPONSIBILITY. AMEN!

MOTHERS

CHAPTER 2

In this chapter we are going to deal with the mothers, but first I want you to read something I read in a daily devotional magazine and it is called 'Great Grandparents.' "Faith in Christ cannot be inherited, yet the influence of godly parents and grandparents can play a major role in a child's salvation."

Timothy's conversion may well have resulted from the influence of not only his mother Eunice, but also his grandmother Lois. Both were women of faith. I thought of this several months ago after meeting a friend I had known as a teenager. In our conversation he mentioned that his mother was not only a grandmother, but also a great-grandmother. She now had 37 great-grandchildren and knows everyone of them by name. My friend said that this impressed him so much that one day he asked his mother how she could possibly remember all 37 great-grandchildren by name. She answered, "I know them all because every night I pray for each one by name." She is more than a great-grandmother; she is truly a GREAT great-grandmother. How blessed are children who have relatives like that.

Judges 5:7 The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

I am talking here, not only to physical mothers, but to a mother in Israel. That means that she is able to bring up children in the congregation of God, but she applies the same principles that a mother in the natural applies if she is a godly woman. There has to be a godly discernment in a mother. Isn't that wonderful? So when you see a mother in Israel in the house of God, respect her. Israel had ceased, actually nothing was going on until Deborah arose, a mother in Israel.

Mothers, you have a great power and influence with God to make God's hand move. It is true. You have a tremendous power with God. A mother also has to be a provider:

1 Samuel 2:19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

Mothers, you need to see that your children are provided with what they have truly need of, not just what they want. You don't do your child a real justice by giving them everything they want just because they say, "Well, Sam's got it, Mary's got it, Josephine's got it." You should ask God first of all if what you're providing for your child is something that will help or hinder.

You are setting a pattern in your children's lives if you give them everything they want, because they cry. There comes a time in the life of each child when they must go out into the world, and they still live like that because you never developed any discipline patterns in their life. You need to provide, not only physical things, but you need to provide spiritual things for that child. Don't give them everything they want, give them only what they need.

Somebody said, "Well, I don't want my child to be deprived of anything." Psalm 37:25 says: "I have never seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging for bread." Let your children learn to be content. The Word of God tells us that we are to learn to be content in whatever state we find ourselves.

(Phil 4:11 KJV) Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.
(1 Tim 6:8 KJV) And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.
(Heb 13:5 KJV) Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

If the mom is not content, the child is not going to be content. If she is always complaining: "The house is too small, I need a new washer, I need a new dryer, I need a new car, I need new clothes," what kind of an example is she to the children. She should be saying, "Thank God, I have a washer. Thank God, I have a car. Thank God, I have enough clothes." The first person children usually see when they come home is mom. They are with the mother more than they usually are with the father. If the mother is not content, she is not going to provide contentment for the child.

I was in Haiti, and they don't have anything in Haiti except a lot of mosquitoes and flies and bugs; but I saw children that had nothing but a stick to play with, that were totally happy, because mom and dad were content to live in a little shanty and they thanked God they had a roof over their head. They weren't saying, "Well, we need a big house like the Americans. We need a McDonald's on every corner." No, they were raising up godly children in the midst of poverty and those children never knew they were poor.

I was raised up in the 30's and we did not know we were poor! Everybody lived on the wrong side of the tracks! Nobody had anything. But we had so much caring and love in our family, we thought we were as rich as the Rockefellers. We did not know the difference. If you did not have shoes, so what? You had two feet and they still worked.

A mother has to be an example and a deliverer. I remember my mom so well; she always made biscuits and gravy or cornbread and beans, but she made it with such love. You thought that was what kings ate. You thought that was what rich folks ate all the time. You know, a little sowbelly and beans, man, you were really up town. But there was something mixed in with all of that, that never made you realize that you did not have what everybody else thought they had. You had love. Mom did everything she did with love.

In our family, she had a remedy for everything; it was called castor oil! Now that came after the first remedy ran out, which was cod-liver oil! You could have the measles, the chicken pox, you could have anything, and mom simply gave you that one remedy. You'd be surprised how often you never were sick! But she gave it to you in love, because she would try to mix it with orange juice or something, but it was still cod-liver oil.

What I am simply bringing out here is that to be a provider does not mean you are going to give that kid everything he or she wants. In a sense, you are going to provide something that money cannot provide. You are going to provide the love. You are going to provide the caring. You are going to provide the sharing. That child, if he has a coat with a patch on it, will think he is as rich as anybody in the world could ever be. A mother has to be an example and a deliverer.

2 Samuel 20:19 I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?

Two things that really ought to be evident in a mother of Israel or a mother in the home, is that she is peaceable and faithful. If you continue reading in that chapter, you learn that she delivered that city from destruction. You mothers can deliver your family continually. If you live godly, if you live at peace, if you live faithfully for God, the blessing of God is going to rest upon you. You say, "Well what about my husband?" I don't care if your husband is a rascal. I don't care if he has gone off and left town. If you mothers will study this teaching, and you will apply it faithfully, you will find that the blessing of God will come in your home.

You may be a single parent, but that does not relieve anyone from the responsibility we have to deliver our children continually from the snare of the fowler, by providing for them the wisdom and the knowledge of God. "Poor little me, I am all by myself in the world. I've only got these fifteen kids, and I'm all alone." God says, "You get busy with those fifteen kids and you will not have time to be lonely and all alone in this world".

Mothers also have to be intercessors.

(2 Ki 4:25 KJV) So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite:

(2 Ki 4:26 KJV) Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

What a mother! In vs. 20 the son had died and she left him on the bed, and she went to find the man of God. She did not go looking for a bunch of people to weep and cry with her. This is where a mother is so important. A lot of things can happen in your house when you make the right choice. She made the right choice, didn't she? She went to the presence of God. And, what did she say? "It is well." No sad story.

(2 Ki 4:27 KJV) And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: ...

I love this! She is going to hold on. She doesn't grab him by the head. She gets ahold of his feet so he cannot go anywhere. You see, that man could have carried her off if she had grabbed him on the shoulders or hands; but you cannot walk, no matter how strong you are, if somebody has your feet tied.

(2Ki 4:27 KJV) but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.

Don't always expect the man of God to know what is wrong with you. Mothers, too many times we are settling for a preacher or someone else to have the answer for our family. God wants us to go directly to Him and not move out without His answer for our life. You see, we will let some man tell us, "The Bible says..." or "This is my opinion, this is what I think." But I want you to know, mom, you need to get in there and stay until you hear from God.

(2 Ki 4:28 KJV) Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

(2 Ki 4:29 KJV) Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

(2 Ki 4:30 KJV) And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

She said, "I'm not leaving here. I don't care how many servants you send out, I am staying with you. I am sticking here, and I am not going to do a thing until you do something. I am staying with you until something happens." What happened? He got up and followed her. Read 2 Kings 4:32-37 to see what happened.

That is the kind of mothers we need today; mothers who are not satisfied with a servant of the Lord, but going directly to God yourself. What a presence of God you can go into when you quit putting someone else there that can do it for you, because pretty soon you will get an answer you like in the natural. If you keep listening to enough people, they will be giving you something beside the word of God. It may sound good but it may not be God's answer.

The world is looking for an answer, so they try psychology, and they try psychiatry, and they try all kinds of psychic works. It looks good to begin with and they spend billions and billions and billions of dollars to initiate that program. Six years later they are back and they say it did not work. God's word will work and it isn't going to cost you six billion dollars. It won't even cost you a dollar; but it will cost you your life and your time.

How important are your children to you? Forget about the world and the things you seem to have to do, and get on your face before God and say, "Lord, it is not working right. There is something missing. I need you to intercede in my family right now; and I am not leaving, God, until I get an answer."

A mother has to be a teacher; one in authority:

Proverbs 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother.

There is a responsibility and an authority that a mother has, and the father needs to back that up. I tell you, children are smart. They try to work one against the other, and if they find out that they can throw a fit and they get what they want, they will throw a fit. They don't mind

working dad against mom, as long as the end result is that they get what they want.

There has got to come a unity in that father and mother relationship. "What did your mom tell you?" "Well, mom said I could not go." "Then what are you asking me for?" "But last week dad..." "Yeah, that was last week. I have been to a marriage seminar, and found I was wrong. From now on, whatever your mom says, I am backing it up." That will bring a unity and authority in the home.

Proverbs 31:1 The words of King Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

The prophecy that his mother taught him. Not his father, but his mother.

Mothers have to be providers. Let's look at Proverbs 31:10-31 in the Amplified Bible.

Vs. 10 A capable, intelligent, and virtuous woman, who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels, and her value is far above rubies or pearls.

Vs. 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her confidently and relies on and believes in her safely, so that he has no lack of honest gain or need of dishonest spoil.

That is a big job, moms and wives. It is a high mark to live up to. Not only does she have to be an instructor and a provider here, but she is going to be a comforter.

Vs. 12 She will comfort, encourage and do him only good as long as there is life within her.

What do you think would happen if the children saw the wife doing this to her husband, instead of arguing with him, fighting with him, debating with him? There is a time when a husband and wife need to sit down and discuss things, but it is never in front of the children. Children need to see something in the father and mother that very few children see today, and it is called unity. Whatever mom said, dad will back it up. Whatever dad says, mom is going to go along with it. They see the mom comforting and strengthening the dad and being an encouragement to him. There becomes a respect in that, doesn't there?

The children are also seeing the work of the Holy Spirit. His working is tender; He is a comforter and an encourager, isn't He? He does you good. The children begin to see that, and they are going to begin to see the working of God in the mom. But what if they see an

angry mom that is yelling and screaming her lungs out all the time. Do you think they see the Holy Spirit in that? Then they are really confused. Here is dad trying to live God-like, and here is mom acting like the devil! Then on Sunday mom is saying, "We are getting ready to go to Church. Get out of bed!" There is a confusion that we are bringing into the home.

So we see the God-likeness in the father, and here we see the Holy Spirit-likeness in the wife; the gentleness that offsets the roughness in the man.

Vs. 13 She seeks out the wool and flax and works with willing hands to develop it.

Vs. 14 She is like the merchant ships, loaded with foodstuff, she brings her household food from a far country.

Vs. 15 She rises while yet it is night and gets spiritual food for her household and assigns her maids their tasks.

You don't get all this until you can prove yourself faithful in the little. Here she is an example, isn't she? She is a provider but she is an example. She wants her daughters to grow up like her. She wants her sons to grow up like the father, but she has to give them some kind of an example. When that son goes out and looks for a wife, he ought to want one like mom; and the girl goes out and looks for a husband, she ought to want one like the dad.

Do you know in a survey that was taken, most girls whose fathers had been drunks, marry drunks. Isn't that amazing? And most men usually marry women that end up to be like their mothers, regardless of what they were. That is the only example they had, and it was always right because it was dad and it was mom. The child reasoned in his mind and said, "That must be right or else mom and dad wouldn't do it!"

You see what you are instilling in that child at that tender age; they are either seeing a true God-likeness, or what they imagine God to be like. You are either instilling a true spiritual likeness of the Holy Spirit of God, or a false likeness. You cannot come in a Church and shout and impress your kids, if you have not been blessing the Lord at home.

The thing about a child is that most of them tell the truth, especially when they are little before they have learned to do all this other stuff. You ask kids what their parents are like, and they will tell you! When I go and preach in some of these churches, I try to stay away from these kids, because they really want to tell me what dad and mom are like!
Mom also has to be diligent.

Vs. 16 She considers a new field before she buys or accepts it - expanding prudently (and not courting neglect of her present duties by assuming others)...

I think this is a great lesson in the credit field; those little plastic cards you've got. Just because you have one that says \$2,000.00 limit on it, don't try it! If you want to get a marriage in real trouble, go out and run that plastic up and then the bill comes in and the husband sees it!! If you are making \$150 a week, don't spend \$300 because it is not going to be long until it will catch up with you and all kinds of havoc will go on! Women, if you are in charge of the household expenses, be diligent in how you spend it!

I have heard women say, "Well, my husband can go out and get two jobs," or "I have to work now because we cannot keep up with the bills, so I had to take a job. The kids come home from school and they watch television. I could not really get a good baby-sitter, so I got the cheapest one." You see, now the entire family is messed up. We farm our kids out so we can make a few lousy bucks to pay more taxes with, or to live in a house we cannot afford in the first place. Mothers and fathers also need to learn to be content with what we have. Something is wrong when being a housewife no longer is a coveted job. It is an occupation that a woman ought to be proud of, because she is spending time to raise up the future generation.

We are only one generation away from becoming an atheistic nation. If moms don't invest their lives in their children, and realize that is more valuable than having four cars, two colored television sets, and a bunch of stuff they cannot wear or use anyway, this nation is in a whole lot of trouble. They need to see that their children are the most precious gift they have gotten from God.

You and I have the answer to reconcile families, to put them back together again; but it is going to take parents that love their children and see that those children are the greatest investment, not only for this life but for the world to come, that they can ever make. So the mom begins to be diligent about what she does. She doesn't jump into a bunch of other stuff and say, "Well, okay."

It is amazing that if we want to get something done, we find somebody that is busy, don't we? You don't want to give a job to somebody who is laying around by the pool. You always want to get somebody who is working eight hours a day, putting in a hard days job, and they will always tell you, "Yeah, I will do it." Do you know there are two words in the English language, not only "yes," but there is a "no" in there. If somebody comes to you and says, "We need a spiritual leader

today," just say, "I can't possibly do it, because that is the time I spend with my children." "Well, we need somebody to teach the Sunday school." "I will help you find one. I have four children at home now and I have to invest my life and my heart in getting them raised up right. I will bring them to Church. I will bring them to Sunday school. I will be sure they get to the house of God. But right now, Pastor, I just don't have the time. I can't neglect my children." Any Pastor in his right mind will say, "Praise the Lord!" Moms, you have to be diligent; don't take on more than you can handle. Don't neglect one duty to get something else done.

Vs. 16 ...With her savings (of time and strength) she plants fruitful vines in her vineyards.

Vs. 17 She girds herself with strength, (spiritual, mental, and physical fitness, for her God-given task) and makes her arms strong and firm.

She is also a protector.

Vs. 18 She tastes and sees that her gain from work (with and for God) is good; her lamp goes not out; but it burns on continually through the night (of trouble, privation or sorrow, warning away fear, doubt, and distrust).

Vs. 19 She lays her hands to the spindle and her hands hold the distaff.

Vs. 20 She opens her hand to the poor; yes, she reaches out her filled hands to the needy (whether in body, mind, or spirit.)

When I was little, we lived in a tent and we all slept in the one room and had coal oil lamps. When one of us kids was sick, Mom would leave the light on, and at the slightest cough, the light would go up and mom would be right there beside you and dad would be snoring away. Mom did not wake him up. Mom did not say, "Dad, get up, get up!" She would get out of bed. She would come over, put her hand on your fevered brow. Oh, I loved it, I loved it! Then she would start singing to you. I look today and I don't see that happening.

The Church has got to get back to what is right. The mother's main job, whether we like it or not, is to raise that child, to be there when that child needs her. When they come home from school, mom ought to be there. One day when my son was talking to his mother and me, he turned right to my wife and he said these words, "Mom, one thing I remember about you, is you were always home when I got there." What kind of things are our children going to remember? What do you suppose they are going to remember? The big nice things we got them, or the loving arms that were there to support them?

Moms need to have confidence.

Vs. 21 She fears not the snow for her family, for all her household are doubly clothed in scarlet.

Vs. 22 She makes for herself coverlets, cushions, and rugs of tapestry. Her clothing is of linen, pure white and fine, and of purple (such as that of which the clothing of the priest and the hallowed clothes of the temples are made).

Vs. 23 Her husband is known in the city's gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.

In other words, she is confident, isn't she? I am tired of hearing moms and dads put fear into kid's hearts. They hear at home that you can't trust the government, you can't trust the police, you can't trust this guy, you can't trust that guy, and you are putting that in their brains. How about telling them, "The angel of the Lord encamps around about you. You are more than a conqueror through Christ. The blood of Jesus covers you." In the next generation that came up you would have people who aren't afraid of anything! Out of the womb you would have warriors who did not grow up with the spirit of fear.

Vs. 24 She makes fine linen garments and leads others to buy them; she delivers to the merchants girdles (or sashes that free one for service)

Vs. 25 Strength and dignity are her clothing and her position is strong and secure. She rejoices over the future - the latter day or time to come (knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it).

Ever since I was a kid I've heard how bad things were back in the 30's and that it was going to get worse in the future. The way I knew it, it could not get any worse. But look at her. She said the future is secure. You may say, "The Lord may come in five years; what kind of a future can my son have?" Glory to God, if he is ready to go with the Lord, he has a wonderful future to look forward to. If the Lord comes in five years and he is ready, and he has been redeeming the time because he knows his future is secure, he does not have to worry.

He does not have to worry about trying to influence people; he knows that mom told him "Son, you have favor in the sight of men. God will cause men to give into your bosom whatever job you are going to need. You live for God, son. You serve the Lord. Don't worry about tomorrow. Just love the Lord today, take care of the things of God today, and when you need a position, you need a job, it will be there; because the future is only secure to those who have a future in Christ. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, son."

So she is prepared and she is not only prepared for herself, but she has prepared her family, and she is wise.

Vs. 26 She opens her mouth with skillful and godly Wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness - giving counsel and instruction.

Vs. 27 She looks well to how things go in her household, and the bread of idleness (gossip, discontent, and self-pity) she will not eat.

Vs. 28 Her children rise up and call her blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied);...

You can't expect your children to call you blessed and happy or to be envied if all you are doing is murmuring, gossiping, complaining, grumbling, and griping. If you are complaining that none of the preachers are any good, that they all are a lousy bunch, and your children hear you say that, do you think they are going to honor you? If you are gossiping about somebody, murmuring, complaining, do you think a kid is going to honor you? Is he going to call you happy, going to envy you? No, because your life is miserable. Why would you envy anybody's life who is miserable? Do you want your kids to envy you? Then you have to line it up with the word of God.

A mother has to have a testimony.

Vs. 28 ...And her husband boasts of and praises her saying,

VS. 29 Many daughters have done virtuously, nobly, and well (with the strength of character that is steadfast in goodness) but you excel them all.

Vs. 30 Charm and grace are deceptive and beauty is vain (because it is not lasting)..

Charm is what? It is deceptive! Isn't that what it says? So we need that hidden man of the heart then, don't we? We need a beauty that goes beyond flesh. If you have been around a few years, you understand what I am talking about. All you have to do is look at a picture of 25 years ago, and look in the mirror today. You can hardly recognize that guy or gal. Something has happened to them. It is deceptive. No matter how good you make it look today, you have to do it all over in the morning again. You don't have to do that with true beauty; it is just there. It radiates. It is an inner glow that makes ugly people look pretty. It is something that comes from inside out.

When a husband sees that, he is going to say, "Wow! You are beautiful!" Other guys might try to tell you that you married an ugly woman, and when you say she is beautiful, they will try to tell you that love is blind! Love is not blind; love sees what it wants to see; and the eye of love has a perspective beyond the flesh, it looks to the heart. She

is not concentrating always on looking good in the natural, but she has that charm and beauty that lasts forever.

Vs. 30 ...but a woman who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord, she shall be praised.

Vs. 31 Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates of the city!

If you have it together, mom, the works of your hands will praise you. But if you don't have it together, the works of your hands will curse you. There is always a two-edged sword in the Word of God. I'd like to see children rise up and call their moms blessed. I would like to see children rise up and say, "My mom is the best mom in the world," and mean it! Not just trying to get something from her. It is easy for people to praise you while you are there, because they are looking for something. But oh, when they praise you when you are not there, it means that you have done something; God has been allowed to do something. So here the Lord is showing us how to have a family that can really work together.

Song of Solomon 3:11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

In 1 Kings chapter 1, we see that David was dying, and one of his sons, Adonijah, was going to make himself king. King David did not know about it, but the prophet Nathan heard about it, and he came and told Solomon's mother and they worked together. The mother went in and talked to David and reminded him that he had promised that Solomon would rule on the throne. Solomon was proclaimed king. There are times, mom, when things look like they are going to destroy what you felt God was going to do. Instead of saying, "Well, what is the use? I raised this kid and invested my life in him, and now look what is going to happen. No good is going to come out of it," you remain faithful to God, and you stand in there and make intercession. God will honor you.

Solomon's mother said, "Wait a minute! He is going to be the king, and I am going to crown him." Isn't that great! You mothers have a lot more influence on your children than you have any idea of! Amen!
A mother is a comforter again.

Isaiah 66:13 As one whom his mother comforted, so will I comfort you; and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

That is how young men really see the Holy Spirit in their mom. They think, "She is a comforter. God must be like that. When I've got a

problem, I can go to God because God is like mom. She comforts me. She doesn't throw me out." Have you ever been in a place where a man was sentenced to life in prison and the mom said, "I don't believe that. He has been railroaded. I know he has been railroaded..." and they had all the evidence in the world against the guy. I mean, eyewitnesses. Everything but a self-confession is there, and mom never believes it! That is her son, and no matter what wrong he has done, that is her son.

Ezekiel 16:44 And behold everyone that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.

Here he talks about a nation, but God is saying to us something even more real in our day. If you mothers gossip, backbite, murmur, complain, waste time, seek after the things of the world, your child is going to grow up that way. They will grow up with that same heart, because they saw you talking about the Lord one day, but almost all of your life was consumed on things, on getting, and having. The child thought that was what God was like.

Look at the following account of Jesus' crucifixion and faithful mothers:

John 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene.

Mark 15:37-39 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Mark 15:40-47 There were also women looking on afar off: among who was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem. And now when the evening was come, because it was preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea and the honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marveled if he were already dead; and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew of it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary

Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph beheld where he was laid.

As I began to read that context, I saw faithfulness -not in the disciples, not in the miracle working group - but I found it in the women that followed Jesus and ministered to his need. Billie Graham even shared this about his own life. Of all the millions of people he prayed for into salvation, and all the millions that he preached for, and all the miles he traveled, he said, "When I stand before the Lord, I do not believe that I shall receive the greatest reward. I believe that there are widows and there are mothers that have supported me and prayed for me that I do not even know, and when I stand before the Lord in that day, they shall receive the greater of the rewards."

I looked at this account of the crucifixion of Christ, and the ones that stood faithful with him were the women. Where was Peter? Where was John? Where was James? They split! Mothers, sooner or later it seems like everybody gives up on your child. That is the time for you to stand faithful and minister to the Lord. Thank God for that child. Love that child, because one day God will move on that heart. Be faithful.

Mark 5:22-43 tells about the ruler of the synagogue who came to Jesus and asked him to come and lay hands on his little daughter who was dying, but someone came from the rulers house and said she had died. Jesus said she was not dead, but sleeping and went on to the ruler's house. But look at what the ungodly people did:

Mark 5:40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel and them that were with him, and entered in where the damsel was lying.

This little girl was dead, but notice who he took in with him: the father and mother, and His own men. He was going to use something He had already told them about: "If any two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything, they shall ask of the father, and it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven" (Matt 18:19). The little girl lived!

Mom and dad, don't bring everybody into your situation. Get the Lord in there. Put out all the scorners and all the ones that say it is not going to work, your marriage is going down the tubes, and you might as well give up on those kids. Don't do that! You get together with your husband, and you get together with the Lord in the midst of all of that, and shut the door and start praying together and believing God together, and you are going to see a miracle. If your husband or wife is gone, it does not make any difference; get in there with the Lord. Shut out all the

scorners, all the unbelievers that say it can't work, and say it will work, and I am going to worship and believe God until I see it manifested. He gave us a principle here. He just put them all out and He took the father and the mother in.

In the account of Jesus going to Jerusalem with his parents for the feast of the passover when he was twelve years old, he tarried behind when his parents left, and his parents didn't know it and had to turn around and find him. His mother reproved him and look at the following account:

Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Luke 2:50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

Luke 2:51 And he went down with them, and he came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

Jesus was subject to them, but his mother kept all these sayings hidden in her heart. Your child may be going bad now, but can you remember back when he was a little guy, and all the plans you had for him. If you really put that in your heart, in Christ, there is going to come a time when you see it happen.

Mother has spiritual desires:

Acts 1:4 And these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

We really need that spiritual identity, and a spiritual desire to have Christ in the midst of us. Now look at the possessors of faith.

2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also.

You are going to affect, not only your next generation, but the generation after that if you have been faithful. Now, let me say this to you moms: whatever you've got in you is what you are putting in your child. Here was a grandmother and a mother that loved God, and what were they putting into Timothy? Faith. Unfeigned, pure faith. Paul said, "I know your grandma had it, I know your mom had it, and I am persuaded that you have it too." Where did that faith come from? It came from the mother, it came from the grandmother. It was in that child as a baby. It

was birthed into that child's heart, and that child grew up in faith. He became Timothy, the bishop, because as a child, his grandmother and his mother made an investment in him.

Don't say to your children, "I don't have time for you right now." That is a wrong attitude. How would you like God to treat you like that? You come to God with a real problem, and say, "Lord, I am really in trouble," and have God say, "I haven't time for you. You come back in about 30 minutes and we will talk things over." You come back in 30 minutes and He says, "Wait, I forgot my favorite program is on. Go sit in your room and play with your toys." How would you like God to treat you like that?

As a mother treats her children, they relate to the Holy Spirit in that same fashion. This grandmother and this mother put faith into Timothy's heart. They lived it, they talked it, they invested it and a man of God came from it. Mothers should teach and love their children.

Now you older mothers, mothers in Israel, those whose children are grown up, don't quit being a mother. It is time to take over.

Titus 2:4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children.

It is time to begin to invest your life in other people's children. It is time to take that young mother under your wing and say, "You need to love your husband, not hate him. Not be mad at him, not be angry with him, but you need to love him and you need to love your children. What would happen in the Church if the older women, the mothers of Israel, would gather the younger women under their arm and say, "Hey listen, I am going to help you." It would not be long until a young woman, when she had a problem, would go to the older woman, wouldn't she? Instead of going to the pastor all the time, she would go to the other mother, and that mother would always sow something in that family. She would sow love. Love for the husband, love for the children.

God wants us to realize that He ordained the marriages and He ordained the family, but for those blessings of God to be in our life, we are going to have to know how to bring them into our life. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You. Lord, we thank You that You have taught us things that possibly we have forgotten or maybe never knew or put away from us, but today you have quickened them to us. We have grave responsibilities as fathers and mothers. Lord, we have grave responsibilities as grandparents. As fathers and mothers in the Church, we have grave responsibilities. God, we need to take those

responsibilities and realize that they must be done as unto God and not unto man. Lord, we need to work on our marriages. We need to work on our families until that unity and that purpose that You desired for us to have, can be made manifest. Let Your love be in the heart of each one of us. In Jesus mighty name! Amen!

TO FATHERS AND MOTHERS

REGARDING CHILDREN

CHAPTER 3

In this chapter, we are going to find out first of all, what a child really is. We sometimes summarize in our mind what children are. We think maybe they are a burden to us, or maybe they are unnecessary, but that is not true. We want to look at our children the way God looks at them. Amen? We want our children to really take the place that God wants them to have in the marriage and in the family. So the first thing we are going to find out is that:

CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD.

Gen 4:1 And Adam knew Eve, his wife; and she conceived and bare Cain and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

God is the giver of all life. Satan cannot give life. Satan does not have the ability to propagate the things of God. God is saying something here that is very important. Here is a pattern and a principle and attitude that every couple ought to have when they have a child: I received this child from the Lord. If you really begin to understand that, it means you will not make light of that gift. You won't take it as a burden, but you will take that child as a blessing from God. They are a blessing to you, even though they may act a little squirrely now and then. I know my kids acted a little strange once in awhile when they were home; but we must remember that we were children at one time also, and there were probably times when our parents weren't sure we were a blessing. Amen?

As I began to change my thinking about my children, it changed my attitude and my life. You really are what you think in your heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). So the first principle we need to see about children is that they are from God. That is why abortion is so horrible. That child is a creation that God is creating in the womb that someone wants to murder. Here God is saying, "Wait a minute! That child is a gift from ME."

CHILDREN ARE ALSO AN ANSWER TO PRAYER

Gen 15:2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

Gen 15:3 And Abram said, behold to me thou hast given no seed: and lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

There is a real meaning here. Abraham had no heir born to him and Sara. What if you accumulated all the wealth in the world and you had no one to leave it to? That is something we ought to think about. "God, what are you going to give me, seeing that I have no children?" In other words, what good is all that you are giving me? What good is all the land? What good is all the gold? What good is all the silver? What good is all the increase, if I have no one to leave it to and instruct how to use it wisely?

So Abraham was really bringing a word of wisdom to us that we need to look at concerning our children. What would you substitute or sell your children for? You may say, "I wouldn't sell my kids," but we do it unintentionally. We get so caught up in possessing things, or status or position in life, we forget about the gift God gave us. We begin to spend our time on obtaining things rather than seeing the priceless gift that God has brought into our life. Everything else has a price tag, except life itself, so when God gives that child into your hand, it is worth more than all the silver and gold that you could obtain in a lifetime.

Gen 15:4 And behold the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir.

What a thought! This is what Abraham really wanted. He was already wealthy in the land of Ur. He was in a good position of life as far as standing went. When God called him out to show him all that he would give him, he said, "What is it all worth if I have no seed? What is life if I live it and just die and leave nothing behind me?" It was an eastern philosophy that many children were a blessing from God. Children were not a curse; they were a blessing. The person that had none, no matter what his standing in life might be in wealth and status, he was bankrupt if he had no children to bless. Isn't that something?

Now today the general idea is to have very few children so you can be free to move about any way you want to. Somebody said, "Well, we are overpopulating the earth." No! God took it all into account when HE made it. There will be enough air, there will be enough vegetables, there will be enough fruit, there will be enough meat, there will be enough of everything to sustain all the life that shall ever live upon the earth. Amen! What we need to do instead of getting family planning, we need to get God planning. The only way we are going to get God planning is here in God's word. The only way we are going to know how to raise our family is here. Let's look at 1 Samuel 1:1-28:

(1 Sam 1:1 KJV) Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:

(1 Sam 1:2 KJV) And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

(1 Sam 1:3 KJV) And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there.

(1 Sam 1:4 KJV) And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions:

(1 Sam 1:5 KJV) But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.

(1 Sam 1:6 KJV) And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.

(1 Sam 1:7 KJV) And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.

(1 Sam 1:8 KJV) Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?

(1 Sam 1:9 KJV) So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.

(1 Sam 1:10 KJV) And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

(1 Sam 1:11 KJV) And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

(1 Sam 1:12 KJV) And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

(1 Sam 1:13 KJV) Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

(1 Sam 1:14 KJV) And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

(1 Sam 1:15 KJV) And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither

wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.

(1 Sam 1:16 KJV) Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

(1 Sam 1:17 KJV) Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

(1 Sam 1:18 KJV) And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

(1 Sam 1:19 KJV) And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

(1 Sam 1:20 KJV) Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

(1 Sam 1:21 KJV) And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

(1 Sam 1:22 KJV) But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.

(1 Sam 1:23 KJV) And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

(1 Sam 1:24 KJV) And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child was young.

(1 Sam 1:25 KJV) And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.

(1 Sam 1:26 KJV) And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

(1 Sam 1:27 KJV) For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

(1 Sam 1:28 KJV) Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.

Vs. 20 said: "Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that SHE BARE A SON, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord."

This brings to my remembrance that many places where I and others with me have gone, people have asked us to pray with them for a child, even though the Doctor said they could not have one. In Oklahoma City we prayed for a young lady, and now she has four and two of them are twins! Ythat ou young people that are going to be married, you need to begin to think about this. Ask God for the children He wants you to have to raise.

In Vs. 27 Hannah said for this child I prayed and the Lord hath given me my petition which I ask of him. She was barren; she could have no children. To be barren in those days was a reproach. But God had another plan, didn't He? God has a plan for your family. God has a plan for your life. We need to ask God about the plan. She asked God. She said, "Lord, give me a son and I will give him back to You," and she did. He became a mighty prophet of God and look what happened to him:

(1 Sam 3:19 KJV) And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

Not one word that Samuel ever spoke fell to the ground. Young people have an opportunity that many of us older people don't have because we wasted a lot of our youth. I wish that when I was a young person, there had been marriage and family seminars taught. I wish there has been somebody to get up and tell me what opportunities really were mine as a young person. Being religious is not where it is; being saved is where it is. If you will grow up in the way of the Lord, God can use you like He used Samuel. You can speak and not one word that you speak will fall to the ground. Wonderful work lies ahead of you. So children are not only a gift from God, but also an answer to prayer.

Now let's look at Luke 1:5-25 and see the account of another child:

(Luke 1:5 KJV) There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

(Luke 1:6 KJV) And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

(Luke 1:7 KJV) And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

(Luke 1:8 KJV) And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

(Luke 1:9 KJV) According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

(Luke 1:10 KJV) And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

(Luke 1:11 KJV) And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

(Luke 1:12 KJV) And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

(Luke 1:13 KJV) But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name JOHN.

(Luke 1:14 KJV) And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

(Luke 1:15 KJV) For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

(Luke 1:16 KJV) And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

(Luke 1:17 KJV) And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

(Luke 1:18 KJV) And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

(Luke 1:19 KJV) And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings.

(Luke 1:20 KJV) And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

(Luke 1:21 KJV) And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

(Luke 1:22 KJV) And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

(Luke 1:23 KJV) And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

(Luke 1:24 KJV) And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

(Luke 1:25 KJV) Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

Vss. 5-7 say there was a priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth, and they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless and they had no child because Elizabeth was barren and THEY BOTH WERE NOW WELL STRICKEN IN YEARS. Now look at verse 13: "But the angel said unto him, Fear not Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard...."

I really like this because if we have children that we have prayed for God to give us, and then we dedicate those children to the Lord, something great is going to happen in their lives. It cannot be any other way. But we get those children and after awhile they become a burden to us, and it seems that they are no longer an answer to prayer, they are no longer a gift from God; they seem to be a problem. Amen? Nevertheless, a child really is a gift from God, an answer to prayer.

I always wanted children. When I was a young man, I said, "Boy, I want to raise a family." I did not know about God and I did not know about God's plan, but I just wanted to have a family. But if we don't have the right attitude, we are going to raise those children wrong. Those children are a gift from God.

The angel said unto him, "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shall call his name John." This is the second time that we find that somebody prayed for a child. Samuel was one of the greatest prophets in the Old Testament, and John was the great forerunner of the kingdom of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is getting ready to make a move and you parents ought to be instilling this in your children, and you children ought to be desiring this. Just as God used John and God used Samuel, you can be used mightily of God. You might desire to be popular in the world, but being popular in the world is only for a moment. Being popular with God is forever. I would rather be used of God for five minutes than to be popular in the world for eighty years.

Next we see that:

CHILDREN ARE AN HERITAGE OF THE LORD

Psalm 127:3 Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

Psalm 127:4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Psalm 127:5 Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them:...

Heritage = Conc. #5159 = an inheritance.

Nothing brings fulfillment into a marriage like having children. It may not seem like it now if you are young, but it will when you get older and they are older. You begin to see them reproduce, and you hold that little grandchild in your hands and know that child is from your lineage. That child becomes very dear to you.

While your children are growing up around you, they bring joy into your home if you let them. Many times we draw such a tight rein on our children that they cannot wait to escape. They marry the first person that comes along and run off with him or her, and we ask, "What went wrong?" The truth is that we did not know how to raise them, we did not know how to train them. We did not know they were a gift from God. We did not appreciate that fact. All we could see was, "Man, they are taking up my time. Boy, what I could do if I did not have these kids!" That is a wrong attitude. The joy is there if you look for it. God says they are a reward to you; they are a heritage to you, and happy is the man that has his quiver full of them.

God has an inheritance in us and He is excited about it. We should be that way toward our children. We found out earlier that our children see God as they see their father. They see the Holy Spirit as they see their mom. I want my children to love God, but if I want them to love God, they have to see God in me first. They have to see the presence of the Spirit of God in their mother. As they grow up, it will be a natural thing to love the Lord.

Now here, we have an inheritance in our children, and what are we doing? Are we spending any real quality time with them? You might say you spend a lot of time with them, but there is a difference between a lot of time and quality time. You can be in the same house with a person and never spend time with them. You have to look at that young person as a gift from God, your inheritance. The only thing you are really going to leave behind of any value is your family.

A Christian preacher friend of mine went to be with the Lord and there was not anything sad about his service. His children got up and they talked about how wonderful their father was, and how much he had instilled God into their lives, and how Christ had become real to them through him. They were excited about Jesus. You know what happened? People got saved because his inheritance spoke for him. One day when you leave this earth, your inheritance will speak for you. I want to leave behind a good inheritance, don't you? I want to leave behind me, godly children that love the Lord.

Genesis 33:5 is the account of Esau and Jacob meeting after many years. Esau asked Jacob this question:

Gen 33:5 And he lifted up his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

That ought to be the attitude of mom and dad's heart. Amen? You women could be barren were it not that you found favor in the sight of the Lord. That is right! You husbands wouldn't be fathers were it not that God gave you favor and graciously gave you the children that you have. See, they are a gift from God. They are an inheritance from the Lord. We need to get ahold of this.

You young people, if you can see this more clearly, it will change your attitude about who you are. You are a gift from God, and you need to act like one! You are a gift from God, so don't act like a curse from the devil. You need to know that. You need to understand that. God chose you, God made you, God put you in that womb so that when you were birthed, you could be what God wanted you to be. You can be a blessing to your parents.

In Matthew 19:13-14 we read about Jesus and the little children:

Matt 19:13 And there were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray: and the disciples rebuked him.

Matt 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

We have already learned that a child ought to see in his father a God-likeness and see in his mother the spirit of Christ-likeness. Now here, we learn that we should be able to see in our children what the kingdom of God is like. But we have ignored them. Children are not a second rate citizen. Children are not the future Church; they are the Church right now. They are as much a part of the Church right now as a person who is eighty years old, and they need to be actively involved in the work of the ministry. They need to be singing and praising God. They need to see how valuable they are in the body of Christ.

We don't need to wait until we all die and then the children can take over. We need to begin to train the children now, and begin to look at them and watch the way they act. Watch the attitude of a little child. There is a difference in a child who has been spoiled and is disobedient, and a little child that has been obedient, and their faith and confidence are in the father and mother.

Look what Jesus said in Matt 18:10:

Matt 18:10 Amp. Bible: Beware that you do not despise or feel scornful toward or think little of one of these little ones, for I tell you that in heaven their angels always are in the presence of and look upon the face of My Father Who is in heaven.

Jesus loves the children, and we should too. We look at little children and we say, "Well, someday, they are going to be the future Church." There may not be another 'someday'. This may be the end of the age; this may be the last age of the Church. We need to begin incorporating them at home into Bible studies and into Church. We need to begin to get them involved in praising, worshiping, reading, studying, and praying, so it does not become dull to be a Christian.

There is something wrong when Christianity becomes dull, or it becomes less exciting than the world. We ought to be in a Church where you can talk about rock and roll. I believe in rock and roll. Yes, I do! My feet are on the Rock and my name is on the Roll! That is exciting! When I was a young child, it was more exciting to go to Church than it was to go to the show, because people got excited about going to Church. The excitement for Christ has to come back into our families. But until I can look at my children and see them as a part of the Church now, as a gift from God, as a gracious favor that God has given to me, and I can put them into a right perspective in my life and say, "Hey, this is what the kingdom of God is like," I am never going to really use them. I am never really going to be blessed by them. They are not a curse; THEY ARE A BLESSING. They are not a burden; THEY ARE A GIFT.

If somebody gave you a Cadillac, and they said, "All I want you to do is just remember it is a gift. There are no taxes to pay on it; it is a gift," you would be telling everybody, wouldn't you! You wouldn't say, "Man, that Cadillac is a burden to me." No! You would get in that big old seat, you'd blast that horn and wave at all your friends and say, "Hey!" They'd say, "Where'd you get that car?" "It is a gift from a friend of mine." "Aw, go on! Nobody likes you enough to give you a gift like that Cadillac!" "Oh, yeah!"

Our children are a greater gift because the Cadillac wears out, but the child becomes more precious. It takes an investment of our time and our life to make that child everything God ever intended it to be. Amen!

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN

CHAPTER 4

This chapter is written for the young people. Let's look first at Genesis 28:7.

Genesis 28:7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother and was gone to Padanaram:..

We know that Jacob was blessed of God and that he was used of God, and he was obedient to his father and his mother. He went where they told him to go. Now one thing about you children that needs to really be in your hearts, is that you are to be obedient to your parents. I don't know if you young people understand this or not, but the wrath of God abides upon the disobedient children (Ephesians 5:6). If you don't want the wrath of God, but want the blessing of God, become obedient to your parents. When your mom or dad say to do something, don't argue with them.

In my house, we had a little back room, and when I said for the children to do something, and they said, "I don't want to," we did not discuss it. After we got through in the back room, they did it. See, the wrath of God, and the wrath of dad, and the wrath of mom, are laid up for the disobedient children. You young people can't get blessed unless you are obedient. I don't care if mom or dad gives you everything in the world you cry for, you are not blessed, because one day you are going out of the covering of your dad and your mom and you are going to find out that the world is real and it is against you, not for you. It is important that you young people get this in your head and in your mind. Life is not a game, and there are no time-outs in it.

Ephesians 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;...

Ephesians 6:2 Amp. Bible: Honor (esteem and value as precious) your father and your mother; this is the first commandment with a promise:...

Notice that the first commandment with a promise is given to the children. You might say, "Why should I be obedient? Why should I honor them?" It is because you don't want the curse to come on you, do you? When you leave home at 20, or whenever you leave home, don't you want the blessing of God to go out that door with you? When you get to be about 30 years old, don't you want to have the blessing of God in your life? You don't learn to do that after you leave home; you learn to do it while you are there if you want to do it easy.

Honor means to be obedient to them, to esteem them. When they ask you to do something or they tell you to do something, you don't argue about it; you honor them and you do it.

Now notice this in Exodus 20:12

Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Here is the promise; long life. The promise never changes. Look what Deut 5:16 says:

Deut 5:16 Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which thy Lord thy God giveth thee.

Who commanded this? God commanded this. It is not mom and dad commanding you to honor them, is it? When I go against honoring my father and my mother, who am I really going against? I AM GOING AGAINST GOD. Do you think God winks at disobedience? Do you think that God lets it slide like you think He does? No! Because it does not happen instantly, and you think you are getting away with it, you had better read the scriptures. Let's see what happens to disobedient, rebellious children.

Matthew 15:4 For God commanded, saying, Honor your father and mother: and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

Matt.15:4 Amp.Bible For God commanded, Honor your father and your mother, and, he who curses or reviles or speaks evil of or abuses or treats improperly his father or mother, let him surely come to his end by death.

Wow! That meant to dishonor them by being rebellious against them. It was not safe to live in those days in rebellion. They took the child outside the gate and stoned him to death. They did not ask him to repent; that was too late. Once they took you to the gate, it was all over with. The sentence was passed (Deut. 21:18-21). You think today that they are not going to stone you to death, but something worse than stoning happens; the curse begins to come into your life. It was dangerous to rebel in those days, but it is just as dangerous today or more dangerous than it was then. That brought swift destruction. Today it brings lingering death into your life. It brings everything that you touch into nothingness. Every plan that you have comes to nothing. You end

up in trouble. You end up in chaos and then you blame mom and dad, but it is your fault because you would not honor your parents.

You say, "Well, my parents are not godly." You can still honor them. You can still respect them just for being your dad and your mom; and if you respect them, you just may win them to Christ. Isaiah 11:6 says a little child shall lead them and he was not only talking about Jesus. This also includes all of you children who obey Him and His Word.

God is long-suffering.

2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

He gives us chance after chance, but when God says you had better do something, you had better pay attention to it! You parents need to be sure that these children that you have charge over, know that scripture is in the Bible, and know what the reward is for that, and know what the consequence is for not honoring their parents.

I have heard many testimonies of how people would send their children to Sunday school, and the little guy would come home excited about what he had just learned. Dad really did not want to hear it, but he wanted to be kind to his child and so he would sit there and say, "Well, tell me." Before he knew it, he heard the story of how Jesus died for him. You see, the Word of God does not return void. You young people are important. You are not just sitting in Church waiting to grow up. You can be of value right now. Don't throw your life away with foolishness of this world, because that is all death. If God wants you to be something, become that. All the other kids will envy you when they see the blessing of God on your life.

It thrills me when I see these Christian athletes who win a game. When they get on television and are asked, "How do you think you won this game," they say, "The Lord Jesus gives me the strength." Praise God! I could just feel God being honored in their midst. I saw a race car driver who won his race, get out of his car after the race was over, and a big smile was on his face. The commentator asked him, "What do you attribute the winning of this race to; was it your car or your driving skill?" He said, "No, it was the Lord Jesus." Hallelujah! I thank God because that man will end up at the end of his days, with children that are proud of him. Amen?

I tell you young people, you need to make some plans for your future, and it needs to be including Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God, and the plan of God for your life. You want to be a good athlete? Ask God. Serve the Lord. He will give you ability to do what He wants you to do. If you want to be a writer, you want to be a singer, you want to be something for God, begin to seek the Lord, honor your parents, and be in love with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's look at Matt 15:4 in the Amplified Bible again: "For God commanded..." I'd like you to underline that. It was not mom and dad. Not the preacher. Not the deacon board. Not the elders.

Matt 15:4 Amp.Bible For God commanded, Honor your father and your mother, and, he who curses or reviles or speaks evil of, or abuses or treats improperly his father or mother, let him surely come to his end by death.

That is pretty heavy stuff, isn't it? God is a God of love; that is true, but God hates sin. God hates rebellion. God hates those things, and if we do not repent of them, we bring that destruction on ourselves. God has nothing to do with it. He just tells us how it works and what the rules of the game are. If I honor my father, if I honor my mother, my days are going to be prolonged, and I am going to have a prosperous life. But if I despise them and curse them, the end of my life will come swiftly upon me. God never lies. I am not picking on you children. I don't believe in picking on anybody. I believe in the love of God, giving the Word of God like it is, so that everyone has a choice to make, and they can make it clearly.

Matthew 19:19 Honor thy father and thy mother: and thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.

God wants us to teach our children to love our neighbors. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." That is what God really desires from all of us. But where is that going to start? It should start at an early age in a child's heart. When we sit down with our children, those children need to be instructed, "Honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbors." Who is my neighbor? Anyone that you meet is your neighbor. I don't care what color their skin is, I don't care what their nationality is, I don't care if they are ugly or pretty or what they are, that has nothing to do with it. All humanity is lost without Christ, and the only people who can love the lost are Christians.

The Lord also tells us to love our enemies (Matt 5:43-44). I need to love that lost individual enough to share the gospel of Christ with them. If our children are taught to hate and be prejudiced, and not love one

another, and not care for one another, where is that love going to come from? Somebody said, "It's got to come from the Church." Our children are the Church. They are not going to be the Church; they are the Church. Parents, we need to understand that we have a grave responsibility to input this into our children.

Mark 7:10 For Moses said, honor thy father and thy mother: and whosoever curses his father and mother, let him die the death...

Mark 7:10 Amp Bible: For Moses said, honor (revere with tenderness of feeling and deference) your father and your mother; and, he who speaks ill of, or reviles or abuses or treats improperly father or mother, let him surely die.

What does God want out of me as a young person? He wants me to honor my father and mother. Amen! He wants me to respect them. To reverence them. To obey them. To do what I am told to do. He expects me to love my classmates, my friends. But parents, where is that child going to learn that? He cannot learn it by laying in the crib, can he? He has to see it in dad; he has to see it in mom. If you are a single parent, it does not make any difference. If your mate is not saved, it does not make any difference. That same godly principle has to be in that child from your example of godliness.

Somebody said to me, "Man, my kids have really gone wild." I said, "What were you like when you were their age?" "Well, I was pretty wild." We forget how crazy we acted. While children are growing up, they are just like a young plant. You have a young plant, and you are trying to help it grow, and the wind keeps blowing against it. You have to keep sheltering it, you have to stake it up, you have to tie it up, you have to keep working until it becomes strong enough to stand there. You don't just let it fall over in the wind, do you? Your children are going to be just like that; they are going to fall over in the wind, they are going to jump up, and they are going to start growing crazy branches on them. God expects you to use wisdom and knowledge to begin to direct and guide that young tender plant until it becomes a great tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

Luke 18:20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

Quit listening to what psychiatrists or psychologists are saying, or the wisdom of this world. It is all foolishness. We need to learn what God respects and expects out of us.

Leviticus 19:3 Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the Lord your God.

This fear here is a reverence. It is the same word for the fear of God, the reverent fear. It means you are going to do this because you respect your father, not because you are afraid your dad is going to zap you. You are going to do this because it will not bring dishonor on your parents. You want to honor your parents through the fear of God.

Lev 19:3 Amp Bible: Each of you shall give due respect to his mother and his father, and keep my sabbaths holy. I the Lord, am your God.

In the Amplified version, they use the word 'respect' for fear. You should give your parents 'due respect'.

Proverbs 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:..

Proverbs 1:8 Amp Bible: My son, hear the instruction of your father, reject not nor forsake the teaching of your mother.

Young people, when your parents are talking to you, don't just sit there at the table and turn a deaf ear to them, and shake your head like you were hearing them. No! You had better begin to hear what they are saying to you. You better begin to hear what is being instructed, because that instruction is there for your safety. When mom tells you something, it is because she loves you, even if you don't like it. You need to respect her and realize she is correcting you because she loves you. If you never get corrected, I doubt if your parents really love you. Amen? A young person said to me, "Well, I really must be loved. I get the wood shed about every three or four days." Thank God for somebody who cares enough about you to give you a wood shed experience. We don't have that much anymore.

Proverbs 4:1 Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

When he talks about a father here, he is not only talking about your natural father, but when you are around a father in the faith who is instructing you in the things of God, pay attention to him. Don't come in the Church and sit there like it is not important whether you are there or not, because you are only a young person. No! When you come into the house of God, or you are hearing the Word of God, pay attention to it because God may speak to you like he did Samuel.

Samuel had to hear. He did not understand at first, but finally he said, "Here am I, Lord!" (1 Sam chapter 3). What if he had said, "Aw, forget it, I am going to sleep all night. I don't want to hear that voice anymore. I am just a child, and it is not important if I hear the word of God or not." Do you think he would have become the great prophet of God? Do you think he would have become a great man of God? No! He listened, didn't he? And when he listened, he heard and finally understood that it was God speaking to him, and he said, "Whatever You want me to do, You go ahead and tell me."

Prov 4:1 Amp Bible: Hear, my sons, the instructions of a father, and give attention to gain and to know intelligent discernment, comprehension and interpretation (of spiritual matters).

Give attention to gain, because if you hear the Word of God and apply it to your life, young or old, it is going to profit you. But if you hear the Word of God and rebel against it, it is going to cost you.

Proverbs 6:20 My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:..

Proverbs 6:20 Amp Bible: My son, keep your father's (God given) commandment, and forsake not the law of God your mother taught you.

Keep thy father's commandment! David said in Psalms 119:11 "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, oh God." You don't want to sin against your parents; keep their word. Hide their word in your heart. Put it deep within your spirit.

Proverbs 23:22 Harken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

To hearken means to hear and to do, or to pay diligent attention to what you are hearing. You young people need to get the right attitude in your heart about your mom and dad now, so that when they get older you do not despise them and want to get rid of them.

I like the Eastern culture on this. We have a Jewish friend, a true Israelite man who was born in Israel, but lives here in America now. He was talking to us about his family in Israel. He spoke very reverently about them, even though they are not born-again believers, and he said, "I know they are going to be saved." He did not speak about his "ungodly grandparents, or ungodly parents." No! He spoke very reverently about them because he revered them.

I want to tell you young people, that attitude doesn't just come 20 or 30 years down the road; it starts at home when you are young. And if you have that attitude in your heart, you will not have any problem loving your parents when they get older, and you won't want to get away from them. You will always want to be around them. Now we want to look at scriptures regarding faithful children, and how it helps your parents in their work for the Lord. Your mom or your dad can be put in an office, but it does not mean God is going to honor that office. Man can put you in any office he wants to, but it does not mean God has. God has certain qualifications and you children need to understand this more than anything you have ever understood so far.

Let's look at the qualifications for an elder or a bishop in the Church.

Titus 1:6 If any man be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

"Having faithful children!" You young people need to be instructed to be faithful to your mom, to your dad, to your Church, to your God, and to the things of the Lord. You need to be taught that when you are young. If you are taught that, when it comes your time to be used in any office in the Church, one of the qualifications has to be here: not accused of riot or unruly. Underline that! If you are unruly, you are keeping mom and dad back from doing what God really called them to do, because they are having to spend all their time trying to get you shaped up. If our children are not faithful, if our children are riotous, if our children are unruly, our mind is always distraught. We are worried and concerned about them, and we cannot really rule in a house of God like we need to rule. Amen!

You young people have learned that you need to be obedient, and reverent, and submissive, and faithful, so that your entire family can come to leadership in the body of Christ.

Titus 1:6 Amp Bible: These elders should be men who are of unquestionable integrity and are irreproachable, the husband of but one wife...

Back in the days when the Bible was written, in the Old Testament, many men had several wives. That is true! But when Paul came preaching the gospel, he found many men there that had several wives, and it wasn't considered a reproach; it was just a practice that they had taken up. But Paul said, "Wait a minute! Those guys cannot rule in a house of God; they will not be a good example, because Christ only has one bride." So he said, "Let him just have one wife."

Titus 1: 6 ...the husband of one wife whose children are well trained...

Who trains a child? Oh! Mom and dad! So parents, if you desire an office in the Church, train your children.

Titus 1:6 ...whose children are well trained and are believers, not open to the accusation of being loose in morals and conduct or unruly and disorderly.

They have to be children then that are lined up with the Word of God, don't they. We have put people into positions in the Church that they were not able to cope with because they were at stress, even at home, and we loaded them down with more responsibilities. The home suffered, the ministry suffered, everything suffered. What we need to do is get our homes right first, so we can know how to rule in the house of God. It is that simple, isn't it? We are trying to lead the Church and we cannot even run our own house.

1 Timothy 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity:...

1 Timothy 3:4 Amp Bible: He must rule his own household well, keeping his children under control with true dignity, commanding their respect in every way, and keeping them respectful.

Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in ALL things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

When you please the Lord you get blessed! You multiply. The blessing of God enriches your life. If you are not obedient in ALL things, if you are disobedient in one thing, you have already broken this. "All" means the total quantity of whatever is being spoken about. If your mom or your dad said, "Get up and go to school," and you said, "I don't feel like it," and then you got up and you did the dishes, and you did the yards, and you scrubbed the floors, you did everything else, were you obedient that day? No! Because you were disobedient in that one area, it took away from everything else that you were obedient in. Isn't that amazing?

So, parents, we need to train our children, don't we? And young people, you need to listen to your folks. Don't debate on whether they are right or wrong all the time, or if they know as much as you do. When I was young, I used to think, "Boy, my folks don't know anything. They are just old fogies." But the older I got, the smarter my parents got, and I said, "If I had listened and been obedient to what they told me, I could have saved myself a whole lot of grief." There just isn't any way you can know more than your folks know. Just living you learn something; and if you have parents that are in the Word of God and in the service of the

Lord by being in the house of God, being faithful to the things of God, you can learn a lot from them.

Young people, your responsibility is that when mom or dad say to do something, do it. Do not argue about it. Do not debate about whether they know as much about it as you do, because one of these days the Lord is going to come along, and when God deals with you, it won't be like mom or dad dealing with you. If you are locked up behind prison bars for doing contrary to what mom or dad told you, or you are laying somewhere in a gutter, you will wonder what in the world went wrong with your plan. You cannot subvert God's plan and put your plan in it, and choose what you will be obedient in, and ever expect the blessing of God to be on your life.

**GOD SAID, "OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS,
FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING UNTO GOD."**

TRAINING AND CORRECTION

CHAPTER 5

In this chapter we are first of all going to look at what the Word of God teaches on TRAINING our children in the way they should go.

If you want to learn something about children, you ought to take care of the kindergarten class in Church. In the first Church that I pastored, we needed a Sunday school teacher one morning because the regular one was gone, and it just happened to be that they were the kindergarten kids. I was in my study and praying for God to send us a teacher that morning for those young children, and God said, "I have." I said, "Who?" He said, "You." The reason God did it, was that He wanted to teach me something.

I sat in that class and I learned more from those children in the way they approach God, than I had ever learned being around real stiff and staunch folks. We joined hands around that little table, and I said; "Now we are all going to pray," and they said, "Okay." Then I said, "Now we are going to take turns." One would take off and say, "Thank you, Jesus, Thank you, Jesus." The next one would say, "Lord, I love you." Then another one would say, "Bless the food, Lord!!!" They would just go around the table like this. There was not anybody in there praying "destroy this Sunday school teacher, or rip mom and dad up." Their hearts were full of love and thanksgiving.

Then when they got through praying, they wanted to just draw on the walls and on the floor, and they wanted to draw everywhere. I spent my whole morning corralling those young people. I thought, "Lord, I learned more today and I am glad, but I don't want to do it again!" But I did, and I learned some other things, and I said, "Lord, help me to learn from little children what the kingdom of God is really about."

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

Proverbs 22:6 Amp Bible: Train up a child in the way he should go (and in keeping with his individual gift or bent), and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Depart from what? He will not depart from the way he has been trained. Your children may have to go through the hog pen, but one day they will wake up and they will remember the way they were raised, and they will say, "I know what I will do. I will arise and I will go to my father

and I will say to my father, I have sinned against heaven and against you." In his heart there was always the remembrance of the way he was brought up. The prodigal son remembered that, and he said, "My father's servants have more than I do" (Luke 15:17).

What we are instilling in our children is the way they are going to grow up; and it is going to be hard to ever take them out of that way once it is established in their heart, good or bad. Somebody said, "Well, I am not worried about my kids. I just kind of let them run free, and one of these days I will get with it and we will get it straightened up." The only problem is, you are instilling in that kid right now, a way, and that way is to do his own thing or her own thing and later on you will correct it. The problem is, many times the correction comes to late. Correction needs to be administered when the problem arises.

The prodigal son remembered the way, didn't he? He remembered the way he was trained. He remembered the good things about his father, and when he found himself in that hog pen, he got right out of it. He said, "I am going back to my father's house. I am going back to the way that is right." In his heart, he had never departed from it. His flesh had over-run him, but his heart was still in remembrance of the things of God. Your child may go sideways, he may go crooked, but if you have raised him right, it is like a big long leash; he may run to the end of it and it pulls him back. He will say, "What am I doing out here? This is not what mom taught me. This is not the way dad raised me."

I read an article years ago on a group called the Oak Ridge Boys. They went secular, but one of the men was a real Christian. They went to Las Vegas or Reno (one of those cities), and they were putting on secular acts and singing all these secular songs. He said he was sitting in his dressing room and this thought came to him, "What am I doing here? This is not the way my mother raised me!" He packed his stuff and he left. If we have raised them right, we don't have to stay up all night worrying about them.

I love that story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-24). It does not say the father went down after him. The father knew he was coming back. It was just a question of the day that he would come back. He was watching for him. He would never have run to meet him if he had not been watching for him. That is why it is so important for mom and dad to serve God faithfully; to instill faithful teaching in a child, correct teaching in a child.

If we have taught and trained our children right, and they go off to the side, but we keep on searching and seeking and going after God with all of our heart, they are going to remember the course that we set. If they do go astray, they will remember how to get back and where to meet us. It

will not be at the gin mill, it won't be shooting craps, it won't be stealing, robbing, lying, and cheating. It will be serving God. They know that the same course they left, they can get back on, and they know how to find it because mom and dad will be serving God and waiting and looking for them.

We tell our children what is wrong with them, but we need to tell them what is right with them. If we keep planting in them their failures and their shortcomings and they believe that, it gets locked into their heart and it is hard to drive it out of them.

Psalms 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Psalms 23:4 Amp.Bible: Yes, though I walk through the (deep sunless) valley of the shadow of death, I will fear or dread no evil; for you are with me. Your rod (to protect) and Your staff (to guide), they comfort me.

The Word and the Spirit. We and our children are walking through the valley of the shadow of death all around us. There is no life in the world; it is all in darkness. Everything in the world is in darkness, except for the Christians that are there. Only the Christians have the light. When people have to go out into the world, they are in a valley of death. Mom and dad, we need to instill in our children the Word of God and the need for the Holy Spirit when they are young, so that when they grow up, they can say as David, "I don't fear any evil." We need young people today that are not afraid all the time. We need young people today that don't have to sleep with the light on all the time. Fear is a horrible thing; it has torment.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

When I was a little guy, and even as a grown young man, I was afraid of the dark. If I walked up to an alley, I would walk out in the middle of the street to go around the opening of that alley, because it was dark down there. I had been taught that you have to be careful, because you do not know what is in the dark. I was taught that when I was a little guy and it stuck with me even after I was saved. When I would go to bed at night, I would turn the light switch off, and I was so terrified that almost before the light was out, I would be in bed.

I began to read the Word of God, and began to hear the Word of God that my grandfather and grandmother were instilling in my heart, and the Lord quickened this scripture into my heart: "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art*

with me;"(Psalm 23:4). That night I was really brave and I started to turn the switch off, and all of a sudden the enemy said, "You don't know what is down that hall, around the corner." You know what I did? I turned the light off real quick before he could talk to me any more, and I stood there in the dark about to panic; but that scripture kept coming to me, speaking to my heart. Pretty soon I just walked off to bed. From that night on, I was never afraid again. Amen!

See, it was from my childhood, from my early teaching. That had been drilled into my mind, that the dark holds some great evil. Even after I got saved, and I heard the preachers say, "I am more than a conqueror through Christ," I still would go around in the dark waiting for somebody to jump on me. It is a horrible thing that we put in our children. We need to put into them faith, love, trust, and hope. Let them know who goes with them through the valley of the shadow of death. The Word never leaves them. The Spirit of God never leaves them. He is there. The Angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him, and delivereth them (Psalm 34:7). Praise God! We need to understand that we have a great opportunity to instill and train in our children the things of faith and of the Word of God, and not of fear and unbelief.

Now we are going to study what the Word of God says on the **CORRECTION** of our children, and I pray that you parents are teaching these studies to your children.

Proverbs 13:24 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: But he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.

Proverbs 13:24 Amp Bible: He who spares his rod (of discipline) hates his son, but he who loves him, diligently disciplines and punishes him early.

The father punishes him early. When he finds the offense, when it happens. That moment. That is when the action takes place. You say, "Well, I read this book on philosophy and I don't believe in whipping my children anymore." I am not talking about using a two-by-four, or your fist on their head, or anything like that. Have you ever noticed that God gave them a lot of padding on their bottom. Don't use something to harm them.

They used to use a little reed. It was pretty long but it was not very big around, but when it came across you, it left a little welt all the way around you. You remembered that for quite some time, and the next time you tried to do something you knew was wrong, you felt that thing. It had taken away from you the ability to do what you wanted to do.

I was raised by this principle. Do you know you can be raised by this principle and survive? One day my grandfather was baby-sitting us kids, and he was in the house with grandma. I didn't want to just sit out in this big old yard, so I thought, "I am going to go into a land of adventure. I am going down around the corner and see what is down there." The only thing is, I forgot to ask my grandpa or tell him. I did not even leave him a note! I just took off, and I am playing down at this big old oak tree, and I am really having myself a time. Before I can run, I look up and there is grandpa standing right there.

Now grandpa was a Baptist preacher, and he believed in this scripture. You know what he did? He went to that oak tree I was playing on, took a switch off about that long, and he let me have it. I started running, and every time my foot would come down, he would let me have it again. I went all the way around the block all the way home, and he was right behind me, pop, pop, pop. You know something; I never went back to that oak tree again. I don't say that I did not have the desire to go back there; I just had more intelligence.

Now I believe in the principle and the application of right discipline when it is due, and when you withhold that discipline, you don't love your child. You might say, "Now wait a minute!" No! I am giving you what the Word of God says, and it is your choice to do anything you want to with it. But I am going to tell you, if you want your child to grow up right, there has to be times of discipline as well as times of reward.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope...

Underline "while there is hope." If you don't train that child, he will become like a wild vine or tree and never produce any good fruit. So mom and dad, we have a grave responsibility. Young people, you have a grave responsibility. When you are disciplined, don't get mad at mom, don't get mad at dad. Understand why you got it. Okay? They are obeying God's Word. If mom and dad withhold that from you, they don't love you like they need to love you.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

One of the favorite tricks of young people, including us when we were young, is that before the punishment comes, we really start screaming and crying and promising all kinds of things. "Don't, no, I'll never do it again, I..." Big old crocodile tears rolling down out of their eyes, and you get taken in, don't you? It may not happen in your life, but I have seen it happen so many times in my life. I'd get broken hearted; I felt like the bad guy. How can I whip this sweet little child after he just cried

his eyes out and repented? I found out though that this Word of God is true. If I despaired for the crying, it wasn't fifteen minutes until they were right back doing what they had always done.

God is talking here about the right discipline. Somehow we have forsaken this. When that child promises you all kinds of promises, and he bawls his eyes out, don't let him off. Carry out the punishment. What you need to do with your children is to sit down with them, and let them know that there are punishments for certain actions. If my child lived under my roof when he is 30 years old, he is still going to be obedient to me, or he is not going to be in my house. That is just the way it is. I mean that. Come on, it is serious. And if someone in your house thinks they can be rebellious against you and get away with it, it is time you showed them they cannot get away with it, because you love them enough to correct them now, no matter what it costs them. Amen!

Proverbs 19:18 Amp Bible: Discipline your son while there is hope, but do not (indulge your angry resentments by undue chastisement and) set yourself to his ruin.

In other words, don't chastise that child while you are angry. I used to get so mad at my kids when they would do something wrong, and I knew if I did it then, I might have killed them. But the Holy Spirit would tell me what to do. The Holy Spirit would tell me to go set them in the bedroom. I will never forget this one particular time with my little boy. He did something and he had it coming, and I was mad! I just took him and I put him in the bedroom and I said, "Sit here and I will be back." I went in the other room and prayed: "God, I've got to get this thing under control. There's something wrong, You know." I sat there awhile and prayed, and soon the Holy Spirit came on me, and it was not anger anymore. It was the need for discipline to be administered in love.

So I went back into the room, and by this time of course, my son thought I had forgotten it. He is sitting on the edge of the bed kind of sheepishly. I sat down and put my arm around him and I said, "Son, do you know what you did was wrong?" He said, "Yeah, I do, dad." I said, "You know I am going to whip you, don't you?" "Aw, you don't need to, dad." I said, "Yes, I do need to, son, because I love you. This is the chastisement, this is the penalty, for what you have done." And I whipped that young man, but not in anger, not in frustration, not in maliciousness; I whipped him in love. I chastened him because I loved him; because I cared about his life down the road. I cared about how he grew up. I cared about how my daughters grew up.

Discipline was a great part of our lives. If you don't have discipline in your home, you are going to have an unruly household, and the older

those children get, the harder it is going to be to discipline them. Today my son could probably whip me, but he respects me now. He loves me now. He reverences me now, because one day I thought enough about him to apply the penalty for that which he had committed wrongly. But, never, never correct your children in anger.

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

You don't have to teach your child how to be foolish. It is already there. Haven't your kids ever done anything foolish? Sure they have. I did, and my kids did; but preaching at them will not drive it away. Arguing with them will not drive it away. Threatening them will not drive it away. It is when you apply the board of education to the seat of understanding that things begin to happen. Amen!

Proverbs 23:13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die.

Now that is not a steel rod; that is a reed.

Proverbs 23:14 Thou shall beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell.

Don't you think it is a good principle? A temporary chastisement against an eternal work? Look what it says in the Amplified Bible:

Prov 23:14 Amp.Bible: Withhold not discipline from the child, for if you strike and punish him with the (reed-like) rod, he will not die. You shall whip him with the rod and deliver his life from Sheol (Hades, the place of the dead).

Wow! You parents may be thinking, "Man, I don't like this study. He is teaching us to beat up on our kids." No, I am not. I am teaching you, that as a parent, you have to discipline your children. You don't do children a favor by letting them go any direction they want to. Your responsibility is to train them up in the way that they should go. You are a teacher. You are a guide. You are a comforter. You are one that executes judgment on the acts that your child does.

Now again I want to say this to you: if it is in the Word of God, we need to pay attention to it. Educated men and women write books saying that this word is out-dated but I have news for you: IT IS NOT OUTDATED. It is beyond anything that will ever be written. It is as up-to-date today as it was when it was put in the Bible. Now, if that be true, which it is, then we need to adhere to the divine principles of the Word of God, not only in

our ministries, not only in our personal life, but in rearing our children. I want my children to be a good inheritance.

I am teaching you children that you need to understand that when discipline comes into your heart and into your home, it is because your parents really love you.

Proverbs 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

Do you think a child knows how to raise himself? Why do we let children make choices when they can barely talk, by the actions they take? "I don't want to go to bed. I will just bawl and squall, and kick the walls out, and they will come and get me out of this bed." Amen? That is the philosophy of a lot of people. When the kid starts bawling and squalling, they take him out of bed, and start patting him. The kid can keep them up all night long. Pretty soon you cannot get that kid in bed. What you need to learn is how to discipline that little baby. It will not hurt a little baby to cry awhile. You might say, "You have to watch out, Brother Krider, because I don't want my children growing up thinking they are not loved."

I don't think I learned to become a good parent until I became a grandparent. You see, it is a job I never had before; it was something new. I really messed up on my first child, but thank God for grace; she grew up to be a good girl anyhow. Amen! I got a little stronger on the second one and she grew up to be a pastor's wife.

God is saying something to us. We do not know how to be parents, so we need to take a book that is proven and raise our children according to the Word of God. Nobody knows how to be a parent when they first become a parent. But if we first become a parent and we take the Word of God and use it, we are going to be able to raise that first child right.

Proverbs 29:17 Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

Watch a child that grows up and continually does evil. You are always worried about him. You are always concerned about him. You don't get any rest, do you? If you had raised that child right in the beginning, you would have had rest when they left the house. I can honestly say here, thank God, that I have rest with my children. I am not boasting on anything that I did. God gave me instruction on how to raise the gifts He placed in my hand. I found the instruction in God's Word, how to raise that beautiful inheritance that God gave me. We can feel bad,

we can feel anyway we want to, but it is not going to change God's Word. We need to apply the principles of God before it is too late.

Many people call our office on the phone, or come to the office, and they are worried about their children. Their biggest concern is not their finances, it is not their jobs, it is not this or that; it is their children. Their children do not give them any rest, day or night. They worry and they don't sleep, and they are on all kinds of medication trying to get some relief. Something went wrong somewhere. Do you suppose it could have been that their children were not raised according to God's Word? Do you think that God can lie? No! God cannot lie. He is not a man that he should lie, so His Word is truth. If you want to have rest when your children are growing up, you have to learn how to raise them.

Proverbs 29:15,17 Amp Bible: The rod and the reproof give wisdom, but a child left undisciplined brings his mother to shame. Correct your son and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your heart.

Wouldn't you like to have children that are a delight to you? Amen! You realize then the responsibility begins with us as parents. There is some responsibility on the children to receive that correction. It does not seem pleasing to be chastised by the Lord, but afterward it yieldeth forth the peaceful fruits of righteousness. Look at Hebrews 12:5-11:

Heb 12:5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Heb 12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

Heb 12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Heb 12:9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Heb 12:10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Heb 12:11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the

peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Now if that is true that as a Father, God works with His children this way, that principle is also true with a human father or a mother and their children. It did not give me pleasure when I had to take my children in the bedroom and whip them; but in my older age, I now have children that are a delight to me and I have rest. The only way that works is by applying the principles found in the Word of God.

We have a generation today on the streets that were raised by philosophy. They are susceptible to the new age movement. They are susceptible to anti-Christ teaching and everything else, because they were never corrected, they were never chastened. That generation is going to be teaching children in our schools pretty soon. I tell you, if you want rest, you are going to have to raise your sons and daughters according to the Word of God. If they cry a little bit trying to get off, don't let them off. It is better to whip them now, or to correct them in whatever way you must discipline them, than to see them behind bars one day, or dead on the streets of an overdose.

You might say, "Are you trying to put fear in my heart?" NO! I am trying to put the fear of God there, not the fear of man, and if I believe God, I will do what God tells me, because I love my children. You love your children. Children, you need to love your parents and honor them so that it will be well with you.

Correction is not to be used as a threat but as a guideline. That is true! One of the worst things you can do to your kid is to say, "If you don't straighten up, I am going to beat you half to death." You need to tell them, "Look, this is what I want you to do. The guideline to escape that punishment is to do what I tell you; but if you don't do what I tell you, this is not a threat, this is the other side. When you cross the line, then chastisement is coming."

I have heard too many parents threaten their children to try to get them to act right, and what the children get in their hearts is rebellion against that authority. You need to sit down and explain to your children what you approve of and what you do not approve of; and let them know if they do what you do not approve of, then the guideline simply states that there will be a penalty for that, or there will be a reward for being faithful to do what mom and dad told you to do.

During these teachings God really laid on my heart five things that we as parents should do:

#1. Parents' teachings must be consistent. Have you ever noticed that everything in God's Word is consistent? No matter whether Luke, James, John, Paul, Peter, Zechariah, or whoever God inspired to write at the time, it is consistent, and you know what God is pleased with and what does not please God. We studied earlier that a mom and dad have to be in agreement, be consistent, so the children will know that we are both going to say the same thing. They will know that no matter which one they go to, they are going to get the same answer.

Mom, if you have a dad living in your home, don't say to those children, "Just wait until your dad gets home. He is going to beat the fire out of you." Pretty soon you will have a child that hates to see the dad come home because he is a big ogre. He is a guy that will come home and beat me up. You moms have the responsibility of chastising that child then! I used to hate for my mom to whip me because she would cry when dad came home, and then dad would whip me for making her cry. I mean there was a consistency with my mom and dad. If you were in trouble with one of them, you were in trouble with both of them; so you kind of paid heed to what either one of them said.

#2. Parents must be an example, not only by your word but by your life. Don't tell your children not to lie if you are continually lying. Don't tell your children not to gossip if that is what you are doing. Don't tell your children to read the Bible if you are not. Don't tell the children to go to Church if you are not going. You see, you've got to live a life more than just talk a life. In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus said that there were two men that built houses. One was a foolish man and he built his house upon the sand. The other was a wise man and he built his house upon the rock. The same storms came on both. The same rains came. The same floods came. The house of the foolish man that built upon the sand, it crumbled; but the wise man that built upon the rock, his house stood.

Jesus said the wise man is the one that hears and does. If you are going to build your family upon the rock, Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 10:4), storms are going to come against it. Winds of adversity are going to come against it. But if it is built, if it is lived, if it is executed through the Word of God, it will stand against anything that tries to devour it.

You don't just get a family and say, "Now I am Mom and Dad. Look at the little darlings we got!" The first thing you know those little darlings act like little demons! What happened? It was the same little darlings you got, but you forgot to train them. You forgot to be consistent. You forgot to walk and live and do what the Word of God told you to do. Mom and dad are the only real example children have in the first few years of their lives, of what God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are like. That is all they have and they pick up quick. A child learns fast, either the good or the

bad, and once they learn the wrong things, it is hard to change them if you don't drive it out right away.

#3. Don't argue in front of children. If you are going to have a discussion, go into your bedroom alone with your partner. Talk it over; don't scream and holler at one another. If they listen at the door and all they hear is, "You know, honey, we are not doing this right and we love our children. We have got to come to some kind of scriptural agreement here on how to raise these children," they see mom and dad in unity. Little children have a way of trying to bait one parent against the other. I do not know where they learn all this stuff, but they are smooth little operators. You cannot let that happen. There must be a unity in the father and mother.

#4. Don't correct children when you are angry. We discussed this earlier, but we need to see it again. Put them in a bedroom until you have gone and prayed, and that anger is gone. Then you can correct that child out of love because you care enough. That child may think you forgot it, but when you walk in that door later, you have not forgotten it. You just have the right spirit to administer it. So never correct your child when you are angry.

#5. The greatest thing that a child can know, is that their parents love one another. You may have a broken marriage, you may not have a mate at home anymore, but whatever you do to that child, don't plant in them a hate for the partner that is not there. I mean that, because what you are doing is you are putting a seed in there that will grow in that child until he begins to hate more than he loves. What you do is just continue to love that child, to fill that empty void of their life, and when that subject is brought up, you just cover the whole thing with love. You don't have to lie about anything. Charity covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).

If you plant the seed of hate toward that other parent that is not there, you are going to have problems with that child. By the time he is a teenager, he is going to be rebellious, he is going to be hateful, he is going to despise even you. Love and hate cannot grow in the same vessel. There has to be the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. Something went wrong; it happens all the time; but that does not excuse the partner that is there from becoming what God wants them to be, to bring that child up in the way that God wants that child to go.

Children, you are the Church. You are not going to be the Church. You are the Church. You would be surprised how many people come into a Church and they watch you young people. One of the greatest things that I hear as a minister around the country is, "I wish we had some young people in our Church." Why? Because there is a zeal there. There is a

provoking there. They will dance, they will shout, they will praise the Lord, and there is life there when the young people are active in the Church.

You are not going to be the Church; you are the Church. You don't know how many more people you affect than older people affect. People come in and they see young people in a Church, and they say, "That is a Church that is alive!" I have traveled to a lot of Churches, and in some of them, you find a few old folks. I try to have Church, but they are sitting back there half asleep. You go to a Church where young people are, they are squirming, they are moving, they cannot sit still; but there is life going on there, and it infects people.

My grandmother had the perfect way of raising a child in the house of God. She never let me sit in the back seat with my friends because she knew what I was like. We wrote in the songbooks, passed notes to the girls, so grandma remedied that. She made me sit with her, with her arm around me, and people thought, "That grandmother sure loves her grandson." She did love me. She loved me enough not to let me do what my flesh wanted to do in the house of God. When I started squirming, or got restless, my grandmother would pinch me on the ear. She had long boney fingers and she pinched my ear! It is a wonder my ears are not longer on one side. That is not bad when you are five years old, but that is embarrassing when you are twelve.

It could be the most boring service in my life but I would not move my head, because the pincher was coming! She would never say anything! She never told me how rotten I was, which would have been true. Never told me how bad I was, which would have been true. She had a remedy. She put the punishment into action. I learned not to write in songbooks, I learned not to pass notes, I learned to pay attention, I learned not to fall asleep, and I learned not to squirm in Church, because Grandma had those long boney fingers that would just rip your ear off.

I told my son this one time, and later I called him down to sit with me in the front row, and I put my arm around him and he kept watching my hand! I never had to pinch him. He was always afraid I was going to.

God wants us to grow up together, children and families, and if we are going to raise our children in a way that God is pleased, it will have to be in the admonition and the fear of the Lord. It is going to have to be more than just theory and doctrine of men. It is going to have to be the children taking their place, the parents taking their place, and both taking their responsibility together.

Children must be made responsible for their actions. If you don't make them responsible while they are in your family at a young age, the law will make them responsible some day. A person that thinks he is getting away with something because he is a smart aleck, or because he is not being disciplined, is not getting away with anything. He is heading for the hardest place in his life. He is heading for real punishment greater than mom or dad could ever give him at home, and it will not be because somebody loves his soul. It will be because they are punishing him after the delight of their own flesh.

I know that with all the love in my heart that I have, if we as parents do not raise our children according to the Word of God, if we allow them to slide and get by with what they think is smart, we will weep bitter tears one day as our children suffer the consequences for the foolishness that we allowed to grow into their hearts. I am asking God to show us our responsibility as parents and our responsibility as young people. I am asking Him to quicken His Word to our hearts, that this has not just been a lot of words, but it has been the Word of the Lord, spoken under the anointing and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

We are His people, by His choosing, and we have a grave responsibility to raise the gift of our children that He have given us, in a godly manner, so that in our old age we can have rest and our children can have long life in peace and prosperity upon the face of the earth. We must love them enough to chastise them according to God's Word with the spirit of love and meekness.

You young people may be thinking, "I know I am in trouble now, because my mom and dad are going to do what that preacher said." It was not Don Krider that commanded you. God commanded! I want you to do what the Word of God says. You young people need to realize how serious life really is. I hear stories all of the time of young people who have been tragically killed. You have no guarantees except this: if you do what God's Word tells you, you can expect to have a long life upon the earth. If you do contrary to what God's Word tells you, you can be taken out immediately. It is a serious thing to be a Christian. I think we have made being a Christian too light; made it too easy. Being a Christian is very serious business. You young people have as much power with God as we adults do, and you need to be praying. I want you praying for those you love, and even for those who have not treated you right, because when you are doing that, your heart is right, and God is truly pleased with you.

Deut 6:5-7 Amp Bible: And you shall love the LORD thy God with all your mind and heart, and with your entire being, and with all your might. And these words, which I am

commanding you this day, shall be first in your own mind and heart; then you shall whet and sharpen them, so as to make them penetrate, and teach and impress them diligently upon the minds and hearts of 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.

Lord, we reach out now, and our desire for one another is that there would be a Christ-likeness in us and in our families. God, we are thanking You because we know that these young people can win their parents, they can win their neighbors, many times more easily than all the preachers in the world can. We desire to see You move in the young and the old alike.

God, we pray that these young people will realize they have an awesome responsibility for they are a part of the Church today, and You will use them now. Even as they reach out to pray for older ones around them, Father, their prayers are effective. Their prayers are being honored. You hear them when they pray.

Lord, we parents need Your help to guide these children. Help us to encourage these children. Help us to be examples that would bring Christ into their lives in a mighty way. Help us to be the parents You desire us to be, and help the young people to be what you want them to be. Help us to be the families that You have ordained us to be, that You truly might be glorified in all that we do; and we will be careful to give you the praise, the glory and the honor, for we are the family of God.

In Jesus wonderful name. Amen!