Jan. 24, 2021 p.m.

THE EXAMPLE OF PARENTS

Reading: **Col. 3:12-21**

“A friend was in the hospital to give birth to her first baby. As the labor pains became more frequent and severe, she gasped to the nurse, ‘Is the hard part about over?’ The nurse replied, ‘Honey, this is the easy part. The hard part will last for the next 18 years.’” (W.R. Sumrall, House to House, Heart to Heart)

**Examples are important** (**Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12**)

* While peer pressure will occur, the example of parents is still the most important factor in raising our kids. Children help us grow up. We see ourselves in them.

**Common Sense (The world sees this!)**

* “I never see a child who has better eating habits than his parents,” says Keith Ayoob, associate professor of pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.” (If parents lighten up so will the kids, Chronicle-Tribune, Jan. 2003)
* “…it is important to remember that your kids look up to you and will follow your example. It’s no accident that the parent who sits in the stands screaming at the umpires, coaches, his or her child, or even other players will probably be the parent with a child who does the same thing.”

(Rick Martino, Be patient with youths, Golf Tips, Times-Daily, Florence, AL)

“The best children’s ministry program is kids watching their parents follow Jesus.” (Toby Mac, Nancy Lee Facebook Post)

**WHAT CHILDREN SHOULD SEE IN THEIR PARENTS**

* **People who enjoy worshiping God in the assemblies.**
* Participates in the assembly. (sings, listens)
* Talks about the sermon, class, a song in a positive way.
* Have you ever sat down at the dinner table and said that a point was made that day that you needed to hear and that you were going to do better? Any evidence that you heard the announcements? Making plans to do something?
* Instead of being critical and complaining – critique the preacher
* “Parents, who treat the church as optional, shouldn’t be surprised when their children treat Jesus as unnecessary.” (Facebook)
* **Bible study and prayer – children see us reading and praying**
* Loves the word of the Lord more than gold.(**Ps. 119:127**)
* Reads the bible, father leads the family in prayer.
* **Fathers (and mothers) who know the place of their work, recreation, hobbies.**
* Work is a means to an end, not the end itself. Not always easy to know how much is too much. (workaholics) When do we say no to a promotion? “Work will lighten up. I’ll have more time eventually.” (lies of the devil) Tired parents make poor parents.
* “If my most important job lies ahead when I pull the car into the garage, then I need to give my family the same effort I just gave the Packers.”

(Ken Ruettgers, Green Bay Packers all-pro tackle, Christian Reader, Nov/Dec 1995)

* **Serving others – workers in local churches**
* The household of Stephanas(**1 Cor. 16:15**)
* We want our children to love the church and be servants of others.
* Hospitality, caring for the elderly and the sick, teach bible classes, work days at the building, visitors, invite neighbors in for a bible study
* “A survey several years ago … 93% of kids remained faithful where both parents were actively involved. However only 6% of kids remained faithful where the parents attended infrequently and were not involved at all in the local work.”

(Misconceptions of Parenting, Barry Gilreath)

* **Character, everyday behavior, speech, integrity, gratitude**
* Fruit of the Spirit, put off the old and put on the new man (**Gal. 5; Eph. 4-5; Col. 3**)
* A little boy was sent to bed after displaying an ugly temper, with the instructions to pray that he might be a better boy. His mother heard him pray, “Dear God, please take away my bad temper. And while you are at it, please take daddy’s too.”
* “If character training is a primary goal of parenting, and I believe it is, then the best way to instill it is through the demeanor and behavior of a father. … Boys watch their dads intently, noting every detail of behavior and values. … Your sons will imitate much of what you do. If you blow up regularly and insult your wife, your boys will treat their mother and other females disrespectfully. … If you are selfish or mean or angry, you’ll see those characteristics displayed in the next generation. Fortunately, the converse is also true. If you are honest, trustworthy, caring, loving, self-disciplined and God-fearing, your boys will be influenced by those traits as they age.”

(James Dobson, Like Father, Like Son, Focus on the Family, Nov. 2001)

* “The greatest thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother.”
* Does he appreciate her? Compliment her? (**Pr. 31:28-29**) Time for her? Date nights.
* Children will “mirror their parents, including the affection they see taking place between Mom and Dad.” (John Rosemond, Better Homes and Gardens, Feb. 1990)
* Are our daughters seeing submission, helpers, respect, and love in their mothers?
* **Admit our mistakes and apologize to them when we need to with no excuses.**
* They see us a “real” people with our own struggles. Pray with them – confess our faults. Let them see the grace of God working in our life.
* When James Dobson’s father apologized to him by saying “I didn’t treat you right this afternoon. I was riding your back for no good reason and I want you to know I’m sorry.” Dobson wrote, “He made a friend for life.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Discipline (with punishment), teaching (balance) and example (with love)!**

**We can do this!**

1. Dr. James Dobson, Parenting Isn’t for Cowards, p. 156 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)