

The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

Volume 17, Number 10

October, 2015

Ten Things You Need to Teach Your Children

by Dan Flourney

Both mother and father are "joint heirs of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:7). They share the great responsibility of rearing children to the glory of God.

As the head of the home, fathers are charged with leading the family: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Literally, "nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

There are three words in this passage that need to be understood: (1) nurture, (2) chastening, and (3) admonition.

Nurture literally means "to nourish." It has to do with putting into the mind of the child that which builds up. Just as food nourishes the body, instruction from God's word nourishes the soul of the child.

The word rendered chastening or as the Revised Standard Version has it discipline and instruction of the Lord, "may refer to all that

knowledge which is proper for children, including elementary principles and rules for behavior, etc."

Admonition means instruction and "may imply whatever is necessary to form the mind, to touch, regulate, and purify the passions, and necessarily includes the whole of religion" (Adam Clarke). Such instruction originates with the Lord in his word.

With these things in mind, we suggest ten things parents need to teach their children. Parents should teach their children...

1. That they are the special creation of God. (Gen. 1:26, Gen. 2:7). Children need to be impressed with a sense of something extraordinary in the formation of their body and soul.

2. There is value and purpose to life (Rom. 12:1-5; 2 Tim. 1:9). Children need to understand that their life is precious in the sight of God.

3. To love the word of God (Ps. 119:11; 105). The Bible is God's special communication with his creation. Children need to learn early in life to have a respect for Scripture and develop the habit of daily Bible reading.

4. Respect for authority (Prov. 1:8; 5:7). Children need to learn early in life that they

must respect authority beginning with parental authority and extending to school and civil authorities.

5. The value of discipline (Prov. 23:13). Fathers and mothers must exercise discipline because "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction will drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15).

6. To avoid bad people (Prov. 4:14-16). Children need to learn early on that there are bad people in the world and that they should be avoided.

7. The importance of sexual purity (Prov. 6:24). Parents should not hesitate to warn their children of the dangers of pre-marital and extra-marital sex for the Word of God is quite clear on such matters (read Prov. 7:4-23).

8. The value of honesty (Prov. 11:1, 6, 28:6). Honesty is the basis for all morality and the foundation of every relationship. Without honesty there can be no trust and relationships suffer. This includes the proper use of the tongue in always telling the truth (Prov. 21:23; 19:1; 15:2).

9. The value of a peaceful home-life (Prov. 17:1; 14; 22:6). When children live with arguing and turmoil they become insecure. Parents need to provide a home filled

with love, devotion to God and peace.

10. **To be faithful in their service to God** (1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 6:33). Parents should not only teach faithfulness, they should exemplify it. If parents do not attend worship, read and study the Bible they cannot hope to instill faithfulness in their children.

An Essential Element of Connection:

by Mikal Frazier, LMFT, LPC

1 Corinthians 10:24 "Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being."

1 Thessalonians 5:11
"Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing."

Recent research has discovered evidence of the very great need for humans to connect. Certainly we have known for decades the essential need of infants to be nurtured with human contact. Scientists have found the actual avenues for connection in the human brain. These are so distinct that it has been termed "we are hardwired for connection." Along with this thought, the actual location where rejection is registered has also been identified. And when rejection is sensed, it is accompanied by severe pain signaled in this particular part of the brain.

We, as human beings, want to know that we matter. Our need to know that we matter is so great that the late communication guru, Virginia Satir, said, "With every utterance we are seeking validation." We want to be heard. Because we do care about one another, we can learn specific skills that

will enrich our listening to one another, encouraging, validating and enriching our connection. The act of this kind of validating listening is called by several terms: active listening, empathic or empathetic listening, and reflective listening.

A friend recently shared a story in our ladies' class as we were discussing the topic of active listening. One of her grandsons, around 5 or 6 years old, was visiting in her home. This particular grandmother is most doting, but also quite busy. She was working on a project as her grandson shared a story. After a bit, as the grandmother was listening and tending to other responsibilities, her grandson said, "Mammaw, are you listening to me?" Well, yes, her ears were hearing, but he wanted more. He wanted more validation that real connection was occurring. He really wanted to know that he mattered.

Someone has said, "Talk is cheap, listening is rare." Maybe a twist of this quote would be "listening is precious." It is a gift of validation to another. If you will think back, many of your mentors and those you have perhaps chosen as role models, were likely very good listeners.

A University of Maine researcher, Dr. Marisue Pickering, identifies four characteristics of empathetic listeners:

1. Desire to be other-directed, rather than to project one's own feelings and ideas onto the other.
2. Desire to be non-defensive, rather than to protect the self. When the self is being protected, it is difficult to focus on another person.
3. Desire to imagine the roles,

perspectives, or experiences of the other, rather than assuming they are the same as one's own.

4. Desire to listen as a receiver, not as a critic, and desire to understand the other person rather than to achieve either agreement from or change in that person.

Other skills that will give the message of genuine listening and even empathy are:

- Give verbal or non-verbal messages of awareness and attending to the other.
- Comment on the actual verbal content from the other.
- Attempt to identify and name the feeling being experienced within the context of the message being given. If you are wrong they will correct you.
- Offer interpretation of what is being said, but be tentative.
- Summarize the feelings and content being expressed.
- Ask questions to seek further information.
- Give feedback, possibly sharing personal information.
- Use your own style of expressing warmth and caring.
- Clarify by seeking to know that what you are understanding is valid.
- Practice silence. This gives the message you have the time and care to genuinely hear the other.

This approach to one-anothering is an awesome way to express agape for one another. God is love. God is agape. As we give value to one another, we are becoming more what God would have us be.