



# Praise and Thanksgiving

*By David Cotcher*

Some time ago a sister in our local assembly testified that she had been feeling ill, and as she began to praise the Lord the illness left her and she received strength. This was a real inspiration to me and I am sure to others. As I thought about this afterward, I looked in the scriptures at some examples of the power of praise and thanksgiving. I also reread an article by Bro. Gilbert Price “The Power of Praise” from the July/August 2000 Sharon Star. I would encourage you to read that article as well.

Exhortations to praise the Lord are throughout the scriptures. We see many examples of the power that there is in praise and thanksgiving. Power has meanings of both strength and authority, and we receive both through praise and thanksgiving. We recognize it is not our own natural strength or authority. By praise and thanksgiving we appropriate the spiritual strength and authority we have through Jesus Christ.

**Praise and Thanksgiving Bring us into God’s Presence**

“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations” (Psalm 100:1-5).

We enter into God’s presence with praise and thanksgiving. By our praise we proclaim that the “LORD He is God.” He has made us. We have not made ourselves. We give thanks unto Him and bless His name. Praise and thanksgiving express our reverence and adoration as we come into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

**Come to God in Prayer with Praise and Thanksgiving.**

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6).

This scripture says we are to be “careful for nothing,” or not to have anxiety or worry, but instead come unto God with prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Supplication means to ask humbly and earnestly. We need to come to God in prayer with praise and thanksgiving for all He is and for all He has done. Then as we enter into His presence, we may bring our requests before Him. God will hear and answer prayer when we come earnestly and humbly before Him with thanksgiving and praise.

**Praise and Thanksgiving Break the Bonds that Hold Us**

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed” (Acts 16:25-26).

Paul and Silas were locked in the inner prison with their feet held firmly in the stocks. In the darkness of midnight they did not despair, but raised their voices in songs of praise unto God. As they sang, the prison doors were opened, and the bonds that held them were loosened. Praise and thanksgiving break the bonds

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that hold us and allow us to receive the liberty that Christ has for us.

A scripture says that the yoke shall be destroyed by the anointing: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isaiah 10:27). As we enter in with praise and thanksgiving; the yoke is destroyed, and we are set at liberty.

#### **Praise Defeats the Enemy and Gives us the Victory**

“And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for His mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten” (2 Chronicles 20:20-22).

We see many examples where the children of Israel sent the singers before the army to praise the Lord as they went out against their enemies. As they began to sing and to praise, the scripture says the “Lord set ambushments” against their enemies to defeat them. We experience the enemy coming against us in many different ways, but as we begin to praise and thank the Lord, the enemy is defeated. Entering in with song is a wonderful way to praise the Lord and receive the victory. Even if we are not singers, we should sing praises unto the Lord together with the congregation in the services as well as in our personal devotions. In doing so, the Lord will defeat the enemy. Praise the Lord.

#### **Praise Breaks Down the Walls that Stand Before Us.**

When the children of Israel came to the city Jericho the Lord commanded Joshua to have the people march around the city for seven days.

“And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city” (Joshua 6:15-16). “So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city” (v 20).

When the people shouted the walls of Jericho fell

inward, and they went in and took possession of what God had promised them. They gave a shout of victory in praise unto their God and the walls in front of them came down. We too have walls that seemingly stand in our way. They will fall before us so that we can enter in to what God has promised. We sing the song “Rise Up and Shout the Victory.”

Rise up and shout the victory,  
It's yours and mine today,  
Was bought by Christ on Calvary  
And now there is a way.  
To peace and joy and happiness,  
For us the battle's won,  
Rise up and shout the victory,  
Give glory to the Son.

Praise God, let us shout the victory in praise unto God even as the children of Israel did, and the walls came down.

#### **Triumph in Praise**

Psalms 106 says we triumph in praise. To triumph is to receive the victory, to be at liberty, and to overcome. There are many promises to the overcomers. We triumph and enter in as overcomers by praising and giving thanks to the Lord.

“Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto Thy holy name, and to triumph in Thy praise. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD” (Psalm 106:47-48).

#### **Praise Binds the Enemy**

“Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise His name in the dance: let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp. For the LORD taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD” (Psalm 149:1-9).

This Psalm says the song of praise is a two-edged sword in the hands of God's people. Praising God gives us the victory. It breaks the bonds that hold us, and it binds the enemy. We are told to sing a new song in the congregation and to sing aloud on our beds, with the praises of God in our mouths. This will be a spiritual weapon for God's people. It is a privilege and authority that we have by entering in with praise.

Glory to God for He gives us victory through Jesus Christ as we praise and thank Him.

In times of difficulty it may seem hard to start praising the Lord. The scripture says that we need to bring the sacrifice of praise. “The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 33:11). “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks

to his name” (Hebrews 13:15). If we enter in with the sacrifice of praise, and open our mouths with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, then the praises of God will flow out from deep within our hearts. We need to praise the Lord not only when things are going well, but in times of trouble. That is when we need even more the power we receive in praising the Lord. We have the example of Paul and Silas singing praises to God at midnight in the inner prison, and they were set free. Praise the Lord, and He will turn our darkness into light, and our bondage into liberty.

Let us praise Him for He is greatly to be praised. He has given us wonderful promises that we can enter into by praising Him. Praise the Lord.

# Child Dedication

## *Accompanied by Blessing of the Child and of the Parents*

Child dedication is a time of joy and celebration, but also a time of serious undertaking and commitment. To begin with, it is a time when the parents acknowledge that this child, which they are dedicating and in a sense giving back to God, is a truly precious and remarkable gift that God has allowed them to have, and has entrusted to them for a period of time that is critical in the life of the child.

Acknowledgement by the parents that the child is a gift from God sets the stage for the dedication of that child back to God, who established the conditions and created the capacities for the parents to produce that child in the first place. This is the nitty-gritty of what child dedication is all about: it is the time when the parents bring their child forward to the Lord, clearing the way for Him to influence and use the child in whatever ways He wills. It is the time when the parents publicly acknowledge and accept the roles and responsibilities that they have for the physical, mental and most importantly, for the spiritual development of the child. They (the parents) acknowledge and take up these responsibilities before God and in the presence of the congregation. It is of utmost importance to know and to recognize that the child-dedication process is not a simple hand-off exercise from the parents to God. It is, instead, the beginning and the formalization of a co-working relationship between the parents and God concerning the spiritual development and well-being of the child.

Although we speak of dedicating a child or children, this terminology covers a broad range of ages, and is generally considered to be from birth until puberty. Children in the church are ordinarily, but not always, dedicated at an early age, while they are yet babies

or infants. A child, at this stage of development, is not yet able to speak intelligibly. This should not be confused with an inability to make his or her needs and opinions known vocally, a capability to which both mother and father can usually attest. But if we accept the obvious reality that the child’s capabilities are as yet quite limited in comparison with those of a grown-up person, this does not mean that s/he is incapable of teaching us anything or of providing any kind of example. For enlightenment on this, we can turn to Scripture. The following materials are from the Living Bible Version. Children are:

**1. Gifts from God:** We have already acknowledged our understanding that children are granted to us by God to enrich the lives of parents. Psalms 127: 3-5: “Children are a gift from God; they are his reward. Children born to a young man are like sharp arrows to defend him. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.”

**2. Models of trusting:** In Luke 10: 21 we read: (Jesus said) “I praise you, O Father, for hiding these things from the intellectuals and worldly-wise and for revealing them to those who are as trusting as little children (literally ‘babies’).”

**3. Models of trusting equated to faith:** in Luke 18: 16-17 we read: (Jesus said) “Let the little children come to me! Never send them away! For the Kingdom of God belongs to men who have hearts as trusting as these little children’s. And anyone who doesn’t have their kind of faith will never get within the Kingdom’s gates.” The comparable admonition is found in Matthew 19: 14, and Mark 10: 14.

**4. Examples of selfishness in immaturity:** Children provide not only positive examples in Scripture, but

negative examples as well. 1 Corinthians 3: 3: “For you are still only baby Christians, controlled by your own desires, not God’s.”

At this point we might ask the question, whether and why parents should dedicate their child to God. Is this action prescribed in Scripture, and if so, where?

The Bible does not prescribe formal dedication of children as a general precept or requirement. It is implied by examples, but not put forward explicitly in the format of, say, the 10 Commandments. Thus it is written, for example, that Hannah dedicated her son Samuel to the Lord (1 Samuel 1: 27, 28). Considering how Samuel’s spiritual career later unfolded, we feel justified to interpret this case as being appropriate for us to emulate, although we would not ordinarily expect that the giving-over of the child to God would be as complete as was done by Hannah in the case of Samuel.

Undoubtedly the key example of child dedication that the Bible provides is that of Mary and Joseph taking baby Jesus to the temple in order “to present him to the Lord” (Luke 2: 22, KJV). Notice that it is the parents, not church officials, who do the presenting of the child. As followers of Christ and emulators of His example, it is reasonable that we also should dedicate our own children to God, and do so publicly in the presence of our family and our church. We can also see in Scripture that in these examples the parents were very precise in adhering to God’s wishes and plans for the children whom they dedicated to Him.

Further, in Mark 10: 13-16 (KJV) we read that people were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, “but his disciples rebuked those that brought them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come unto me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth; anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And He took the children in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.”

It is primarily on this passage of Scripture that we model our Service of Dedication of a child to the Lord, followed by the blessing of the child by the elders of the church. Parents will find it invaluable to be able to tell their children, as the children are growing up under their care, that they, as parents, have made sure that the children belong to Jesus and that they have asked God to use them as He would, and that they did this personally and publicly before God and the church.

This is probably a good time to point out that child dedication as it is practiced in our church does not involve baptism. We believe that baptism is meant to take place at a time when an individual makes a personal decision to follow Christ and when that person is old enough and mature enough to be able to repent and confess Jesus publicly and on his/her own

initiative. It is also pertinent to note in this context that Jesus himself was not baptized until he was an adult (Matthew 3: 13-17).

It is rather startling to realize that dedication of a child per se is not meant or designed to accomplish much (or anything) of immediate and direct impact for the child. Such benefits flow from the blessing, which is generally part of and follows the dedication process. Dedication of the child is actually a giving-over of the child by the parents whereby they dedicate themselves to bring up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

It is key for the parents to recognize that they need God’s wisdom and help in raising the child, and that with His help they have set out to do their best to train up and to set the example for this child to follow in the way of the Lord.

To summarize, child dedication is a family time when parents of the child publicly commit themselves to abide by biblical principles and to raise the child according to God’s standards. Not only are the parents dedicating their child to God, but perhaps even more to the point, they are also dedicating themselves to God and to the church to properly execute their role as parents in this regard.

As Christian parents, they are committing themselves to maintaining a Christian home in which Christ is honoured and where the Word of God is held in reverence.

As Christian parents, they are also committing themselves to do all that they can to “set apart” their child to and for God until the child can make his or her own choices regarding his or her relationship with Jesus Christ. This brings to mind phrases such as “living in the world, but not of the world,” and “boat in the water, but water not in the boat.” We are all familiar with sayings such as these, and they convey quite well the “setting-apart” principle that is so important.

The explicit responsibilities that God entrusts to Christian parents include:

- constantly praying for their children (Job 1: 5),
- instructing their children in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22: 6),

- setting a godly example for their children (Proverbs 20: 7), and

- disciplining their children as the Lord would discipline us (Proverbs 29: 15,17; 13: 24).

The subject of discipline is controversial, even within the Church. It is probably appropriate and worthwhile to examine the function of discipline at a time such as this. It is important, first of all, to recognize that the word has the same root and shares the core of its meaning with the word “disciple,” which carries the connotation of “follower,” with the relationship of “following” founded in instruction. In other words,

discipline, to be appropriate and effective, needs to have two aspects:

Correction with respect to wrongdoing, and

Instruction about recognizing and avoiding wrongdoing.

It will thus be seen and understood that “discipline” is as much (or more) about proactive and preventive teaching and instruction as it is about chastising and punishment. In fact, it is the teaching aspect rather than the chastising aspect that we want to emphasize when disciplining our children, and also the focus that we want and expect God to have when He disciplines us. A very practical consideration is that this is also the “face” of discipline that will not invite the wrath of friends and neighbours, and that will keep parents out of trouble with the secular authorities.

The responsibilities of parents set out herewith regarding the spiritual development of their children can only be fulfilled by drawing on the strength and wisdom which God makes available through Christ and the Holy Spirit (Philippians 4: 13).

Parents who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will not be able to submit their children to God’s will and His ways in a meaningful manner. This is because the parents themselves first need to demonstrate that they know the meaning of God’s will and His ways. As a parent, your devotion to God — or lack of it — will make a resounding impression on your child.

The parents, in bringing their child forward and dedicating him/her to God, will simultaneously be promising before God and the congregation that they will raise the child in the Christian faith, and that they will be a godly example for the child, and that they will train the child in Christian principles. These principles include commitments to prayer, Bible reading, family worship, church attendance, etc.

Dedication of a child to God cannot be complete unless accompanied by a commitment by the parents to cultivate a spiritual atmosphere in their home and to be godly role models for the child. One must never underestimate the incredible influence that parents have on the faith of their children. Infant dedication expresses the intention and faith of the parents to do everything they can to lead their child to salvation. It is a commitment to encircle the child with a positive environment that will nurture the child’s faith in God. Scripture tells us that we are to train a child in the way s/he should go (Proverbs 22:6). This includes meeting together regularly as Christians to spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:23-24). Dedication of children to God must include a promise by parents to model a Christian lifestyle for the children while worshipping regularly at home and with a church family.

The local elders in the Church at Saskatoon have developed a format for the child dedication service that has been used a number of times. It is presented at the end of this article as a possible format for other local elders who might like to use something like it in child dedication services in their own local assemblies. If such a format of parental vows were to be used, it would be advisable to make parents aware of that in the pre-dedication meeting with them.

A meeting such as this would provide opportunity for the elders to give instruction to parents regarding what the dedication of their child really means, what they are committing to, and what their responsibilities are. In addition, it will be a time when parents can ask for clarification of their role in the service of dedication to which they are agreeing to participate and also in the aftermath. This meeting should take place even if the child is from the same family as a child that was dedicated previously.

Contributory sources for this text include: Lighthouse Christian Fellowship.

**Dedication to the Lord of  
(Name of Child)  
( Name of Church), (Date)**

**Parental Vows**

We, (name of father and mother)

Being the parents of this child, (name of child)

Declare before God and as members of the company here assembled,

That we do dedicate this child to God,  
and further that, we also dedicate ourselves:

to raise this child in the Christian faith,  
to train this child in Christian principles,  
and to set a solid Christian example for this child in our home.

We make these commitments in faith, secure in the knowledge that

God Is eternally available and willing to assist us when we seek Him,

and to provide us with the wisdom and strength to fulfill what we have spoken.

These things we commit and acknowledge in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

The elder(s) will conclude the Service of Dedication by taking, holding, and blessing the child, and also blessing the parents in their crucial new roles.

# Raising Children Biblically

*By Dave Levson*

God has laid down wonderful principles in the Bible that are wise guidelines for raising children as opposed to what the world may tell you. My intention in writing this article is to present these principles that the Holy Spirit may reveal to your heart what will help you. “But the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (1 John 2:27). The following are some of the key biblical guidelines that if we let the Holy Spirit reveal the intent of God’s heart to us, we will be greatly blessed:

## • LOVE FOR GOD

Ephesians 6:4 **“...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”** It is of primary importance that we raise our children in all the ways of the Lord. We can learn about some aspects of human parenting from what God has instilled in His creation. Many examples in God’s creation show what nurture is. A mother deer will feed her fawn, care for it, watch over it, train it, and protect it (by hiding it where the deep forest floor, hit by speckled rays of sunshine, matches the spots God has put on the fawn). Blessed be to God for what he has instilled! Wisely, the brethren have encouraged us, wherever possible, to have one parent stay home and look after the children unless there are extenuating circumstances. I have witnessed the heartache of mothers who chose a career over their young children and, after deciding to reverse their decision, were so much happier. As a teacher, I have noticed that teachers have limited influence in a young person’s life. This is because most of the influence has been set in the first 5 to 6 years by the parents who have been with them day-in and day-out, and have devoted their time to them.

In the same manner, examples in God’s creation show admonition. For example, a mother grizzly bear will swat her curious young away from an approaching porcupine or skunk. Because young children imitate their parents, it is so important to be a good example in every way. The Lord, through the example and teaching of members of the body of Christ, grandparents, other family members, and friends also provide tremendous nurture, admonishments, corrections and guidance for our children. Also, have family devotions! Instill a love and reverence for God in your children!

## • LOVE YOUR CHILDREN

1 John 4:7 **“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.”** In Titus 2:4, the aged women

are taught **“...that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children.”** Each child is unique, and it is necessary to find out ways to love them individually. Encourage their strengths, and help them with their weaknesses. Refer to 1 Corinthians 13 on how to show love in all its forms. Ask God’s wisdom to find out what forms of love mean most to them. Dr. Gary Chapman in *The Five Love Languages* suggests 5 different ways and they are as follows: words of affirmation, gifts, acts of service, spending quality time, and physical touch. Words of affirmation include such things as acceptance, encouragement, positive statements, and compliments. Gifts are those things that are very meaningful to the child. Acts of service are things that are done for the child that are truly helpful. Spending quality time refers to doing things together such as one-on-one fun activity. I know some of the most rewarding time with my children has been when I would periodically set aside time to do something with them individually that was special to them and that they enjoyed. Physical touch is communicating love in a warm, appreciative, and physically appropriate way.

## • DISCIPLINE

The following scriptures, with the help of the Holy Spirit, will reveal to you what the truth is and that it will benefit your child:

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him” (Prov. 22:15).

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame” (Prov. 29:15).

“He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” (Prov 13:24).

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying” (Prov. 19:18).

“Open rebuke is better than secret love” (Prov. 27:5).

“Do not hold back discipline from the child. Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol” (Prov. 13-14 NASB).

## • DON’T OVER-CORRECT

Colossians 3:21 **“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”** Provoking usually results from over-correcting and the child or young person doesn’t know what you really want. He/She loses proper self esteem and appropriate assertiveness. They may become rebellious, and discouraged. Although it is right to correct children when they are wrong, it is even more important that

they tell the truth. If they are over-corrected, they may start lying so they don't get into trouble. Parents need to instill in their children to tell the truth and be honest, and accept the consequences rather than have more consequences because of lying. Encourage them to know we all make mistakes, but God wants us to admit them and to want to change our ways. May the Lord reveal this truth to your hearts.

Ephesians 6:4 **“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath...”** We must be very careful about any kind of provoking that brings very negative results.

• **TRAIN A CHILD**

Proverbs 22: 6 **“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”** It has been my experience that the things my mom and dad taught and trained me to do still stay with me today and have been a great blessing to me over the years. These include scripture verses, that have great meaning and are practically applicable. As well, many physical things of daily life, and Christian principles still stay with me. Deuteronomy 6: 7 **“And thou shalt teach diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”** This verse teaches us that we should constantly teach our children about the things of God such as in His creation, in our relationships, in the events that happen to us and others, in the scriptures, and in our love for Jesus.

• **KEEP A CHILD CONTROLLED**

1 Timothy 3: 4 and 12 **“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;”** **“...ruling their children and their own houses well.”** Titus 1: 6 **“...having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.”** The main point of this scripture is to not leave the child to himself to do whatever he wants. It also means teaching the child to be obedient rather than out of control.

• **PROVIDE FOR THE CHILDREN**

2 Corinthians 12: 5 **“...for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.”** It is the parents' duty to provide for all the needs of their children but not necessarily their wants. Where there is a lack in any area, ask God, because we all have weaknesses and blind sides. This is where the body of Christ can also play a part. The importance of the church in this area, as the Holy Spirit leads, is to minister to the needs spiritually, emotionally, and physically. If we are honest with ourselves, we realize that we all need one another.

• **LOVE YOUR SPOUSE**

Titus 2: 4 **“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,”** Ephesians 5: 25-33, especially verse 25, **“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”** This love for your spouse may be overlooked by parents, but it is critical.

If parents look at it from the child's point of view, they would realize that divorce and separation often lead to divided loyalty, and that puts the child in the position of having to choose which he/she does not want to. Often, proper self-esteem and confidence of the child can be decreased or lost when parents divorce. One must also consider that the following can have a negative effect on the child: lack of unity, lack of harmony, arguing, disrespect, lack of love, unforgiveness, and intolerance. This shows the importance of striving for parental unity and harmony and asking the Holy Spirit for His help where we lack. Now, if divorce has already occurred or if there is any other lack, one can always ask for God's grace. Philippians 3: 13, 14 **“...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”** Ask forgiveness for mistakes or sins; learn from the past. Look at the present and to the future, and walk closer with Jesus. One of our brothers in the Lord has ministered the following tremendous story of hope for children. A child, who was very poor, raised in the ghettos by a divorced mother, became a top surgeon who took the hardest cases of surgeries in all of the United States!

• **BE A GOOD EXAMPLE IN EVERYTHING**

2 Timothy 1: 5 **“...the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded in thee also.”** Examples can be passed from generation to generation, which emphasize the importance of being a good example. Often children will mimic their parents, grandparents, siblings, and significant others in everything they do. This will include the good and the bad habits, personalities, words, attitudes, etc. Incredibly, I have found how my grandchildren can mimic each other in a split second from laughing to crying to laughing again. Similarly, I have seen how children reflect the good and bad things of their parents and grandparents, and will also point out that their parents do things that the children have been told not to do. The best thing to do is to be honest with ourselves, admit mistakes, and ask God to help us make changes.

1 Kings 9: 4, 5 **“And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments; Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever...”** This verse talks about integrity of heart, which is honesty. If we are honest, we all must admit we have good and bad within us. The key is to examine our hearts, make changes, and keep growing and maturing in Christ.

1 Peter 2: 21, 22, and 23 **“...Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled**

not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; ...” Because children will watch us, we must be good examples; this includes how we should treat other people by following Jesus’ example: (no sin, no deceit, no paying back evil for evil). Consider this tremendous example: John 1: 47 “**Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!**” If we fail, we must ask forgiveness. Remember, every one of us is watched by many people, not just children.

1 Timothy 4: 12 “**Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**” Although this verse specifically talks to youth, in reality, we all need to be an example in each of the areas mentioned in this scripture. Let us pause now as we read this and examine our hearts in each of these areas and ask God’s help if we lack.

John 13:15 “**For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.**” Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, and He gave the example of serving one another. Parents must do many things to serve their children and thus meet their many needs. Of course, as they grow older, they will take more and more care for their own needs. God’s wisdom must be sought to know how and when this must be done, having the proper balance.

• **BE IMPARTIAL**

James 3: 17 “**But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.**” When parents have more than one child, it is important to treat them in an impartial way. Basically, that means not favouring one over another. Children must be taught to understand about being fair and being treated differently. A child will often say, “That is not fair!” Because each child is unique, he or she needs to be treated differently. However, they should also be treated fairly. For example, they should know that they are all very much loved by both words and deeds.

In conclusion, God is our Father and we are His children. There are many parallels between this and the way we should raise our children.

- God teaches us to love Him.
- He loves us.
- He disciplines us.
- He doesn’t over-correct us.
- He trains us.
- He tells us how to remain controlled.
- He provides for us.
- God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are one.
- He is a good example to us.
- He is impartial.

God wants us to grow and mature until we become fully grown and mature sons and daughters of God just like we want our children to be fully grown and mature!

## CALLED HOME

**Duane Olson, Elder - Minden, NE**

August 4, 2015

**Winston Abrams, Elder - Waramuri, GY**

August 8, 2015

**Muriel Russel - Rosetown, SK**

August 13, 2015



*For a listing of dates and contact information visit [www.globalmissionsinc.org](http://www.globalmissionsinc.org)*

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