

# A Christlike Home (2) Christlike Parents and Children

by Zac Poonen

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*As parents, we have a significant responsibility to bring up our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, and to model a strong faith in our daily lives.*

**Duration:** 1:03:01

**Scripture:** Isaiah 66:13

**Topics:** "Christian Parenting", "Family Discipleship"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being Christ-like parents, focusing on the balance of grace and truth, discipline, and instruction in raising children. It highlights the need for parents to prioritize spending time with their children, instilling godly values, and being a witness for Christ in the home. The sermon also warns against the dangers of being too busy or partial towards children, using examples from Scripture to illustrate the impact of parenting choices on future generations.

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## Transcript

So we want to continue our study of a Christ-like home. We saw in our first session Christ-like husbands and wives and we want to look now at Christ-like parents and children. As I said in the Old Testament there was not much spoken about husband-wife relationship except a few verses and proverbs to wives.

But concerning children there are a few things mentioned in the Old Covenant too and much more in the New Covenant. I think children help us to know whether our Christian religion and faith and faith is genuine or whether we are hypocrites because we can guard ourselves from losing our testimony before other people in the church but it's almost impossible to guard yourself from your children because they see you 24 hours and they know everything. Those who live in your home know everything about your relationship as husband and wife and that's why the Bible speaks so much about in the New Testament about the way you bring up your children.

I mean if you brought up your children well it's an important qualification for being a leader in God's house. Let me show you that verse 1 Timothy 3. Here is a condition for being an elder in a church. Now most of you may never be elders in the church but you need to understand the principle of spiritual responsibility and that is 1 Timothy 3 and overseer verse 2 must be above reproach.

Husband of one wife is the first thing mentioned is his relationship with his wife and then it says in verse 4 he must be one who manages his own household well keeping his children under control with all dignity because if a man does not know how to manage his own household or family how can he take care of the church of God. So the church of God is a higher responsibility than family and if you can't bring up three or four children in the fear of God how in the world are you going to take care of 200 people in a church. Now here is another just like husband-wife relationships and Christendom have many cases have ended up in divorce.

The children also unfortunately most Christian workers their children are wayward. It's almost become legendary that children of full-time workers and preachers are wayward and what is the reason? I personally believe there can be only one reason that they don't practice at home what they preach in the church. They can preach fantastic things in the church but the children see it's all hypocrisy.

Dad and mom don't live according to what they speak in the church. Then they go astray because the example of their life speaks louder than the words that they speak and in Titus also we find requirements for an elder and there it's even more strongly said Titus chapter one elders must be an elder must be verse six Titus 1:6 a man above reproach the husband of one wife and children who are believers. See this is even more than what you read in Timothy of children who are kept under control.

How can a man be held responsible for his children being believers or unbelievers? I mean if this is completely out of his control there can't be such a condition. See there are certain things outside our control we can't be responsible for it. Do you understand that supposing there was a condition saying an elder should not be bald what can you do about it that's not something he has a control over.

Do you believe he has a control over children being believers? Is it something he has no control over like baldness or height elder must be above so much height those things he has no control over. The bible is not unreasonable it doesn't give us conditions which we have no control over so when it says an elder must have children who are believers that means it's something which a man has control over. Now the reason I say that is even if you are never become an elder in your life remember that whether your children grow up to be believers or not is dependent on you.

Don't ever push that responsibility on somebody else and say the devil did this or they are being influenced by my parents or they go to the grandfather's house and get led astray. These are all silly excuses or children are different. These are all excuses to justify ourselves.

The lord told the pharisees you fellows are experts at justifying yourself. It's a mark of a pharisee. It's much better to say what the bible says in Romans 3 let God be true and every man a liar.

So I believe that God's word is true even in the old testament it says in proverbs and chapter 22 and verse 6 train up a child in the way he should go and when he's old he will not depart from it. He may not depart from it or he will not depart from it. I believe that's inspired.

He will not depart from it. I mean they may have their ups and downs. Some children have a few struggles in their teenage years in their early 20s.

That's because they have it's like they're in transition between being a child and an adult and they make the mistake in their teenage years of thinking that they're adults and the parents make the mistake in their teenage years of thinking that their children are still babies. So both are wrong and that's why sometimes

they go through an up and down. Some people have a smooth passage through their teenage years but as they grow older if they're really being trained they will not depart from that way which has been instilled into them and one of the great examples for us parents is Moses' mother who had Moses as a little baby with her for a much shorter time than you and I have our children.

You know Pharaoh's daughter picked up that baby from the bulrushes and gave it to the mother saying train him up and when he's old enough bring him to our house to the palace. I don't know how many years she had Moses at home. Let's say seven years but what a work she did in those seven years that when Moses was old when he was 40 years old he did not depart from those values that his mother had put into his head before he was seven.

How many of us believe that we can put values into our children's hearts and heads before they are seven years old? We got to start as soon as they begin to understand which is even before they are one year old. They understand. It says about Moses in Hebrews and chapter 11 now remember if an old covenant mother could do such a fantastic job how much more we remember what I said in the earlier session we got to be filled with the Holy Spirit to be a Christ-like husband, Christ-like wife, Christ-like parent or a Christ-like child.

Hebrews 11 it says the faith of Moses' parents is mentioned here in verse 24 or 23. By faith Moses' parents this is the faith of Moses' parents hid him for three months. They were not afraid of the king's edict.

King had said all the little baby boys should be killed. They were not afraid. They would not kill a baby even if there's a law in the country saying you must abort your child.

God-fearing parents will say sorry we're not going to do it because that's murder. So they didn't kill that child. And when Moses grew up he said I'm not the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Notice the three things that he refused. We know that that happened when he was 40 years old. He said I'm not the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Now see everybody thought he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter and if he had kept quiet about it he would have been a pharaoh. Pharaoh means the most powerful ruler in the whole world at that time because Egypt was the biggest superpower the only superpower and he could have been the head of the world's greatest nation. He just turned it down.

He says no I'm not the son of Pharaoh's daughter. I don't want that honor. He refused the honor of the world.

Second verse 25 he rejected the passing pleasure of sin. He lived in a palace which was the most wicked corrupt immoral place in the whole world and he saw what all was happening. A lot of pleasure in sin.

He was a young man as he grew up. He rejected the pleasure of sin because he knew it was passing. He said I know there's a pleasure in sin but it'll pass.

I don't want it. Third he rejected the treasures of Egypt verse 26. So three things that Moses rejected when he grew up.

One the honor of this world the pleasure of this world and the wealth of this world saying I don't want it. Now here was a man who had the opportunity to get it. Most of us don't have the opportunity to get all

these three and to say that we don't take it is not a great thing but here was a man who had the opportunity to get all these three and said no.

Where did he learn it? Did Pharaoh's daughter teach him that? Did anybody in the palace teach him that? No. That was the early seven years of training which he got from his mother. Why do I say his mother? Because his father was a slave and I presume the slaves went off to work at six o'clock and come back late.

I mean our computer scientist slaves usually nowadays go at seven o'clock in the morning and come back seven in the evening. It's something like that. Those days much worse.

The slaves in Egypt they went off to work maybe early morning came back late in the evening and probably saw very little of Moses there. The mother had this little boy at home and drilled into because he knew she knew I've got him only for seven years. She drilled into his head remember you are an Israelite.

We are descended from Abraham who contacted God. We are the chosen people of God. Don't ever forget that.

Drilled it drilled it into a head for seven years. He never forgot it even when he lived there. So he stood up and said I'm not an Egyptian.

I'm not a son of Pharaoh's daughter and drilled into his head. Another thing don't despise the fact that we are poor. We are living in a hut.

We're slaves but wealth is not everything. We've got God. Wealth is not the big thing.

Don't live for money. Imagine drilling that into a child's head when he's seven years old and the child gets absorbs it absorbs it. Money is not everything.

It doesn't matter if you're living in a small hut. Dad's a slave. He doesn't have much money.

I can't get you all the toys. I can other rich people can get their children. We are poor but we're not ashamed of it because money is not everything.

What wonderful values to put into our children's heads before they are seven years old and then when they're seven years old they don't know much about sin but she must have taught him sin is dishonoring to God. Fighting with your sister is wrong. Telling lies is wrong.

Little little sins and you mustn't hurt anybody. You mustn't those values gotten to it and as you grow up Moses there'll be other pleasures of sin. Avoid them.

Avoid them. You're one of God's people. Train up a child and when he's when he's young and when he's old he will not depart from it.

It's a classic example and it was done by a mother single-handedly because I don't know how much time the father had at home. Another example is Timothy's mother. We read in 2nd Timothy in chapter 1 2nd Timothy chapter 1 Paul says in verse 5 2nd Timothy 1 5 I'm mindful of the sincere faith within you.

Where did he get it from? Where did Timothy get the sincere faith? He says it was first in your mother in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice. So the grandmother had the sincere faith and she drilled

it into her little girl Eunice's head. Faith.

Faith. God can take it. God can solve every problem.

There's no trial that God cannot see us through and Eunice must have seen in her mother Lois how in difficult situations she would pray and trust God and say don't worry there are problems but God will solve it and she would see the problem solved in their home. She grew up seeing a mother who would pray whenever there's a problem and not complain and grumble and backbite and gossip with the neighbors but would pray and see God and that little girl grew up with faith in her heart and she grew up. I have a feeling that Eunice when she grew up for a period she backslid.

That can happen. But she came back. The reason I say that is because she didn't marry a Jew.

She married a Greek and you read there in Acts chapter 16 that there was this man called Timothy verse 1. Young man Timothy the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer but his father was a Greek. How did this Jewish woman go and marry a Greek? There was a law which says you must not marry non-Jewish people. She must have backslidden and then she married this Greek who was probably only interested in making money.

Unbeliever. So you know Paul doesn't tell Timothy this sincere faith which was in your father. Father never had faith.

It was the mother. It's great encouragement to mothers. Your husbands take no interest in bringing up your children.

Here's an example. Moses' mother. Timothy's mother.

I think when she got a child she had a lot of backslidden women marry outside the will of God but when they get a child they repent. They say boy okay I made a blunder in my life but I'm going to make up for that by bringing up this child in the fear of God. And so she would have spent all her time.

Okay I'm going to make up for where I slipped up by bringing up my child. Father was busy with his making money and his business but Timothy his mother spent time with him time with him. Many great men of God have become that through the influence of their mothers who prayed for them instructed them.

John Wesley had a very God-fearing mother who gave birth to about 19 children of which seven or eight died. This is in the 1700s. But even though she had about I don't know 10 or 11 children she and her husband was not much interested even though he was a preacher clergyman he was not much interested but she is a God-fearing woman who's very strict with her children would never allow her children to speak unkindly even to the servants and instructed them she would spend one hour every week with each child alone.

Imagine having 11 children and spending one hour every week with each child alone instructing them in the things of God. And John Wesley grew up he never had any children but he started the Methodist church which is a very part the most powerful movement in the world in the 1700s. I mean it's very different today.

And when he wanted to instruct parents in his churches he got his mother to write the instructions. So you tell these people how to bring up children. He had so much respect for the way his mother brought him up.

That was Timothy's mother was like that too. I mean she couldn't she was a backslidden but she raised an apostle. Timothy became an apostle and a young when he was 18 years 19 years old Paul looked at him and said I want this man on my team.

Imagine if the apostle Paul had looked at some 18 year old boy here and said I want that person on my team. Boy that would be tremendous honor. I would consider a tremendous honor if I was 18 years old and Paul picked me up for his team or Paul picked up one of my children for his team when they're 18 years old.

That indicated what a job the mother had done with Timothy during that time that she raised someone who became an apostle. God fearing young man in spite of the fact that she had to do it single-handedly. Moses' mother did it single-handedly.

So all these things teach us train up a child and the way he should go take time effort. That means if Moses' mother and Timothy's mother had to spend so much time with their children and John Wesley's mother had to spend so much time children. I'll tell you one thing they didn't have time to go visiting all their neighbors and gossiping and chit-chatting about everything that was going on under the sun like a lot of sisters do.

They didn't have time to waste with useless things. They concentrated on their children and determined that they would bring up their children in the fear of God and see the rewards. Timothy went on probably to bring hundreds of others to Christ.

One woman's labor and when Timothy gets his reward I'm sure God's going to call his mother and his grandmother and say hey each of you got to get your reward for the way you brought him up. So these are great examples of men who've been brought up and so what does it mean for us to be a Christ-like parent? The Bible says in Ephesians fathers the responsibility is primarily on fathers chapter 6 verse 4. Don't provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. There are two things discipline and instruction.

Both we must do not just discipline. There are a lot of fathers even in the world who discipline and mothers ready to whack their child but that's no use if you don't give instruction. Discipline plus instruction it's like two legs.

Don't stand on one leg and bring up your children. Stand on both legs. Discipline plus instruction of the Lord and the primary responsibility is the father's and if you're a born-again father it's your responsibility to bring up you.

It doesn't say mothers it says fathers. If you're a useless father then let the mother do the job. That's fine but acknowledge every day before God I'm a useless father.

You better say that. I'm a useless father so I'm letting my wife do the job but it's your job to bring up your children not your wife's. She's not the one supposed to instruct the children and she's not the one supposed to discipline the children.

It's your job. I'm not saying the mother does not discipline the children but the primary responsibility is the father's. It's so clear here.

Why doesn't it say parents? Why does it say fathers? Is it a slip of the ball's pen? No because even in Colossians where it speaks about parents and children it says in Colossians 3:21 fathers. So that's definite. It's primary responsibility of the father's but if you're a useless father like Timothy's father then the mother's got to do the job or if the father is away at work the whole day then the mother's got to do the job.

So anyway the responsibility is on parents to bring up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So what does that mean? Let me turn you to Psalm 90. This is a Psalm that Moses wrote.

Now we know that Moses was a bit of a failure as a father. You read in Exodus chapter 4 that he had not circumcised his own child. Perhaps I should show you that.

The reason I say that is because Psalm 90 was written by Moses. So let's look at his history a little bit. Exodus chapter 4 you read about Moses that he was selected by God to go to Egypt to be the leader and on his way we read on the way they stopped at a lodging place on the way to Egypt.

Exodus 4:24 and while Moses was there it says the Lord met him and tried to put him to death. What do you mean tried to put him to death? I mean God could kill a man any moment. I don't know what happened maybe Moses got seriously sick with a high fever on his way to Egypt to deliver the Israelites.

He gets his high fever and he's about to die and his wife Zipporah was not a Jewish person wife was a Gentile the daughter of some heathen priest and they began to seek God and it became clear to both of them it is because you have not circumcised your son. How in the world are you going to lead Israel to obey God's commandments and you haven't done it in your own home and Zipporah his wife realized it. Verse 23 took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses feet and said you're indeed a bridegroom of blood.

That means they had argued about it many times and for the sake of peace in the house Moses said okay we'll disobey God. Honey do it your way just like Adam for the sake of peace in his home he told Eve okay honey if you insist I'll disobey God I'll eat give me the apple give me the fruit rather. Well that's what Moses did.

God said you're going to lead people and you can't even be the head in your own home. I tell you I have to say that to many so-called Christian husbands in our churches. I say you men should put a veil on your head and sit in the meeting because you're not the head in your home.

You let your wife run the show and why are you sitting here with an uncovered head? Put a veil on your head and cover it and say I'm not the head in my home my wife is the head in my home. God created man to be the head of his home and he or he was disobeying the case of his own children. So serious that God wants to kill Moses and somebody went to the Lord and said Lord but he's the only man available now to lead your people you took 80 years to train him you'll take 80 years to get another man he says I don't care I'll take a hundred years to train another man but I'll kill this man if he doesn't obey me.

You know how serious it is not to bring up your children in the right way. I mean this is the I'll tell you this is the reason why God's anointing has gone away from many of his servants who once had it but lost it because they listened to their wives did what they told them compromised God's standards in the house and allowed the children to grow up worldly because the soft wife said oh don't don't hurt our child let him let him have it and so on. Let our girl dress that way okay okay it doesn't matter if he's a bit worldly and

following the worldly passion it doesn't matter and the father who should be putting a veil on his head okay honey we let our girl grow up like that isn't that tragic absolutely tragic well that's Moses.

God almost tried to kill him God is very strict with his servants and in the new covenant all of us are supposed to be God's servants so now we come to Psalm 90 the Psalm which Moses wrote and see what he says there Psalm 90 is the only Psalm that Moses wrote he says Lord verse 16 Psalm 90 verse 16 let your majesty let your work appear to your servants and your majesty to their children Lord we want our children to see your majesty and for them to see your majesty verse 17 let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us it's the King James Version translation is that is the correct translation let the beauty like we sing let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me we get it from this verse let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us so that our children can see your majesty and confirm the work

of our hands yes Lord confirm the work of our hands our children must see that God is with their daddy God is with their mummy that they can see the majesty of the Lord the beauty of the Lord in the lives of their parents so that is primary so what does it mean to be a Christ-like mother and a Christ-like father remember when God made man it says uh listen to this verse Genesis 1 27 and 28 no yeah 27 Genesis 1 27 God created man in his own image in the image of God he created them male and female so there there's a part of God's image in a woman which no matter how hard a man tries he can't do it it's in the combination of man and woman that the full image of God can be seen that's what it says there in the image of God he created them male and female and that's why he's made a woman a

certain way and man a certain way that if they are really joined together they can manifest the full beauty of the glory of God glory of God full of grace and truth is to be seen in a husband and wife together not alone they must see the beauty of Jesus in their parents right from early childhood what is the glory of God the glory of God we read in John 1 14 was seen in Jesus Christ full of grace and truth there's a balance there it's not all grace it's not all truth it's truth plus grace it's like bones plus flesh bones are solid things unbendable firm no flexibility that's truth sorry i'm not going to compromise on that we're not going to allow that in this house that's against God's word we don't permit it in this house those are the bones but that bones must be covered over with flesh

with grace that's the glory of God if your children see only bones don't blame them for running away from you because you yourself will run away from a skeleton if you see a skeleton walking up to you in the middle of the night what do you do you'll run and if you fathers and mothers are like skeletons to your children only bones firm firm firm don't blame them if they run the skeleton is to be covered over with flesh there's a lot of difference between a skeleton kissing a child and a person with flesh kissing a child it's hard skeleton even the kiss of a skeleton is hard but it's covered with flesh there's grace and truth that's the glory that's the balance there is the beauty of God and that's the beauty he says let's let it be seen in me and there when husband and wife are together

it's wonderful because one may have a little more of truth one may have a little more of grace but when both together the glory is seen see Romans chapter 11 this is what our children must see in us as Christ-like parents this is what we have to manifest to our children Romans chapter 11 and verse 22 behold now whenever you read the word behold it means look carefully don't just quickly glance look carefully at the kindness and the severity of God that is grace and truth see how kind God is and see how strict he is that is the balance kindness plus strictness that our children must see in us as parents and you know if one is overly strict then the other is overly kind then there's a balance but one should not prevent the other from fulfilling that part of God you know there must be a

balance of grace and truth of kindness and strictness so that for example if a father is going to punish a child for something he does deserves punishment for the mother should not in a false sense of compassion say no no no no don't do it and the child suddenly gets the idea that father and mother are actually not agreed on this and they'll play one against the other that's not the time I mean if you feel that your husband has punished your child too hard you need to talk to him because you're his helper but talk to him afterwards after the punishment is over I mean your child is not going to die because he got one wrong punishment afterwards you can when in when your children are not listening you can talk to your husband and say you know I think that was a bit too strict because

whatever reason that's how the balance comes if your husband and wife can talk together but never give that impression to your children that you're divided it's very important there's a beauty in the blending of grace and truth in kindness and strictness that must be your children must really see that you love them you're willing to sacrifice anything for them you're kind towards them I mean they can even see little things like this our children used to see that in our home when we couldn't afford a lot of good food they would see that we would give them all the good food and eat very simple food ourselves as father and mother that is a very simple way in which you can show your children that if you don't have enough money to get good food for everyone you give it to them first and give

them the best part of the food and eat nothing or what's left over what I mean is if there are sweet things that you can't afford to get for everybody just give it to them they see that you deny yourself there's a kindness there and then at other times there's a strictness I'll tell you one of the greatest joys of my own life has been this now that I'm 71 that all four of my boys have told me dad you are a hero and we want to bring up our children the way you brought us up if you can hear that from your children one day I wish you will I don't mean they're just flattering you but they really mean it you're a lucky parent you've done a job good job you brought them up in the fear of God it's very very important I mean it was so important for me in my younger days when I was a young father

that I'll tell you I don't like to make myself an example but I'm not perfect I'm not I told my children I was not a perfect father I'm an honest father I made mistakes I made lots of mistakes but I would always acknowledge them I was an honest father but I only say this to say that it has worked it's only to say that it's like saying I did a chemistry experiment and it worked so I'm only saying it in that context for the glory of God that there were many things I would cancel my own program so that I could be with my children it was important if they had some function that was important for them in which they were taking part whether it was a school drama or sport or some activity I would try my best if at all possible to adjust my program so that I could be there for that it would mean

a certain amount of giving up certain other things but I'd be there to show my children that I'm interested in what you're doing I want to ask you do your children feel that you're interested in something they're doing even if you have no interest in them but for the sake of your children you take an interest yeah if they're interested in it and I know my wife is a greater expert at this than me she'd sit and watch American football with these children she doesn't have the slightest interest in it but can't understand one bit of it she knows a bit now but just for the sake of fellowship with the children boy I like that and that's brought them very close to her you know and I want to encourage you sometimes you have to deny yourself and sit and do something which is not evil but something

innocent which you don't have any interest in perhaps for the sake of fellowship with your children but play a game with them what you have no interest in perhaps you want to fellowship with them this is a day

when there's the devil's trying to separate parents from children and don't try and be super spiritual try and fellowship with children in the ordinary things of life in little little things take an interest in their homework when I visit different homes sometimes I mean now I don't get much time to visit many homes because I'm traveling so much but when I was here much more frequently and I was an elder in this church once for a number of years and I used to visit some homes I would call the little children and talk to them I love to talk to little children I'd call them and ask

them about their homework what subject they were studying I'd ask them to bring me your geography book or bring me your mathematics book and you know small classes things which I also know and I would ask them some question and talk to them and maybe teach them some simple way of doing something and become friendly with them by talking not about Hebrews and James and all that but about geography and mathematics things they are interested in and I've become their friends thereby and the result is when I stand up here to speak in the pulpit they'll sit here and listen to me because they know I'm their friend you must become friends with little children Jesus was a great lover of little children and you're not like Jesus if you don't love children I tell you that no matter you can think

you're very holy but if you don't love little children you're not like Jesus not only your children anybody's children see it says in Malachi chapter 4 Malachi chapter 4 the last verse it says in the last two verses Elijah is going to come before the great and terrible day of the Lord he will restore the hearts of the fathers to the children the hearts of the children to their fathers so that I don't come and smite the land with a curse the last word the last word in the old testament is curse that's how the old testament ends and then you come into the new testament with grace and that curse is on the land because fathers don't have time for their children these are the days we're living in fathers are too busy I was reading somewhere the diary of a young 20 year old boy who died in a

car crash and the parents were active members in a church they were going to and after they never knew that he was writing a little diary after his death they opened this diary and they found entries you know something about geography and other things there and then today I went to dad and asked him something and dad said don't disturb me now I've got something very important to do and he says what a home this is I'm so lonely even my dad doesn't have time for me and then another few days later another entry I went to my mom for something she said no I've got to go for a prayer meeting I don't have time now then I sit here all alone and then he says I went to church and after the church I spoke to the pastor at the door and said you know I was really encouraged by something I you spoke

today can I talk to you he says no I have no time now he says I'm all alone it's all useless and he died don't wake up one day to read such things in your child's diary sometimes the things that don't interest you interest them I read another story of a man who's you know I don't know whether his child died or grew up and went away but he was an old man and he he was wealthy businessman and one day he was looking through old books and all lying around and he saw his son is not at home now his little his son's diary which the boy had written when he was 10 years old this is somewhere in the United States and he also the father also used to keep a diary and he saw what he and he compared what he wrote in his diary on that day with what his son wrote in his diary on that day what he wrote in

his diary the father wrote in his diary was went for fishing with my son spent the whole day catching nothing absolute waste of time the son's diary was went for fishing with my dad never caught a fish but it is a wonderful time with my father never enjoyed a day so much as this you see the different perspectives the question is not whether you catch fish or not the question is spending time with your children you have

them for such a short time I tell you this we had our children only for 18 years at home and boy we're thankful for the little that we could do but we miss we miss them tremendously when they went many of you have your children with you for longer than that take advantage of that time one day they'll go you'll see them very rarely and they'll have other responsibilities and

before they go make sure you're put into them values that will influence them not only them but which will influence the next generation for Christ is it enough that you are a witness for Christ don't you want your next generation to grow up to be witnesses for Christ I had this tremendous passion that's what my wife and I used to pray for our children all the time Lord fill them with the Holy Spirit make them your witnesses I don't care what job they have but make them your witnesses make them your witnesses fill them with the Holy Spirit we pray for them even now dear brothers and sisters let me urge you pray for your children every day then God will fill them with the Holy Spirit from childhood I started praying for my grandchildren now that God will fill them with the Spirit and give

them I always look for a promise in scripture when our children were small God gave my wife and me this promise and you can claim it because it's in scripture it's for you too if you can claim it Isaiah 54 and verse 13 the Lord says all your sons will be disciples that's the meaning will be discipled by the Lord and the well-being of your sons will be great this is when our kids were small I said Lord we claim it it's interesting that God gave it to my wife and to me separately and say oh well then there must be from the Lord we claim it you know you don't find these promises if you don't read the scriptures if people are lazy to read the scriptures there are checks huge checks with a lot of money spiritual money in the in this book you got to read it to find these checks and cash them in

the bank of heaven all your children not one or two all your sons will be discipled by the Lord and the well-being of your sons will be great I said Lord that's your word all the promises of God are yes in Jesus Christ we put our arm into it we've signed at the back of the check cash it in the bank of heaven it's for us and now that I've got grandchildren this is the promise I claim Isaiah 59 verse 21 as for me this is my covenant with them says the Lord my spirit which is upon you my words which I put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth nor from the mouth of your children nor from the mouth of your children's children says the Lord from now and forever now that may take a long time to be fulfilled but once upon a time it took a long time for Isaiah 54 13 to be fulfilled with

our little boys now it may take 20 years that's fine if the Lord tarries and if you're alive we'll keep praying for 20 years Lord fulfill your word what I'm trying to do is these promises are there for everyone it's not just for me my name is not there why don't you go to scripture husband and wife and say Lord what is the greatest thing we can do for our children just feed them clothe them educate them no bring them up in the fear of God so that in their generation they will be bold witnesses for Christ they may not be preachers that's not the point to be a witness for Christ I have never prayed that God will give my gift to my children or to anybody else God needs only one zack munnan in his church God needs only one of each of us but my prayer is that they'll be witnesses filled filled

witnesses in their generation and for that they must see the beauty of Jesus in us God is a father and a mother and they must see as I said the strictness and kindness of God in us and as a mother the care that a mother has see I want to show you a verse in Isaiah chapter 66 see what God says Isaiah 66 as one who verse 13 Isaiah 66 13 as one whom his mother comforts so I will comfort you and you will be comforted says the Lord a mother is there to comfort and encourage her children but what if the mother is most of the time working in an office and the children come to come home from school to an empty home

or mother is busy with other things she doesn't have time to comfort her children because she's busy earning money she's busy socializing etc sad that is another of the evils of

today's world my wife and I took a decision when our first son was born my wife was working right until the day our first son was born and you know she was a doctor and she could have earned many lakhs of rupees millions of rupees in these 40 years but we decided when our first son was born even though we had very little she's going to be a mother none of our children are going to grow up as orphans with me gone off to work for serving the Lord somewhere and mom gone off to earn money as a doctor and the children growing up as orphans brought up by some ayah or nanny or somebody else or grandmother or aunt or something I said no we'll bring up our children in a hut but we will give them our time and so my wife never went to work do we regret it of course we couldn't get all the fancy

things for our children that working mothers could get for their children but we never wanted those fancy things we wanted them to have a good life not fancy clothes and fancy toys and fancy gadgets which working mothers can get for their children no we were not interested in those things we wanted them to have time with their mummy and so every day when the children came back from school mummy was there I wasn't there many times I was not there sometimes I'd be gone for six weeks ministering somewhere or the other and but she was there every day she would never travel with me till my last son left home did she want to travel of course she'd love to travel but she didn't because she wanted to be at home with the children every day the children would come back from school she would talk to

them and they became very close would pray for them and when they went off to college one of their roommates told me you know Mr.

Poonen your son said that is the prayers of my mother that have kept me not the prayers of the father by the way the prayers of my mother have kept me and it's true so what I want to say is if you are struggling for survival and you cannot make ends meet God will understand if a woman has to go to work but if it is merely to raise your standard of living God sees that also we could have said you know we were so poor we didn't give enough money to rent a house that's how we started we could have said at least we should rent a house if my wife go to work but I say no that's not more important renting a house is not more important bringing up our children is more important it's all a question of values and I'll tell you something all the wealth you give your children is not going to help

them to be godly children of rich parents are some of the most spoiled children on the face of the earth it's better to teach them to learn to live with less and not that they can get whatever they want you give your children whatever you whatever they want and just because that person's child has we used to tell our children sorry we cannot afford to get you what that other boy in school has and that other boy in school has no we can't we can't afford to give you money to go out at lunchtime and go and buy a lunch somewhere you're just going to take this packed lunch that mommy makes up for you in the morning I know it's going to be a bit cold but that's it I don't regret it it's good that our children learn that they can't get everything they want to give them values particularly in the

area of money dear brothers sisters be disciplined and I want to show you something for about the Lord said about Abraham in Genesis chapter 18 Genesis 18 verse 17 please remember this verse God says shall I hide from Abraham what I'm going to do what a wonderful thing for God to say that Abraham is my friend I'm not going to hide from him what I'm going to do because he will become a great and mighty nation and verse 19 I have chosen Abraham for what purpose not to start the nation of Israel as we think

I've chosen Abraham so that he can command his children and his family after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice command is a military word right turn left turn quick march he will command his children not say will you please do this no he would command his

children tell them you got to do it I'm your dad and his family to keep the way of the Lord and then only then the Lord will be able to bring upon Abraham what he has spoken about him it's an amazing verse Matthew 18 Genesis 18 19 so you see and the proof of that is when Abraham was an old 125 year old man went up to the top of Mount Moriah and here is the young strapping 25 year old Isaac muscular young man and his old father says lie down on that altar I'm going to kill you now what does this 25 year old muscular young man do he meekly climbs on the altar allows his father to tie him up and the father is taking the knife to kill him that is the greatest proof of the way Abraham brought up his son in obedience that's why God could bring upon him I'll give you another unfortunate example

one Samuel Samuel was a wonderful man he saw the bad example of Eli who was before him Eli's children were all wayward and God used Samuel to warn Eli I'm going to punish you because your children are wayward what happened to Samuel's own children one Samuel chapter 8 when Samuel was old he appointed his sons to be judges he was the judge and even though he saw that his children were not God-fearing he made them judges you know how sometimes even elder brothers can be partial towards their own children even though they are no they are not God-fearing wonderful man like Samuel did it anybody can do it this partiality it's one of the last sins that many Christians get rid of particularly towards their family members they become lenient partial Samuel appointed his own sons as judges and

then and they were judging his sons verse 3 did not walk in his ways they took bribes and perverted justice can you imagine taking bribes and favoring the fellow who gave him a bribe and punishing the innocent person Samuel's sons what is the reason because verse chapter 7 previous verse chapter 7 verse 16 15 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life he used to go annually on a circuit he used to travel from Bethel to Gilgit to Misbah and he judged all over the places then he would come back to Rama where his house was and then he would travel all the time he had no time to bring up his children because he was serving the Lord he was serving the Lord the need was so great he needed he was needed here brother can you come here Samuel can you come here he went all over the world place

end result was his children grew up wayward was it worth it and he had learned from what happened in a previous generation to Eli these things are written in scripture to warn us let's be careful to take the good examples and the bad examples and say Lord let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me I want to say something to encourage you at the end if any man lack wisdom let him ask God that is the greatest need we have with our children wisdom James 1 5 says if you lack wisdom ask God he will give you liberally if you ask him in faith Lord I want wisdom to bring up my children to instruct them in the ways of the Lord teach them the truth the stories in and teach them the principles of God's word why we don't tell lies why we don't watch all these movies and why we are different from other

people why my little girl why I don't allow you to dress like all these worldly girls I'll tell you because we are different we don't follow these worldly models and cinema stars let the worldly Christians do that but I'm not going to bring you up my little girl that way no you're going to listen to me you may not understand it now but that's you'll understand it later on and then you'll bring up a girl who'll marry a God-fearing man one day and not just not just fall in love with somebody whom she sees and get married off to some unbeliever or something bring up your children in the ways of the Lord and teach them right from childhood the ways of the Lord and later on in life you can reap the harvest of the seed you have sown

let's pray Heavenly Father we pray you'll give us grace in

these difficult days to have wisdom to be filled with the Holy Spirit to take our responsibility seriously more seriously than we have ever taken it so far to have a right sense of values is what's important what's not important for our children to instruct them and bring them up in a way that will please you we pray in Jesus name Amen

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