

Encouragement for Mothers

by Annie Poonen

Maintaining unity in marriage is crucial for building a strong family and a strong church, and it's a birthright that the devil should not take.

Duration: 1:00:36

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6

Topics: "Family Unity", "Parental Guidance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of building a strong family foundation through unity, discipline, grace, and prayer. It highlights the need for parents to lead by example in oneness with each other, submission to God, and consistency in teaching and correcting children. The speaker shares practical tips on fostering obedience, truthfulness, tidiness, unselfishness, and contentment in children, while stressing the significance of correcting with love and without anger. The sermon underscores the power of prayer in maintaining harmony, seeking God's guidance, and instilling values in the next generation.

Transcript

So, let's begin with a word of prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you for this time that we can have together, and we come into your presence. We are thankful to you, Lord, for all that you've done for us, and putting us in families and taking care of all our needs.

You've been so good to us, Lord. We just want to think of all your goodness and be thankful to you, and not look at our problems, Lord, but we want to look to you, who you have done so much for us. Help us to always have a thankful spirit in our lives, Lord.

And we pray that you'll bless this time together, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. So, Our girls are there.

They can come here if you want. You come sit at the back. Come.

You can bring your kids along if you like. I mean, nursing babies. Tell Lily also, if she wants, she can sit at the back.

It's not formal. Yeah, yeah, let everybody come here. So, welcome.

Come, you can bring your babies here. And even if they cry, it's not going to disturb me, because I've had babies. I had to work with them.

So, I was just thinking of an illustration which I heard many years back, when my children were small, and I was struggling with them. And now it looks like it's been so many years that it's like a dream. But I heard somebody say that he was walking by a construction site, and he saw different people working at the construction.

And some people were digging, some people were carrying logs, some people were, you know, in India they have bricks, they build with bricks, so people are bringing bricks, and a lot of things are going on. So, curious, come, come join us. Curious passerby asked, what are you doing? Like, wanted to find out what type of building, because it looked like a big structure was coming up.

Are you building a high-rise building or a house? What are you doing? So, the first person said, I'm just carrying some bricks. Then another person said, oh, I'm the carpenter here. And another person said, like different people give different answers, and that's not what the man wanted to hear.

So, finally he asked somebody, and he said, you know, we are building a cathedral. And that was his answer. And I thought many times, when we look at our lives, we think, oh, I'm just changing the diapers here.

Oh, I'm just cleaning the house. I'm just washing the dishes. I've been up all night, and like different answers we give.

And then when God looks at what we are doing, it's not that answer. Like that person said, we are building a cathedral. And I thought, Lord, that's a wonderful thing you're giving me to do.

So, not only am I bringing up my children for you, which I'm trying to do with your help, but you're building a cathedral in my life. You're building a temple in my life. I'm going to be like your son, Jesus Christ, one day.

And that's the work which you're doing. Let me not be taken up with these small things of carrying bricks, and I'm working all night, or I haven't had enough sleep. Help me not to be focused on that, but let me think of how you look at my life.

You're building a cathedral in my life, and one day it will be finished. And now when you do embroidery, you look at the other side, and you see all the knots and the bad stitches and all. But one day God is going to reverse it, and then He's going to show us and show the whole world this beautiful embroidery which He's done, and it's going to be beautiful, and there's something good which is going to come out.

Even though we're struggling with our kids, they'll turn out okay. God's not looking at the small little disobedience they did here or the little lie they said there. I mean, definitely none of our kids is perfect.

God's not going to show all those little things, but one day when they turn out okay, and it's going to be for His glory, not for, oh, you've been a wonderful mom, or you've been a wonderful parent, you've done it perfectly, or you can write a book about how you trained your children. It's not for that, but for the glory of God. He's going to, through all ages, He's going to reveal His mighty power that in spite of our weaknesses, shortcomings, and failures we had and complaints we had, in spite of all that, it's going to be a beautiful work He's going to display.

So always that thought comes to my mind. I mean, many times it used to come when I was struggling with my kids. Sister, please, Jessie, sit here.

You can sit there. Don't go away. No disturbance for us.

No, if it's too loud, we'll tell you. So that's the thing which used to come to my mind often. Lord, help me not to lose sight of this cathedral which you're building in my life, which you're going to display.

Help me not to be taken up with these small, small things. Another illustration which often comes to my mind is one of our Tamil brothers in India was speaking at one time. He said, if you take a coin, like we have rupees, you take a coin, like a quarter or something, and you put it so close to your eye, and you shut one eye, and you feel close.

You can even shut out the sun. You won't even see the sun. So some of the problems that we face on earth, or even material things, like earning more money, or how to save money.

For us, maybe we don't have a job, but we may think, oh, I must save money. These material things, we get it so close to our eye that we can shut out the sun, and we get blinded. So those two things often used to come to my mind.

Lord, let me not be focused on these small things, ups and downs, and the losses that I faced when I was trying to be so careful. You know, in India, we have to be so careful about small, small things. We have to save, even water we have to save, because water, you don't have enough water for your needs.

And so if you're focused on that, then you lose the sight of the big things. So I want to always be reminded of these two things, that we are building a cathedral, a temple of the Lord, and Christ-likeness is going to come in our lives, not just, oh, what a change has taken place in this sister, or she was so angry before, now she's not so angry. Not those small things, but one day Christ is going to be revealed in us, and that will be to His glory.

So I thought of two, if someone were to ask me, what were the two most important things, or like the uppermost, which come to your mind when you think of a family? Some truth. You know, when we have needs, or we're trying to bring up children, we look at some, we try to look at some book, find some book which will help us, like how so-and-so brought up her children, or how some missionary brought up his children in that remote place, and how it succeeded for him. Or, you know, different things, and we look at the internet, and we think, okay, this book might be the thing.

But we should always remember, however much a person has written about philosophies or psychology of bringing up children, or even done a doctorate about bringing up children, that's not going to be the thing which is going to help me. Somebody else may have brought up her child, like I brought up my children in India. If I think, like, this is how I did it, and you try to copy it, that was India, and that was my generation.

Here you have to bring up your children in this generation, in this country, and you cannot, like we Indians who grew up here, we cannot pattern our bringing up children according to some other, like some Norwegian did it, or some Caucasian, or some other race. We cannot, because our children are different. The way we speak to them is different from the way somebody else would speak to them.

The way we come across to them is not how some other person. So we should always look at the Lord's pattern as the ultimate pattern, not like some psychology book, or some Amish lady, or some Mennonite lady did like this, and that's how she worked, or this is how she spanked her children with three, four little sticks. And we think, like, oh, this is the way we should do, or a wooden spoon.

Like, we should not look at and imitate anybody's pattern, but we should say, Lord, for my culture, and the way I am, and the way my children are, like one child may be very quiet, one child may be very hyperactive, and you can't use the same yardstick for all. The one quiet person, you just have to speak quietly to that person, and he or she will respond. But if a person is very hyperactive and not listening, you have to speak in a different tone, or you have to maybe repeat the same thing.

You may think, oh, for my daughter, I didn't have to repeat. I said it once, and she obeyed. But for my son, I have to keep on repeating.

Yeah, that's true. God made all our children different, so we cannot use the same pattern for all. That's one thing.

There's no rule, like no rule book. This is how you should do. No rule book even for different situations, like in the morning.

Like some parents may think, oh, my child can get up in the morning and have a systematic way of doing things, and then nap in the afternoon and go to bed at night. Bringing up my children, I just could not follow those rules for practical reasons, because the church was meeting in our home, and people would come for consultations. Like even if it was a free consultation, they'd turn up without even fixing an appointment.

Like I couldn't plan, but I tried my best to plan so that my children would have wholesome food, and they would eat in time. Because if they are not fed, they can be, because they are hungry, they can be naughty. So I wanted to fit in everything, but I needed the Lord's wisdom.

I could not pattern the structure of my home according to any pattern. And another thing, my husband was traveling a lot, so I could not expect him to come and help me in things. And I would sometimes think like how nice it was for some sister in our church, because her husband was always at home, and he would pitch in to like even make a bed for her after they got up, and help to dress the children, get the children ready, or help in the cooking.

And I thought, oh, good for her. But I didn't want my husband to be tied down helping me doing all these practical things. For one thing, he'd have to stop his ministry, he'd have to stop traveling.

And our life and our family structure was totally different. So God helped me to just accept my situation as it was. I should not think, oh, my husband is not here to help me.

Even when my children were sick, I thought, I wish my husband was here, so at least I could have a few hours sleep in the daytime. And then I said, Lord, you gave me a good education about medical things, so I don't have to worry, and this is a serious thing, I can handle it. And when the child sleeps, I can just have a few, a short nap, and then I'll get up and pick up.

So the Lord sort of came along with me and helped me. So coming back to my point, excuse me, because of the, I take BP medicine for me, I'll try something. So if you were to ask me, what are the two uppermost things which helps you, as a wife and as a mother, I can think of two principles in the Bible.

And those are, after I came to know about the New Covenant, I thank God for opening my eyes to the New Covenant, because before that, I was just born again, and I just thought, like, you ask forgiveness for your daily sins, you're born again, and everything's okay. But two things which came to my mind was after I saw the life of Jesus when he was living on earth. One was how he was one with the Father, oneness with the

Father, and the other was submission to the Father.

Both those things, I came to grasp it, and appreciate it, and be so gripped by that, that that has helped me in my, those two things have helped me in my daily life, in my family life, in bringing up my children, in my relationship with my husband. I'll go on to tell you what those are. You know, if you, there are scriptures for that, and I'll just tell you some.

Oneness with the Father, if you turn to Luke, I mean John chapter 17, there are many verses, but one of the verses which I can quote, which Jesus himself said, was in John 17, verse 21. Jesus said, that's the high priestly prayer of Jesus, he said, Lord, speaking to the Father, Father, that they all may be one, that means we all, and we can say our husband and wife, we can be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that thou didst send me. I mean, there's so many things in that one verse, but that they may be one, as you, Father, and I are one, Jesus said, it's implied there.

And if you read in John chapter 1, about the first few verses, he says about Jesus, John chapter 1, verse 2, he, that is Jesus, was in the beginning with God. Verse 1, the word was God, that is Jesus was God, is God. All things came into the being by him, and apart from him, nothing came into being that has come into being.

So, I cannot understand it with my human mind, but there's some kind of unity, which we will understand more when we meet the Lord, and we are with him. But there's a unity with the Father and the Son, which is so deep, and so precious. And Jesus, in a few words, he says, Father, just show them that little bit of that unity, which you and I have, that unity which I have, and they will have that unity.

And it was so deep for me, and I think it's so, our human mind cannot grasp God and his nature, but he wants us to understand that there's something about that unity which the Father and Jesus had. Otherwise, he wouldn't have written it. If it is so difficult, impossible, he wouldn't have written even those few verses.

Even Genesis 1, the world was created by God, and before the foundation of the world, Jesus was there, and he created the world. So, there's something about the unity of the Father and the Son, which is so precious and so deep for us to understand, but God wants us to have a revelation of a teaspoon of it, and that he wants us, as husband and wife, to have that unity. I brought it down to our level.

God, my husband and I, we can have that unity which you and the Father had. It's so, my mind cannot understand it, but it is there, and it's real. And then we think of all the disunity that there is in families.

You know, small, small things we differ about. We see it like this. My background, I see it like in this way.

And my husband's background, he sees it in a different way. Of course we are different. He sees it in a different way.

He was brought up in a different way, and especially those who are married from other cultures, there's more. You see it in an Eastern culture, and your wife sees it in a Western culture, and then you think, God wants us to be one. How deep that is.

And so I said, Lord, make that true in my life. Help me be so united with my husband that I don't see the differences anymore, that he's different from me. He's a very, maybe, outgoing or introvert person, and I'm

the opposite.

Help me not to see those differences, but help me to see the possibility of making us one. And that was a need in my life. I said, Lord, it's your will that my husband and I should be one.

And every day, and all the circumstances, all the things which come up in my daily life, I want to make that happen. I want to do my part to make that oneness happen in my life. And that was like a goal in my life.

When the children were small, it was difficult because we were distracted with the children. And one needed help, and I needed my husband's help in correcting. But deep down, the underlying thing was, Lord, help us to be one.

That helped us, because I saw many times things come up where you are tempted to quarrel or disagree with your husband and say, Lord, you didn't do this, and you did this, and because of you this is done. The tendency to blame and everything can come up, but deep down we think, Lord, it's your will that we should be one. And nothing is going to... You know the marriage vow? God has united these two husband and wife together, and if anybody separates them, God will even destroy.

Let nobody separate this united couple. So it's God's will that we should be united, and we should do all that is in our part to keep that unity. And don't look for... If you are not aware of that, and guard that unity, so precious, then easily things can come up, or people can come up.

I used to think, like many times in our ministry, girls wanted to come and share with my husband, you know, marital problems or young girls, and you know, sometimes I would in the early years especially, I used to think, why are they coming and talking to my husband? I should also be there. Then I thought, I know my husband, his heart is for me. Nothing is going to separate us, and we are always together.

Let any number of girls come, any number of people come and share, even if we don't have time together to talk as much as he spends with others, still I know that unity is mine. That's like the birthright which God has given me, and nothing, I'm not going to lose it. And God preserved us, even sometimes we hardly had time to talk together, but I knew we were united.

I knew, because I didn't allow, I didn't want to allow those distracting thoughts, those suspicious thoughts, or you didn't do this, or you didn't care, or I'm doing this alone, can't you see I'm doing it alone? I didn't want those distracting thoughts, and I didn't want help from anybody, but I said, Lord, you're enough for me, and you'll take care that we are united. And that unity with our husband is the thing we should guard. Don't let any amount of relatives, especially people who are living here, you don't realize how fortunate you are, that you're away from relatives.

But in India, our relatives, you know, they physically come, or they write to us, and we are so much involved with our relatives that that can tend to break up our marriage relationship. Even if your relatives are far away or nearby, it's up to you to keep that unity. Don't let that unity get fragmented at all.

And so, it's a very high goal, but it's possible. It's possible because every time a little thing comes up, it's like a little gap that is coming there, or a little thorn that has got in there. You have to take it off.

I said, Lord, I'm sorry I was not focused on this, keeping that unity of this between my husband. I'm sorry I got distracted. I'm sorry I started blaming.

That's the meaning of judging ourselves. Immediately, sometimes we let it go. We think, like we harbour on it, harbour on this bad attitude, and that like an abscess growing there.

The sooner we get rid of it and treat it, so that's what I want to urge you, as younger sisters and me, which I worked on, to keep, preserve that unity. And the world is so changing so fast that many things are happening to break up that unity. And we have to preserve, because when a good family and a united family is there, that's good for the church.

You have five or ten united strong families in the church. That church is a strong church. The gates of hell will not prevail against that church, because it's united.

The families are united. The husband and wife are united. And that we have to do our best to preserve that unity.

So, I can say a lot about that unity, and it takes years. It's not like, oh, today I'm going to do, keep united, and tomorrow something may happen, or you lose your focus, and you're taken up with some, maybe movie you've decided to watch, and then you find that all your energy has all leaked out. So we have to guard that unity.

Do our best to keep that unity, because it's our birthright and the devil should not take. That's one thing which I want to emphasize, which I kept and, you know, it's many years we've been married, my husband and I, 46 years. He's a very quiet person.

I'm an outgoing type of person. And we've had relatives, we've had problems from churches, other churches. We've had problems from people taking us to court.

My own family giving us so much trouble, but I said, Lord, whatever happens that unity should not be. God has helped us and helped me to deal with these small things. No.

This is the devil coming in, like a wedge. He'll come in with a small point, but it's a wedge. It's going to get wider and wider, and it'll open, and something will happen to my family.

And, you know, you keep that relationship, you'll find that the children sense that Dad and Mom are united, so united that we can't separate them. You know, in some cases, the children come and know that they can get something done if they ask Mommy first or if they ask Daddy first. And then, if they understand that Dad and Mom are united, sometimes we may slip up and think, okay, Daddy has given permission, it's okay.

But if that has happened, we should never disagree in front of our children. Say, why did you say this, and why did you do this? Because then they see, oh, Dad and Mom got a disagreement, and the devil has come in, and the children start misbehaving. So, even if we disagree, that's the rule which we follow.

We don't, my husband and I don't agree 100% on everything. I disagree with him, but I never disagree with him publicly in front of my children. I never tell him, even if it concerns, I mean, I have nothing to do with church matters.

That's completely he and the brothers, elders in the church. But family matters, we disagree. So, I never tell him that I didn't want you to take this decision, and I want to do this.

So, I wait for a chance when we are by ourselves. And I, or when the children are asleep or something, and then, by then I would have sort of settled down. We should never bring up a conversation, a disagreement, especially when we are all heated up.

Because then, there's more, you know, a lot of dust has been stirred, and you cannot do much work. So, wait till we are settled down, everything is calm, and in a mature way, not in a childish way, in a mature way, you bring up the topic, and you say like, you know, what happened in the morning about this thing? I really felt a little bad that you decided to do, but I felt we should have done like this. And this is so and so and so and so, and the reasons why I felt it shouldn't be.

And then he said, no, no, I felt that this is the way we are going to do. So, we leave it at that. But sometimes he'll say, yeah, that's true.

Maybe we could do it a little differently. And you won your point. But if you were to argue, why did you do, why did you, I did this, you did that, nothing happens.

But you say it in a mature way, and you, and both of you sit down, have time to think about it. You may, you may change, the wife may change, the husband may change, or you may come to a different way of doing things. A third alternative, which is maybe the best.

So, keeping, that's all connected with keeping the unity in the home. And you can think of a thousand and one things which come up in the home where you tend to be disunited, but deep down you should think, Lord, help me to keep the unity, help me. Then when the children grow up in that home, you find that it's easier to bring up the children.

You don't have to handle their disobedience, because it's easier for them to obey, when they see everything is harmonious in this home. So I'll better settle down and I do what I should be doing. I found that many times, but when there was unrest, the children can sense, mommy's little disturbed, and then they want attention and they play up and they make it more difficult for us.

So that's one big, big thing which I wanted to remind you and remind myself. Keep the unity of the spirit. And in every level, newly married, you're beginning to know each other, you have to keep the unity, start with the unity.

When you have children, at my stage, I find my children are grown up, my children are married. When I go to visit their home, I should not go there to disrupt the unity of their family, like, oh, they're not, I'm here to see that this is done, this is done. I don't even need to correct their children, because they are the parents.

If I see something wrong and if they give me the liberty, I say no, no, don't do that. Or I check with my children and their wives, is it okay if I do this? If they're not happy with it and they don't want me to correct, then I should not correct, I refer it to them. They are the parents of those children are the final authority, I'm not.

So even at my level, I have to work hard to keep that unity, unity in my children's lives, in my church family life, so that's a big thing. I don't want to go on and on because time is up. Second principle which I felt is very, very important and which will guide us in all the little, little things is submission.

Now, people don't like to hear the word submission because you think submission means I should just give in and I should give up my own will and just do what somebody else wants. It's not like that. I look at

submission as what Jesus did.

And if Jesus could do that and he asks us to do, then he'll give us the grace to do it. And he loved the father so much, so he did it out of love for the father. And there are a few verses in that, many, many verses, but we won't have time to read all.

But if we just, sometime when we have time, we read Philippians, no? So look at Philippians chapter 2. The first few verses it says about Jesus how he existed, was God, is God and existed in the form of God. He did not regard in verse 6, he did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped. Like he didn't hold on to that, oh I'm equal with God.

Here I was telling about oneness with the husband. I'm equal with my husband. I'm one with my husband.

But Jesus did not hold on to that equality with God as a thing that he's going to keep it. He said I'm willing to give up that and I'm going to go down and not just come one level below God and like, or even become an angel. Okay, I'll be like head of the angels.

No. He came down as a man and not only as a man, he came as a bond servant. That means the lowest of mankind.

If you think, in India we have people who, oh you think of some slave who doesn't have, in those days where they had slaves, who don't have any rights and they cannot question if they are starved, they cannot say oh I'm hungry or they have no rights, no laws, nothing. And Jesus he was not that the father made him like that. He chose to become like that.

He chose to become the lowest and lower than all of us. So I think Lord, if you chose to become like that for my sake, so that I could be saved from my sin, I want to choose to come down from my high level. I'm not going to say oh, I'm not going to be a 16th century Indian wife who always listens to her husband and no question about it.

I want to choose to come down, for you to come down from God and below me such a big drop and for me it's just a little few inches I come down and submit to my husband. Not that our husbands are tyrants God has given us good husbands who care for us and understand us and we can talk with them. If it was a husband who's drinking and abusing us and doing all the wrong things, then even then God says by your humble and your quiet behaviour you can win your husband.

We can trust God to do that but for us who God has given us good husbands, to submit is should be the happiest and easiest thing. So I look at it like that. Lord, you did it.

You're my example Lord Jesus and the new covenant, Jesus came as a man and lived as a man and he's our example. He's our example, he's our example in submission. And I'm going to submit, not like, oh I have to submit.

It's a hard thing for me to submit. Why do I have to? Why can't I, somebody, why can't he do something? Why can't he give up? No. God's word says we have to submit and because God's word says that and because Jesus did that I'm not going to question, I'm going to do that.

Then submission, it doesn't become like a painful or a hard thing. The only wives may think, oh you poor Christians, you have to submit your husbands. How can you do that? Why should you do that? Can't you

speak up? No, it's not at all like that.

It's the happiest thing we can do. And the most there's no other thing that can give us greater joy than living the life which Jesus wants us to live. And look at submission like that.

Then people come and argue. I say you, I cannot argue or convince you by my words. You live it and you will see the joy that there is in living such a life.

And so that came more and more. I said Lord if you want me to submit and you want me to submit don't let it be like a painful as if I'm dying on the cross. Make it like how you felt.

It was a joy for you too. And Jesus said, my father and I are one, and he said I always do the things the father wants me to do. I do nothing of my own.

John chapter 6 7 and all, you read those verses you think how Jesus loved his father so much that he delighted to do the father's will. And Lord let it be like that. If your will is that I should submit, give me the joy.

I don't want to put on a long face and miserable way of submitting. You are going to give me joy? That's my birthright. Give me the joy of submission.

And it became true in my life. I can tell you more and more true. The only sorrow I have miserable times I had was when I did not submit.

When I refused to obey God and go against him and do my own will. Then I used to feel like guilty and I used to feel like why did I do that? It was not worth it going against God and that you know the guilt of sin and having to come back to the Lord. Otherwise if every single time I chose to, you know sometimes you may think my husband doesn't understand me why should I submit? See we are not to, God has given us a mouth and God has given us freedom to speak.

We can speak in a loving way to our husband and say look I don't feel like doing this thing which I should do. And maybe he can help us or maybe we may not be needed to, required to do that whatever that small thing which he wants us to do. Say okay, it's not important.

So everything I we keep those two principles. Oneness with our husband and submission. Submission not like in the bad way how the world looks at it but submission how the Lord wants us to submit how Jesus submitted and make that our pattern then our it's like the summary of our whole how a wife should be.

There are no rules that you should do this, you should do this, you should dress like that. You know, I had an experience when I was 14 years old and I almost died of food poisoning and that's when I gave my life to the Lord and I decided to follow the Lord. After that anything any temptation comes the Lord, I said Lord bring that incident back to my life.

How I would have died if I'm tempted to be a little you know worldly or want some worldly thing or you know all the vanities which girls can have when I was a student and all that. I said Lord bring back those days if I had died I almost died, I was in coma if I had died and I would have been in a grave and I've been in the grave then what's the use of dressing up that skeleton with all these grand clothes or with this thing or with that thing or this particular that will mean nothing to that skeleton but because of your grace I'm not a skeleton I'm still alive, I'm going to live only for you.

So ask the Lord to bring something to your mind some thing would have been impossible, maybe you may not have got a visa to come here and your husband would have been here and you would have been in India or anything, ask the Lord bring something to my mind, I could have died and my children wouldn't have had a mother or anything like that so Lord bring that to my mind often so that I'll be thankful to you, I won't have any complaint Lord this is not right, that's not right Lord this impossible situation you did for me, I'm going to ever more be thankful to you I'm going to look at the rest of my life, I'm going to live for you because you did that and the Lord will bring for me it was that incident where I almost died, for you it may be something else but God so good he'll bring that to

my mind, to your mind so those are the two things which I want to spend so much time on, then lot of you have questions about bringing up children, see there's no rule about bringing up I used to ask different people how you did it, how you did it but then I thought I could never pattern my bringing up my children the way somebody else did but I got some help I must say, I didn't reject everything, I got help but I adapted some things to I got some benefit from them and I adapted them into my situation, like the way you bring up girls is different from the way you bring up boys and as I said earlier some boys and some children respond to one way another but one thing I found if you try to be harsh with your children and speak harshly before that, if you have the habit of speaking in a

rough way with your husband, that will be your tone of voice if you always say, why did you do that? why are you late? look at the time, you're late now then that will be your way of talking and you'll talk like that to the children and the children will learn that way of talking but if you cultivate the way of ask the lord, lord teach me you said your word is refined seven times, let me refine my word seven times or any number of times speak in a better way each time in a better way, better way then the children learn that so that's something, it'll take years but we have to work on it begin with working with our husband talking with our husband in a nice way and when we're tempted, and if we have slipped up and said something in a harsh way, all of us are human, we make mistakes, if you

have slipped up sometime best is immediately say I'm sorry, but sometimes it's not so easy to say sorry, but sometimes say you know how my tongue is like that so rough, I'm sorry that I spoke like that even if we apologize sometime then the next time it'll be easier we won't speak so easily, but if we don't apologize, we continue speaking like that, because the last time we didn't apologize, the next time it'll be worse then worse, and then it'll be a big fight so my suggestion is if you slip up and sometime during the day, come down from your pride a little bit and say I'm sorry I spoke like that, and sometimes make it like a joke, you know my tongue is a little rough but I need to work and I'm sorry I spoke like that, then it's like, and the husband will say ok, you have to kneel down

and say, or never, they won't say like that, they say it's ok, it's not a big thing, they'll always say like that, they'll never make us feel bad, I didn't even think that you spoke like that, they say like that, so if we work on the way we speak with our husbands, then we speak kindly with our children, but if we always have the habit of speaking with our children in a scolding way, then that'll be abnormal, and our children will leave home thinking, oh mummy is a cranky person, she always used to speak in this way, she always threatened us, she do this, do that, ok, it doesn't matter up till now we may have done like that but we can make a beginning and say, lord, so many years I've spoken that way, but at least now let me change and speak, and god will help us to change little by

little one time we may speak, or ten times we may speak in a harsh way, but one time he'll help us to speak, but another thing about bringing up children, we should be consistent now suppose we say that,

ok, we don't want the child to play with those blinds and then none of us want our children to play with that, but then they play a little bit and they are watching and they see that you've not done anything about it, the next time they do it little harder, and a little more rough, and best time to handle that is when they do it the first time, I found when they do it the first time, I tell them look, don't do it, don't play with the blinds, because it'll break and it's not our property and another thing, if you say don't I found that you must give something which they can do at the time

don't do that, but you can do this instead, if you give some other alternative, then their mind is focused on that and they forget about this, but I find that lot of times we let them play and then become worse, and two, three children join and they play, and then it goes, and then we shout, hey, don't do that, that was, if we have done like that, my advice is change that method when you see them beginning to do something and you know, ok, this is just the beginning, right now it's not too bad but if I continue, it's going to be it's going to fall down or something, if you see in the beginning itself, you take them out of that situation and give some other alternative that's a tip which I want to give otherwise we are always saying, don't don't, don't, don't, and they don't hear

anything which you can do you do this, you do this I'm sure all of you are doing that, but just a reminder, I found that I used to add to then in teaching our children, one of the most important things we have to teach them to do is to obey, because God's word says, children obey your parents, we teach the children recite that verse, children obey your parents, but we don't teach them obedience, and the one way we can teach them is by our life if we are obeying, now suppose we tell the children don't watch TV, I don't want you to watch TV, and then they see in the nap time they come up and they see that we are watching, then they think oh mummy is telling us not to watch but she is watching then they think obedience is not important, so by our life we must say, if it means if it's that

important for me, then it's important for mummy also, then I find that, then they take that seriously if we that's just one example, you can put it in your life, anything which you want to, first of all teach them God's word, and teach them obedience by our own life, we obey, if we think like, they say okay mummy does so many things when daddy is awake, and then I can also do then by our life itself, we are destroying our children those are some examples another thing we have to teach our children is truthfulness, in like lot of Indian mums they tell lies, then the children know, mummy is not telling the truth if they speak to somebody, they tell a lie and they know, yeah it's not the truth but mummy has said that, if mummy can tell a lie then it's okay for me to tell a lie so we should

teach the children by our life, the importance of truthfulness yes is yes, and no is no if we have it, then we find the children respond, have you done that, immediately they say, yeah I did that, it's okay, if you do that this time I let you go, but next time if you do that, you have to have a time out depending on the seriousness of the thing, so give them one chance especially if you are if they have happened to disobey, say okay next time, I'll have to punish you, then another thing we have to teach them which I'm sure all are doing is tidiness, so if we are tidy and we keep our homes tidy, only then the children will learn tidiness, so they have played with their toys and make a habit of putting away their toys and you say that, yeah, after you're done with your toys, you put it

away, then the children learn the value, but if we, and the habit of keeping our kitchen all untidy dishes not washed, and it piled up piled up, they think okay, and they grew up in such a home and they learn that untidiness from us that's something which I have to always work on, because in India it's not so easy, small small things and are important so I tend to like put away these things, but I try my best like at night

before I go to bed, keep everything tidy, wash up, clean up and all that, so tidiness is important, and not to be wasteful, if our children grow up like they can waste things and oh, it doesn't matter if this is lost or broken, we'll get another one, then they grow up wasteful but we teach them, no, no, you should not waste it, if you're not going to eat all this food,

just eat just this much and if you finish that, I'll give you some more sometimes before we used to think we pile the children's plate with a lot of food and they have to eat it, they can't, they're not going to eat it, and then we waste it and the children see, oh, it doesn't matter if it's wasted mummy thinks it's okay but I found that for my children, I just put small helpings, and they finish it good, okay, you want some more?

I'll give some more, so that they try as far as possible, teach them not to be wasteful, those are just some tips which I thought of, and discipline in our life, if we are disciplined, then our children learn to be disciplined, like if we think like, I'm just going to sit around and waste a lot of time and then the last minute I'm going to be frantic, like even getting ready for church I found that I had to prepare the previous night, their clothes and the food for the next day, and I'm sure all of you are doing that, I know Laura is doing that keeping all that ready then it's easier for the next day, sometimes we forget that these things have to be taken care of and we keep everything for the last minute oh, this one, oh, this one, the button doesn't work, and this one, the plant is not

correct then we keep searching so if we are disciplined and orderly it makes it easier for, I mean, those are some practical things, then another thing we have to teach our children is to be unselfish, a lot of times we think our children this is mine, this is mine and all children have the mind, that is like their thing but we can teach them to share their things with others, if they're eating some snack, ok, offer it to the person, little child sitting would you like to have one, I mean, make sure the mom is ok, because sometimes children may be allergic to something so make sure if that's ok, then you teach the children to be and teach the children to be content with what they have, say oh so and so has this type of clothes, I want that especially girls, as they're growing up they can,

I want this, I want that say no, for us this is, they can have it, but for us this is, we've got so many dresses, when that's over, when that's small for you then we get another one things like that, then correcting children, our time is running out, but we think, when you bring up when we talk about bringing up children, the first thing that comes to our mind is correcting say, how do we correct our children, as I said earlier, if we do the positive thing, like building them up spending time with them, talking with them and telling them stories from the story books, and helping, teaching them to put the things away or helping in the home and constructing then we don't have to do so much of correction, but if we leave them alone, then we find they're always getting into trouble and

they're doing wrong things, so we're spending time building them up and I'm sure all of you are doing that because there are so many, so many helps which you have nowadays in the web and so many things which children can do, you get things for them but I found that I couldn't afford even my children, very small I couldn't afford so many toys I have some of the toys which my children played with when they were small which I'm keeping for my grandchildren, but in the early years, I used to make up my own, like, you know, a container you put something in it and that rattles, and the child can play with that for a long time, and when you're done with that you just throw it off, and sometimes they find that and they want that more than the more important, expensive toys, so don't think of

correcting the children as much as building them up, when you build them up, then the correction is less, but if you just sort of ignore whatever they're doing, then you have to keep on correcting, oh, what's he doing, is he in this thing, or is he in that thing, is he doing that or is she doing that, then the correction gets less and less if we are building them up then another golden rule about correcting, which we all have heard in the churches, we should never correct our children in anger, when we are angry and we spank them, then we may be spanking them ten times harder than we should be, so we say, Lord I know what my child did was wrong, and she needed to be disciplined, but let me never do in anger, I've been guilty of that but mine was like you know, I just had a small twig and

it was not so bad, but even then I saw that there was anger in them, I used to think like, if there's a mark on your child's body then it's like it was too hard, whatever the spanking or what so I used to keep that as a rule, if afterwards if I saw there was a red line, I think maybe the spanking was too hard, but now you all know, there are other methods like time out, you sit on that step for ten minutes and you come back when you're happy for small things, that's enough only for big things, you need to use the wooden spoon, if they're deliberately rebellious or you say two or three times, don't do that and they've gone ahead and they do that if you have told them not to do that and it was like some days back, they may have forgotten it, so you call them and then you say, didn't mummy

tell you last week that you shouldn't be doing that, and maybe they did it because some other child was with them, so you say I want to remind you not to do that and give them a chance and then if they still do that, then only you I used to give them the and for my children, the biggest punishment was that they're not allowed to play cricket outside, they said give us any number of spanking, but just let us play, so then I found that okay, I could work on that and as the children were growing older, for me the punishments, I don't know if you would do that, but my method of punishment as the children were growing and were able to write I would give them like hundred times I will not scream or ten times and the handwriting would improve I will not scream, I will not scream and that's like

the punishment and then you know what you've written so those were some of the things which I used to give, now of course your children may question you, mum, why are you making us write it again, it makes no sense children are smart these days, but in my days I could get away with that and then and also be consistent like if you say you are not to do that, and then next time when they do that and you sort of ignore it, then you are not being consistent, then they may keep on doing it and then you find that it becomes too late so be consistent, if you think that they should not do some particular thing and they are doing it, you call them and you say, I don't want you to do that but sometimes you know we tend to go by a rule book and sometimes we have to sort of let go and make some

compromise and say it's ok, this time I'll let you go like when my husband was away I think this will be the last illustration because time is up, when my husband was away I'd find like he'd be away maybe 3 weeks or 5 weeks and all of them I'd have different things which I had to deal with and I didn't want to be like sorting them for every little thing so I had a little book I had a book with and I would write down so and so did this, and I put the date he did this, and so and so did that, so and so did that and then ok daddy will have to do it, I didn't want my husband to come back after 5 weeks like a policeman and deal with why did he do, I thought, I don't want them to think with dread about their dad's return, I wanted them to look forward, daddy's coming back with chocolates and

with gifts so I'd take out the list and say ok you come, let's see this thing on such and such a date you did this, and I explained to them you did this and that was because of this, this happened I'm sorry mommy,

ok I cut it out, next one you did this, most of the things I cut it out but I make sure before he came home, 2 or 3 days before he came home and say ok, I'll cut out all this and then the next child I cut off, everything would be cut off because they were not such big rebellious things, like they were not doing big things, but I went through that again, so that it'd be in their mind, that that was serious enough, but if it was something that I wanted my husband to know like when we were all sitting at mealtime I'll tell, I'll bring the topic and say somebody did like, I wouldn't

say who did it, but somebody did like this or said like that somebody did that, and daddy would know immediately that something has happened, ok we should not, and he'd give some and he would enforce it and that helped me a lot, because they didn't, I mean I wanted to maintain discipline but I didn't want to be like a school teacher or like a judge 10 years in prison, or 5000 dollars, I wanted them to think forgiveness is free, because God has forgiven us, at the same time it's a serious thing, what you have done, and has to be dealt with and sometimes there was some consequence, ok daddy would say, so whoever did that, I want that person to come and see me and we'll talk about it, but it wasn't like a spanking or anything, some consequence, ok, then for the next you cannot do this, I

won't allow you to do this, whatever you did, you should not do it for the next few weeks, I won't let you play, or whatever, he would deal with it, so it was always with law and grace, we should not be always law, then our children will think of mummy and daddy as always strict, strict, strict and they'll rebel against us they'll think, when will I leave the home and I be on my own and I'll do what I like I want my children to come back home and think, oh home, I love my home, and that's how I wanted it, so there should be law discipline and grace, and those are some of the things which God helped me and I can say, it's only the Lord who has helped us, but another big secret I can tell you, which is a must, must, must is both of you, husband and wife must pray together, must pray

together, sometimes morning and evening and sometimes in between also, especially if the children are having some problem with behavior say, you should not think like, oh I'm not, I can handle it or my husband is not, the devil will bring a thousand and one flaws in your husband and say, oh your husband doesn't care for you, but don't just ignore all that and say let's pray, our son is going through this problem, our son is having this or our daughter is having this problem or she's stammering or whatever, big or small whatever the problem is, it's important for God, God can handle it, so as we heard today from all the testimonies pray with your husband and that will bring the unity, because you have some problem and you think you're not in your spirit united with your husband then that

prayer won't be heard, so you be united, and no not even one day should go in our life when we are not on talking terms with our husband or in a bad mood with our husband, if that temptation may come, I know families for days they would not talk to each other, but should not even in a few minutes, I mean little unrest may come, but say Lord I want to deal with it you can tell him, I'm a little disturbed now, just leave me alone for a few minutes and I'll be ok in a little while, you can tell him, ok then my husband knows and with the Lord's help get over it, but anytime there's disunity or disharmony, the devil is going to sneak in, and persons who are going to suffer are our children, so think Lord, at least for the sake of my children, I'm not going to have this disunity come in my life

so we'll close and we'll pray Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are our Father and you are there to help us in every situation we know that we are not perfect, but we want to learn from you how to be a good father, good parent and we thank you for Jesus who's our example and the Holy Spirit who gives us strength and grace and comes in to help us in all our weaknesses, we pray that you'll help us help us to

have good families, good children and we want to bring up our children for you Lord we offer them on the altar for you, and we pray that you'll take them and help them to be our witnesses in the next generation so that they'll be used for you and for your glory, and we want you to take all the glory and honor for all that you've done for us, and you're going to do for us help us

not to take any glory for ourselves, we ask these things in Jesus name, Amen

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