
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

PARENTS

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20

I. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Apart from the book of Proverbs, the Old Testament does not seem to give us much teaching concerning parenting. In the New Testament, however, Paul wrote something about being parents. Most books in the world teach children how to be children; not many books teach parents how to be parents. Most people pay attention to teachings for children. But the New Testament pays much attention to teachings for parents. It does not pay much attention to teachings about being children. Although it does teach us something about children, the emphasis is not on children. Both Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3 put more emphasis on parents than on children. We should learn to be proper parents because God pays more attention to parents than to children.

If we try to summarize the words in the Bible concerning parenting, the main thing parents should do is nurture their children in the teaching and admonition of the Lord and not provoke them to anger or discourage them. This means that parents must exercise self-control and must not be loose in any way. This is Paul's teaching concerning the subject.

As difficult as it is to be a husband or a wife, I hope you will realize that there is something more difficult—being a parent. Being a husband or a wife involves only two people; being a parent involves more. Being a husband or a wife is a matter of personal happiness; being a parent is something that affects the well-being of the children of the next generation. The responsibility over the future of the children of the next generation is on the shoulders of the parents.

We have to realize how serious this responsibility is. God has placed a person's body, soul, and spirit, even his whole life and future, into our

hands. No individual influences another individual's future as much as parents. No one controls a person's future as much as parents. Parents almost have a say in whether their children will go to hell or to heaven. We must learn to be good husbands and good wives, but above all we must learn also to be good parents. I believe that the responsibility of being a parent is more than that of being a husband or a wife.

Here we will consider the Christian way of parenting. The knowledge of this will save us from many headaches.

A. Sanctifying Oneself for the Sake of the Children

First, all parents must sanctify themselves before God for the sake of their children.

1. *The Lord Sanctifying Himself for the Sake of the Disciples*

What does it mean to be sanctified before God? The Lord Jesus said, "For their sake I sanctify Myself" (John 17:19). This does not refer to being holy, but to whether or not one is sanctified. The Lord Jesus is holy and His nature is holy. But for the sake of the disciples, He sanctified Himself. There were many things that He could have done which were not contrary to His own holiness; nevertheless, He refrained from doing them because of weakness in the disciples. In many matters the disciples' weakness directed the Lord and restricted His freedom. The Lord could do many things, but He did not do them because He did not want the disciples to misunderstand or be stumbled. As far as the Lord's nature was concerned, He often could have acted a certain way. But He refrained from doing so for the sake of the disciples.

2. *Not Walking in a Loose Way*

Similarly, those who have children should sanctify themselves for the sake of their children. This means that we should refrain from doing

many things which we could do for the sake of our children. There are many things which we could say, but for the sake of the children we do not say them. From the day we bring our children into our family, we should sanctify ourselves.

If you do not restrict yourself, you will not be able to restrict your children. The looseness of those who do not have children, at the most, results in trouble for themselves. But for those who have children, looseness results in damage to their children as well as to themselves. Once a Christian brings a child into the world, he must sanctify himself. Two eyes, sometimes four, are watching you all the time. They will follow you all your life. Even after you have left this world, they will not forget what they have seen in you; the things you do will remain inside of them.

3. Acting according to Standards

The day your son is born is the day you should consecrate yourself. You must set a standard for yourself in morality, in conduct at home, and in all moral judgments regarding right and wrong. You must set a high standard for what is ideal, and you must also set a standard for yourself in spiritual matters. You must act strictly according to these standards. Otherwise, you will have problems for yourself, and you will spoil your children. Many children are ruined by their own parents, not by outsiders. If parents are lacking in ethical, moral, and spiritual standards, they will ruin their children.

A young person makes decisions and judgments in his future life according to the training he received during his early years with his parents. A child may remember or forget what you say, but what he sees surely will remain in him forever. He develops his sense of judgment from you, and he also develops his system of values from you.

Every parent must remember that his actions will be repeated in his children; his actions will not stop with him. When you do not have children, you can do whatever you like when you are happy and give up and forget about everything when you are unhappy. But once you have children, you have to restrict yourself. You have to act according to the highest standard of conduct whether you like it or not. The whole life of

Christian children depends on the behavior of their parents.

I remember a brother who said something when his son got into trouble. He said, "He is just a replica of me and I am just he." When a parent sees something in his children, he must realize that he is seeing himself. He must see that they are his very reflection. They are just reflecting him. Through them he can see himself.

This is why every couple should consecrate themselves anew to God as soon as they have a child. They should come to the Lord and consecrate themselves to Him again. From that time forward, the Lord has committed a human being, with his entire spirit, soul, life, and future, into their hands. From that day forward, they have to be faithful to the Lord's commitment. Some people are committed to a work for one or two years when they sign a contract. But this work lasts for their entire life; there is no limit to the term of this commitment.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for the blending and one accord among the saints.
- Pray for the English-speaking testimony and gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- Pray for the summer training that the Lord release His speaking to supply the Body.
- May the Lord raise up many brothers to bear the testimony together.
- Pray for the burden to raise up next generation for building up of the body of Christ.
- Pray for YP that they will be companions with one another to pursue the Lord together.
- For GOW training: Vital groups be raised up, attending prayer meeting, prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: How to Raise up the Next Generation for the Church Life for Chinese speaking and John for English speaking M 1:1~13, T.14~18, W.19~34, T.35~51, F.2:1~11, S.12~22, S.23~3:13.
- Tuesday prayer meeting at Bro. Tai's place, 12137 Kristy lane, Saratoga, CA.
- GOW 6th term training registration: register with the brothers in small group to be trained by His grace and practice steadfastly unto Zion.
- Chinese scholar training in NJ, 7/27-8/3. Continuing training in Fremont 8/2-8/5.