

How to Rear a Godly Seed

by Don Currin

The sermon emphasizes the importance of rearing a godly seed through effective prayer and transparency, and provides practical examples and applications for parents to model a godly life for their children.

Duration: 51:25

Scripture: Psalm 102:27, Isaiah 66:8

Topics: "Godly Seed"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses nine principles for raising children in a godly manner. He emphasizes the importance of being present and attentive to our children, just as a father watches his daughter perform gymnastics. He also warns against making fun of our children's weaknesses or handicaps, as this can be detrimental to their self-esteem. The speaker then highlights the significance of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of parents, which in turn impacts the spiritual growth of their children. Finally, he emphasizes the importance of transparency and training in raising children, encouraging parents to have daily devotions with their children and to cultivate accountability to biblical principles throughout the day. The speaker references Psalm 128 and Proverbs 22:6 to support his points.

Transcript

Thank you, Ralph. If you would, take your Bibles this morning with me, please, and turn to Psalm 128. Psalm 128.

I know you have received a sheet, and of course on that sheet there is a list of the sermon titles that have been preached, the teachings that have been given, and also those that will be given this morning. And what I've chosen as my title is, How to Rear a Godly Seed. And my wife is a home school teacher, and it used to be entitled, How to Raise a Godly Seed, until she said, You don't raise children, honey, you rear them.

And maybe that's just a play on words, but I certainly appreciate that correction. But that's what I want to speak on this morning, is how to rear a godly seed. And the reason I have come to the conclusion that this is what God wants is a leading that way, and then an affirmation, as I've been in some of the prayer meetings, people around have been praying for their children.

And the prayers that have been conveyed have been communicated to the Lord with just a real burden. And some of you, your children are up and gone, and now you have grandchildren. So let me just say this

morning that this message is not only applicable to those who have children still at home, but those who don't even have children, or people who have seen their children grow up and leave home, and possibly now the Lord has given you stewardship over your grandchildren.

This is a message that I believe is pertinent to each one of us. For in one sense, you could even be godchildren or godparents to some children in your church. Children that possibly are brought in by way of the bus ministry, or maybe someone brings them to church, and maybe they don't have a spiritual steward over them right now.

And you could pray for those children and encourage them in the things of God. And so I want to just share with you, and I'm not speaking as one that is an authority on this subject, I do have four children of my own. Nathan is fourteen, Aaron is twelve, Hannah is eight, and Rachel is four.

And I'm still learning, I'm in the process of learning right now. But I've been tapping the minds of people's lives across the country in North America, and anything I see, if I see something that's outstanding, a character quality, a spiritual quality in the lives of children, I go to the parents and I say, what do you feel like has made the difference? What wisdom has God given you? And so what I'm going to share with you this morning is something that I'm learning, and something that I'm beginning to see the fruit of in these days of rearing my own children for Christ. If you would look with me in Psalm 128, beginning in verse number one, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways.

For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion, and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children and peace upon Israel. We know that all Scripture is profitable to each one of us, and while I believe there was a specific party in mind that this portion was addressed to, I believe it's something that we can receive as people who care and have a burden for our children and our children's children.

A promise of God. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children and peace. Peace.

This morning I want to give you five words that I believe are five exercises that we can administrate in our relationship with our children that I believe God can use to produce an atmosphere and a spirit that is conducive for God to work in bringing about a godly seed. Let me just give you a few thoughts in the way of introduction. In Psalms 102, verses 27 and 28, the Scripture says, But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee. A promise of God. In Proverbs chapter 20, in verse number 7, the just man walketh in his integrity.

His children are blessed after him. But on the other hand, God has a warning in the prophecy of Hosea. For in chapter 4, in verse number 6, a portion of Scripture that many times is grossly distorted, as various organizations seek to use that to amplify their own ministry and the need of it, but yet you find that the knowledge here is not referring to being a knowledge to the economic situation or to the New Age movement, but rather it's a knowledge of God that the prophet speaks of.

As the Scripture goes in Hosea 4, 6, My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge, the knowledge of the Lord. Because, he says, thou hast rejected knowledge, God says, I will also reject thee, that thou shall be no priest to me, seeing that thou hast forgotten the law of thy God. Listen to this curse.

I will also forget thy children. Seeing that thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. I have loved to glean from the lives of great Christians and two of the men that I have highly esteemed over the years, and though they are dead, yet they speak.

One is a man by the name of Jonathan Edwards. Some of you are familiar with this legacy. But for those of you who are not, let me remind you, or let me share with you this morning, exactly how God fulfilled his promise in being a godly father in the lives of his children, this man, Mr. Edwards.

Out of his descendants, there were 14 college presidents. There were 100 professors, 100 preachers, missionaries, and theologians. Over 100 were lawyers and judges.

60 were doctors. Over 60 have been authors of high rank or editors of journals. I was ministering in a Mennonite church in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, year before last, and one night a lady and her husband came and sang, and after the service, the pastor introduced me to them, and he introduced the lady as one of the descendants of Jonathan Edwards.

And I said, tell me about the family. How's it going? And she says it's being passed from generation to generation. And what a delightful spirit she had, and what a heart for holiness she possessed.

Well, the other man that I speak of is Andrew Murray, which Ralph just spoke of a moment ago. I regret that the book, How to Bring Your Children to Christ, is not back there on the book table. We've sold more copies of that book than any other, and in our home we have a large shelf of child-rearing books.

And of all the Christian child-rearing books that Cindy and I have read and gleaned from, the one that stands out, and there's not even a close second to it, is the book How to Bring Your Children to Christ by Andrew Murray. You know, when we hear these how-to sermons or how-to books, I don't know about you, but I'd like to know if the author is really an authority on the subject. And so I did some research on Mr. Murray, and I found out that he had eleven children, six boys and five girls.

Five of the six boys were preachers, and four of the five girls married preachers. So I think if there was ever anybody qualified to write on Christian child-rearing, it was Andrew Murray, a great man of God. But God fulfilled His promise to these men.

Well, these five exercises that I believe are essential in rearing a godly seed. I certainly am not saying that they are the only things, but I believe this is a portion of that which we can do as parents to rear a godly seed. Number one is the word travail.

Travail. Now, it's not by chance that I use the word travail because I have an alliteration outlined this morning, but I do not believe that casual prayer will get the job done when it comes to really seeing our children reared in the ways of the Lord. The word travail, praying beyond our casualness, learning to get a hold of the Lord on the behalf of our children, praying on the basis of what we believe, not on the basis of what we see.

Let me give you a reference. Isaiah chapter 66 and verse 8. When Zion prevailed, she brought forth. And just as there is no birthing into this world physically without travail on the part of the mother, there will be

no birthing spiritually without someone being willing to exercise themselves, to pray and to travail, engage in effectual fervent prayer on the behalf of their children.

Miss Bertha Smith, who is a missionary to the Southern Baptist Convention for 42 years, who had the privilege of sitting under the ministries of men like Watchman Nee and R.A. Torrey, she said if God had ever given her a husband, which she was never married, but if God had given her a husband and through that union had given them children, she said there would have never been a day that my children left the house without me first of all pleading the blood of Christ upon their soul. Some years ago, as I said over lunch with Jack Taylor, I said, Jack, what is the greatest thing we can do for our children to bring them up in the ways of the Lord? And without any reservation, he says, pray. He said intercede.

Let me give you a definition of intercessory prayer. Someone has defined intercession as a ballistic missile that can be launched from a launching pad no larger than a place to kneel, travel at the speed of thought, land precisely on target thousands of miles away, and there is no defense against it. But it all breaks down if there's sin in our heart.

And my, how we need to engage in this type of soul travail in prayer. You recall in Matthew chapter seven, verses seven and eight, that the asking, the seeking and the knocking is not just a passive once and for all thing, but rather it's a consistent, persistent asking, seeking, knocking in regard to needs, this need of our children. In Luke chapter 18, verses one through eight, the prayer of importunity, the witness continual coming so annoyed the judge that he moved to avenge her of her enemy.

Now, you know something, this probably is very unnecessary here at the flames of freedom rally, because I guess in the impression of us, at least first glance, we think that everybody's spiritually minded enough that they really wouldn't need this exhortation. But let me ask you this morning, this question, do you pray for your children? Do you pray consistently for your children? Do you pray for your children's children consistently? Do you pray for the children at church that you have a tendency to be so critical of consistently? There are certain things that I am praying for my children. In my prayer notebook, I pray that you're praying that for yours.

You know, no matter how many children you have, they're all different. It's amazing how unique they are, even though they come from the same parents. And so, therefore, we pray accordingly.

But there are some basic things that I do pray for each one of my children. Let me just share a few of them with you. First of all, I'm praying for their salvation.

I'm praying that they might give diligence to make their calling and election sure. You see, my three oldest children have made professions of faith. And the boys have probably made at least four professions of faith.

Hannah's probably made at least two professions of faith. But you see, friend, until I see the vital signs of eternal life springing forth from their life, there'll always be that uncertainty in my heart as their daddy, whether or not they have legitimately passed from death into life. Oh, I don't tell them that they're lost.

I don't have a right to do that. But you see, there's always that doubt. I really wonder because I've still not seen the vital signs of new life in Christ.

And I'm not satisfied as of yet as a parent. They may be saved, but I'm still praying and believing that they'll make their calling and election sure and not base their salvation upon the religion of dad. The

second thing that I'm praying for is that they might be totally surrendered to the will of God.

Nothing less. That there might be an absolute abandonment to the Lordship of Christ in their life. You see, friend, I'm not looking for a preacher.

I'm not looking for a pastor's wife or a missionary. Oh, listen, that would delight me even more. But listen, if my kids grow up and they love Christ with all their heart and they have a hunger for holiness and they're a soul winner, I mean, what more could I ask for? And that's what I'm praying for, that they would be totally surrendered to the will of God.

My boy tells me he wants to play professional basketball. He may be moving right toward that. He went for a physical the other day.

He just turned 14 and he's 6 foot 3 from his mother. Number three is I'm praying for moral purity in my children. You know, the people that I counsel and interact with across the country have deep-rooted problems.

Many times one of the major root problems is the reason why they cannot seem to get a handle on spiritual realities is because of moral failure. You see, I'll never let my children date. I believe in biblical courtship and I'm committed to it.

If a boy wants to see one of my girls, he'll come over and spend time with the family. I'm praying for the moral purity of my children. A fourth thing is I'm praying that they might learn to stand alone, regardless of the peer pressure around them.

As they go into the world and as they're around people who don't love Christ or are not converted, I'm praying that the pressure of that moment will not overwhelm them where they'll compromise biblical conviction, but they'll learn to stand alone and they'll stand alone with a meek and a quiet spirit and a heart of love toward people around them. And then fifthly, I'm praying for my children's mates. You say, as young as your children are, you're praying for their partner? Yes, I'm praying for their mates that they might have a passion for God, that they would love Christ with all their heart.

I'm praying that their mates would honor their parents and teaching the boys not to look on outward beauty, but to look at the character of young ladies. And I'm also teaching them, I said, watch them guys. As you get older and you get your eyes on young ladies, the way they treat their mother and fathers, the way they will ultimately treat you is the authority of God in their life.

I'm praying for their purity. I'm praying that God would preserve my children's mates' purity. And I'm also praying that they would learn to submit to the authority of God in their own life.

Well, there's a second word that I would mention that I believe that something that we can exercise our self in in regard to rearing a godly seed, and that is the word transparency. Transparency. Matthew chapter 5, verses 14 through 16.

Jesus said, you don't light a light and hide it under a bushel, but you put it on a lamp stand that it might give light unto all that are in the house. You know, parents, when we are not willing to confess our faults and acknowledge our sin and our failures before our children, what we do is we hide the light of the glory of God within us under a bushel. And it's impossible for it to give light unto all that are in our house.

Some years ago, I had the opportunity to speak in a revival conference with Brother Roy Hession, where you're talking about inferiority. And I had to precede him one morning. The night before, we had gone to a restaurant together and spent a couple of hours in fellowship.

And during the course of our conversation, I asked him about a brother in Christ. And he responded in what I thought to be a very pleasant way, but later on, he took it to be very critical. Well, the next morning after I spoke, he came to me before he was to begin his session and he said, Brother Curry, he said, last night you asked me about a brother and he said, I was rather negative.

Brother, I had a critical spirit. Would you please forgive me? Here I am, this man I suppose at the time was in his late 70s. And I said, well, Brother Hession, I didn't take it that way, but certainly, brother, I forgive you.

He said, thank you, brother. You see, friend, I was greatly ministered to through his ministry of teaching and preaching. But that's the most outstanding thing I'll ever remember about Roy Hession.

It added credibility to his message of brokenness. If we would be that transparent with one another, certainly revival would be right at the door. But can you imagine in a home atmosphere if we would be transparent in the presence of our children? Some years ago, we were living in Goldsboro, North Carolina, and we went over to Greenville, North Carolina one night for a meeting.

A young man was ministering. His message was the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. And he got very transparent as he shared out of his own life and his family, his relationship to his family.

Just as soon as the service was over, I went by and I shook this man's hand, and I gathered the family together, and we went and we got in the car. It took about an hour to get back home, and all the way home, I did nothing but confess my sin and my failure before my family. You could have heard a pin drop in the car, because as I shared, they were so, so quiet as they listened so intently.

You say, why were they so quiet? Because you see, they're not used to hearing Dad confess his sin. So when we got home that night, I got my Bible and we got into the living room and we sat on the floor, and I had intention of sharing from the Word, but I could not see the Bible to read, because the tears flowed so freely, and God the Holy Spirit continued to plow up my heart. And I confessed my lack of consistency in family altar, family devotions.

I confessed my impatience toward the children and impatience toward Cindy. my angry spirit, my lack of understanding. And when I got finished, the Holy Spirit finished showing these things to me, I looked at Cindy and I looked at the children, and two of the three children were crying, and Cindy was crying, and I said, would you please forgive me, honey? And I looked at the children and I said, would you please forgive Daddy? And the kids got up and they all came over and they put their arms around me, and hugged me real tight, and they said, Daddy, we forgive you.

Daddy, we forgive you. And I said, thank you. We had a prayer and Cindy went to put the kids to bed, and at the time we were homeschooling, and after she put them to bed, the two boys says, Mom, do you think that Dad would mind if we were to tomorrow turn our toy closet into a prayer closet? And of course, Cindy said, Oh, that would be wonderful.

Well, she told me that when I came to bed that night, and you know, I was happy to hear that, but to be honest with you, I thought they were just sort of caught up in the emotion of the moment. I never thought

anything would come of it. But the next day when she finished homeschool, about 2.30 in the afternoon, the boys made a beeline to their bedroom, and they took out all the toys out of their closet, and they know that their dad is a perfectionist, so they stacked the toys very neatly around the wall in the room.

They got a piece of paper and a pencil. They made them a prayer list. They taped it up on the inside of the closet door.

They got their Bibles, a tape recorder with the tape. There was no light on the inside of the closet, so they got my flashlight and they went in there and they spent all afternoon praying, confessing, and praising God. Here's what God showed me.

As goes the sanctifying work of the Spirit in our lives as parents, so goes the sanctifying work of the Spirit in the lives of our children. The Song of Solomon, he says, draw me and we will run after thee. So you see, the basis of their running after Him is contingent upon us allowing Him to draw us.

And as God does the work in our lives as parents, grandparents, and godparents, God can do a work through us in the lives of our children. Transparency. The third word is training.

Training. The word is training. Proverbs 22, verse 6, train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.

It's interesting to note what the word train means. Listen to it. It means to mold a character, to instruct by exercise, drill, to make obedient to orders, to put or point in an exact direction.

I believe that godly training consists of three essential ingredients. Number one is instruction, number two is discipline, and number three is example. Number one is instruction.

Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 4. It speaks of the admonition of the Lord, and the word admonition means instruction. Instructing them. But let me just give you an insight.

Here, it's not just having daily devotions with your children that will really significantly impact their life. It's out of that devotions cultivating an accountability with your children and your grandchildren. You see, at home, my boys, they give me four hours of work a day during the summer.

And during the course of our labor in the yard, outside, as we work together, if there's anything that comes up that relates to biblical truth, what we do is we immediately begin to discuss it. Always bringing them back to the Word of God. Not being satisfied with just a time of devotions where we read the Bible and say a prayer, but establishing and cultivating an accountability to the truth of God's Word throughout the day by pressing upon their minds and their consciences, principles that relate to specific situations during the course of the day.

This is instruction. Secondly, there is discipline. I wish we had time to talk about this at length.

But let me give you this reference. Proverbs 22 and verse 15. And if you would, take your Bibles and turn there.

I don't think anybody can say it any better than the Lord. Proverbs chapter 22 and verse 15. It was Harry Truman, one of our former presidents in the U.S. who made the statement, crime prevention begins not in the high chair, or excuse me, begins in the high chair, not in the electric chair.

Look at the promises of God in regard to discipline. Proverbs chapter 22 and verse 15. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child.

But the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. I pray we don't have any social workers here this morning. I trust you believe in biblical discipline, friend.

The way kids talk to their parents today, the impatience they have toward their parents, the impatience they have toward their parents, side two, it grieves my spirit. And I can't say anything. They're not mine.

But the rudeness. There is a generation that curseth their father and doeth not bless their mother. Is this a promise of God? Foolishness, rebellion is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Do you know what I'm discovering? If you don't discipline your children, if you don't discipline your children, they will ultimately bring chastisement to your life. And could it be that this is the chastening of the Lord for those parents who believe that love is the answer to everything, just love them and sort of wink at their sin and overlook their iniquity? And this thing to do is to appropriate a little psychology here and let's talk about it. And so what they do is they reap what they sow.

If you don't chasten your children, they will ultimately chasten you. Look at another verse, Proverbs chapter 13 and verse number 24. Proverbs 13 verse 24, He that spareth his rod hateth his son.

What if I were to come to you because you're so negligent and inconsistent and discipline your children and say, you don't love your children, you love yourself. Well, you would be enraged. But it's the truth.

Read the rest of the verse. But he that loveth him loveth his child, chasteneth him but times consistently. Look at another reference.

Look in Proverbs 29 and verse 15. Verse 15 of chapter 29, The rod and reproof giveth wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Could we not appropriate that to working mothers? If a mother works outside the home, a child left to himself will bring his mother to shame.

It's amazing how people, they try to squeeze out from underneath the responsibility that verse in the New Testament, you know, that women are to be keepers at home. And they said, well, I believe I can be a keeper of my home without being at home. That's not what it says.

You can't be a keeper at home unless you're at home. Proverbs chapter 19 and verse 18. Look at this one.

Chapter 19, verse 18, Chasten thy son while there is hope and let not thy soul spare for his crying. Some kids, when you administer the rod, they act and sound as if you're killing them. But God gives us an ability as a parent to know when the will has been broken.

When the dry cry and the cry of rebellion and the cry of self-saving has been transformed into a brokenness of heart. He said, don't slack up until you accomplish that. Proverbs 29 and verse 17.

You'll not want to miss this one. Proverbs 29 and verse 17. Boy, what a promise.

Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest. Yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul. Wouldn't it be great to be able to pellet your head at night someday knowing that your children are indigenous spiritually, financially.

You know where they are and you know that they are being successful for the kingdom of God's sake in life. Promise of God. God said you discipline and I will give you rest.

Look in Proverbs chapter 20 and verse 30. By all means, don't tell a child worker, a social worker about this. Proverbs chapter 20 and verse 30.

The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil. Dr. Lester Roloff used to say I'd rather have blue bottoms than black soles. So do stripes the inward parts of the belly.

Well, Al Fabrizio said in his little pamphlet under loving command, the pain that the rod inflicts on the body delivers from the pain the character suffers later in life from a selfish wheel. Well, Brady Wilson, one of the associates with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association said growing up that his mother used to have hanging from a nail in the kitchen, a leather strap above which were the words. I need the every hour.

Isn't this a reason that Eli's sons turned rebellious? God said, because you have restrained them, not there's a third ingredient and that is example. First Corinthians chapter seven in verse 14 is the Proverbs 22, six of the New Testament. Look at it with me.

It illustrates the power of the element of sanctification. If only one party in the home is saved and living for Christ and walking in the way of Christ, in the spirit, God can sanctify the rest of the home, especially the children. First Corinthians chapter seven in verse 14.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. Now watch this promise. Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.

It was Mr. Spurgeon who said that when the home is ruled by the word of God, angels might be asked to stay with us and they would not find themselves out of their element. Have a man that I have appreciated greatly over the years, and I've mentioned him one time in the conference thus far. And his name is Dr. Peter Lord.

And he pastors the Park Avenue church there in Titusville, Florida. I love the marquee out in front of the church. It's got Park Avenue Baptist Church.

And underneath it, it says a part of the body of Christ, a part of the body. Some years ago, an evangelist friend of mine was conducting a citywide crusade in Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas. And he made the statement during the course of one of his messages one evening that he had never met a man that was more like Jesus than Peter Lord.

He said, I've been around the man. He said, I've been in the presence of him when pressure has been exerted. And he said, it's amazing how much like Christ he is.

He responds like Jesus. And so that night after the service was over, a line formed. And in that line, there was a 19-year-old girl who walked up to this friend of mine.

And as they shook hands, she said, you mentioned Peter Lord tonight. And this friend of mine said, oh yes, do you know Peter Lord? She said, Peter Lord's a good friend of mine. And the girl said, yes sir, I know him very well.

Peter Lord is my daddy. He's my father. And she broke down and began to weep.

And he said in his mind, he was thinking that maybe the reason she's weeping is because I made an improper assessment. Maybe he's not at all like Jesus. Because if there's anybody that ought to know whether he's like Jesus or not, it ought to be his own daughter.

And so he said, I listened on as finally she got her composure together enough to look at me through a veil of tears and say, I want you to know that my daddy is just like Jesus. Just like him. Could your children say that you're like Jesus? There's a fourth word.

Please let me encourage you to brace yourself for this. I believe there's nothing wrong with the word. But yet normally in revival circles, we've used it in a negative sense.

That's the word tradition. I think really the word we ought to be using is traditionalism. That's the negative element.

But there's nothing wrong with godly traditions. Deuteronomy chapter six, verses six through nine. You want to put that reference down? Someone has said that tradition is the living faith of dead men, while traditionalism is the dead faith of living men.

Nothing wrong with tradition. As long as our traditions are predicated upon God's truth. And they're ordered by God's spirit.

Do you have a family tradition, a family altar? It's what we call, we use the Bill Gothard home school curriculum and we call it a wisdom search. You spend time in the word each day searching the mind of Christ. Is that a tradition in your home? Is it a tradition around your grandchildren when they come to stay with you or you spend time with them? We have a ministry, it's a family tradition.

It's a ministry where we go to a certain portion of the country. Each year during the summer as a family and spend time in ministry. And for six years, our trip was always to New England.

And within that tradition, there was another tradition. We make it a practice and we have a very weird practice of visiting cemeteries. Now we don't just go to any cemetery.

We go to cemeteries that accommodate the remains of those who made an impact in their generation for Jesus Christ. And among those that we've had the privilege of going and just standing over the grave as a family are men like David Brainerd, Jonathan Edwards, D.L. Moody, Praying Hyde, Solomon Stoddard. We've always been blessed and the family has been greatly benefited through this family tradition.

I remember the first time the boys were, I guess Nathan was four and a half and Aaron was three, almost four. And we went to Northfield, Massachusetts to take in the home and the museum and the tabernacle and the grounds of Northfield Seminary and the grave site of D.L. Moody and his wife. And so after a couple of hours, we're standing around the grave and just had a time of prayer and reflection.

We went out to get in the van and as we started off the campus, Nathan, as I said, he was four and a half, five at the time. He popped up in the back seat and he says, Daddy, when I get to be big, I'm going to be a great man of God, just like D.L. Moody. I looked at my wife and winked.

I said, boy, honey, that was worth the trip, wasn't it? He said, it sure was. Little old Aaron, he wasn't going to be outdone. He perked up in the back seat and he said, Daddy, when I get to be big, I'm going to be like Jesus.

He was like, top that brother. Family traditions. I don't know.

Sometime we get out of the. Monotonous. Everyday routine of just reading the scripture and and praying.

And what we do is we sing to the Lord. You ever just sing to the Lord as a family. We've got a little course books and sing to the Lord.

Little scripture songs that you memorize, we sing to the Lord. Really refreshes you. A pastor friend of mine, he does that for his devotions almost consistently.

Takes the old hymn book and just sings the old hymns to the Lord and meditates on the words. Traditions. Well, then finally, and certainly I believe that travail is the most important of all of these, but this would have to run second to travail.

The fifth word that I would mention this morning is the word treasure. Treasure your children. And what I mean by that is approve of them.

And unload praises upon them continuously. Don't praise their talent. So much as you praise their character.

And quickly, can I just give you a few ways that you can keep praises upon your children. Some things that will communicate approval to them that I believe God can use to impact their life and rearing a godly seed. Number one, learn to listen to them.

Listen to them. Yesterday, Bill and I sat down, Bill Orr. Bill knows my family very well and he prays for my children and they love Brother Bill.

But he says, Don, he says, you've got to listen to your children. And you know, we all know that, don't we? We've given that counsel, that advice to other people. But it encouraged me to realign my focus upon my children.

Because he's right, at times I don't listen to them. And even right before I came here, the girls came up, you know, Dad, can I share something with you? And I said, Dad's busy right now. Later, honey.

And later never came. Listen to your children. Secondly, love them unconditionally.

Some of you right now, you have children that have moved away from home. And maybe you don't think they're raising their children the way they ought to. And you like to get in there and manipulate and put pressure on them.

Oh, friend, you're making an enemy out of your boy, out of your girl. Love them unconditionally. Don't even convey in your spirit, well, if you'll start doing this and if you'll adjust in this area and change over here, then I want you to know I'll really start proving my love towards you.

We can convey that in our spirit without ever saying it with our words. Love them unconditionally. Another way that we shower approval upon them is spend individual time with them.

The report is that Susanna Wesley had 18 children. Do you know that Mrs. Wesley made it a practice to spend 30 minutes alone with each child each week? Now, a number of these children died. I believe there were 10 or 11 that lived to be adults.

But she spent 30 minutes alone with each child each week. You say, well, Brother Curran, I mean, what's the big deal? I mean, 30 minutes, that's not so much. Listen, friend, I know parents who only have one child and they don't spend 30 minutes alone with that child each week.

Number four, learn to write them notes. Just little notes of love. Men, can I challenge you in this area? Why is it we feel like we've got to be some macho? Man, my children will think I'm weak if I write them a love note.

Oh, no, they won't. No, they won't. Just in a very transparent way.

Just want to let you know I was thinking of you. I love you. Number four, number five, learn to touch them.

Embrace them. You say, well, I'm afraid, you know, my children are grown now and I'm afraid if I went over and tried to embrace them, they'd think I was weird. Well, they would probably stiff-arm me.

They would push me away. Listen, risk it. Risk it.

They may push you away a few times, but keep on going back. Number six, seek their counsel. You say, come again? I said, seek their counsel.

When issues come up in the home or in your life, go to your own children. What do you think daddy ought to do? You know what that does to them? It conveys value. And you know, most of the time they're not far off from what God wants you to do.

And sometimes they're right on. And sometimes God uses it as an affirmation. Number seven, we've already mentioned this one.

Be transparent. Let me ask you something, man. When's the last time you confessed your sin to your children? When's the last time you verbally communicated that you had faults? When's the last time you expressed verbally, I love you.

Isn't it amazing these days how many people have grown up, middle-aged, older, never heard their mom and dad ever say, I love you? Are you going to pass the baton and not do it either? Number eight, learn to look at them. Rachel, ever since the Olympics were on, we watched quite a bit of the Olympics. She, uh, she has developed her own Rachel gymnastics and she's just four years old.

She said, she said, daddy, watch my gymnastics. And so she goes tearing across the living room floor and cuts a flip. I know it's painful.

I mean, man, she hits the floor hard. But as long as dad's watching her, that's enough to endure the pain. Number nine, never make fun of them.

Never joke about their weaknesses or their handicaps. North Carolina in our church, there was a family there. Every time I went to the home, they were constantly being sarcastic.

Father with the mother and mother with the children and the children with the father and back and forth at wind, just little jokes, but little gigs, you know, just kept poking at each other and poking at each other. And I never really sensed the reverence in those children for their father and mother. Don't make fun of them.

And then number 10, learn to praise them. Learn to praise them. It's Dale Carnegie who said the greatest need in a human being's life is a need to be appreciated, appreciate them.

Let's bow our heads together in prayer. Now, Holy Spirit, I pray that you would just take these truths and principles and thoughts and use them for the glory of the Lord Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for giving us a guidebook to rear our children.

I pray, Lord, that you would not forget our children. I pray, Lord, that we would continuously pursue our God to know him, that we might be the Christian parents, grandparents, and godparents that you would have us be. In Jesus' name, amen.

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