

Raising Up Children

Part 5

4- From the childhood life of our Lord Jesus Christ: “41 Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. 42 When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. 43 After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. 44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” 49 “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” 50 But they did not understand what he was saying to them. 51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Luke 2:41-52)

The mind and the understanding of the people dictate that children should be placed with other children to play, to race and to talk to one another. There is a notion in most of the culture states that the children are good for children. That is why you find every where children with children in the street, schools, gardens and parks, etc.

People assume that in order for children to learn is to spend a fair amount of time with those of their own age. But is this idea scriptural? Does the Bible anywhere warn parents to provide adequate social interaction for their children? No! In fact all the warnings I am aware of focus on the opposite danger. Paul warned about friendships saying **“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good characters.’” (1 Corinthians 15:33)** It is not that carnal friendships "might" be a bad. There is no "maybe" or "possibly" here. Ungodly companionships are inevitably a bad influence in **all** cases.

Solomon warned his son in saying to him, **“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.” (Proverbs 13:20)** How can you tell if your children are experiencing companionship with fools? Fools are those who are foolish! The Bible tells us where we are most likely to find foolishness. **Proverbs 22:15** states, **“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”** This verse definitely tells us an inevitable focus of foolishness-- children. Is it the plan of God for children to be nurtured by adults rather than by peers?

Ultimately the Bible has completely different concept and stand; the bible does not appreciate children mixed with other children. Children by nature are foolish and should not be allowed to be mixed with one another without the supervision of mature responsible adult.

Jesus when he criticized who despised John the Baptist, he compared them with the following: **“16 To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: 17 “We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.” (Matthew 11:16-17)** Jesus compared their foolishness with the foolishness of the mixed children playing in the street.

In **Matthew 19:13-15** **“13 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. 14 Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” 15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.”** The children did not come to Jesus alone but they were brought to Him by people who were responsible on them

From **Luke 2:41-52** and that event from Jesus’ life we can get good conclusion for raising up godly children:

A- Children should accompany parents who should be directly responsible for their children: “43 After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.” (Luke 2:43) Joseph and Mary were not aware to care for their child, Jesus. Many parents behave in such a way who do not mind where is their child is going and with whom.

B- Children should not be mixed with relatives or friends without the presence of the parents: “44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends.” (Luke 2:44 NIV) “44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.” (Luke 2:44 KJV) When Joseph and Mary left Jesus alone, he was not found among friends or relatives. Jesus is God and would not do wrong and go alone to friends and relatives and spend time among them. Many parents they let their children to go along their friends, neighbours or their relatives just for the reason that they can get some socialization and fun time. That would not be a healthy reason or a healthy atmosphere for them to grow up. Some other parents they leave their children in front of TV, computers, video games and that has more harmful effects on their lives.

C- Parents should search carefully for their children: “45 When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.” When your child is missing from around you, then you need to move quickly to find him. God made you accountable for your child/children and you need to give an account on them before God.

D- It is the parents fault if the child is lost: “48 When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” It was not Jesus fault but the fault of his parent. In the same way it is your responsibility as parents to look after your children.

E- God gave the parents authority over the children and bestow on them respect and honour: “51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his

mother treasured all these things in her heart.” Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents. Your children will obey you as you exercise your authority over them and discipline them.

F- Children can be entrusted or be under the care of God’s Word teachers: *“46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.”* If Jesus His parents had left him, the only place that He needs to keep Himself with is the teachers of God’s Word. For certain particular reason that you cannot keep your child/children with you, therefore you need to entrust them to be with God’s people who can handle them and lead them in righteousness. Godly people who are disciplinarian can take care and look after your children but for a short period of time till you are available back to be with your child/children.

G- Parents should take the direct responsibility to teach their children the word of God: *“46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.”* Jesus was not only listening but he was fully oriented of what the teachers are saying and even he was asking them questions. The scriptural directives to *“Train up a child in the way he should go.” (Proverbs 22:6)* and *“teach [these words] diligently to your children.” (Deuteronomy 6:6)* are given to parents, not to some other institution. Leaders in the church are to *“Equip the saints for the work.” (Ephesians 4:12)* not "do the work for the saints." The church needs to train parents to take responsibility for discipline and discipling their own children. The church should stand beside the parents and help them and encourage them and build them up in the way that God wants them to raise up their children in godly manner. In *Matthew 19:13-15* *“13 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. 14 Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” 15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.”* The children were brought to Jesus by people who were responsible on them. Therefore, children when they are brought to the Lord/church, should be accompanied by their parents.

My Dear and Beloved: Your children are God’s children, and He gave them to you in order to raise them up in a the prescribed way that they would finally serve Him and take the lead to do the will of God and the work of God and to be His instrument to deliver mankind from the peril of sin and devil. To this you are called as parents and God wants you to desire to work hand in hand with Him and do properly your part as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your word that clearly declare to me your will and your good plan for me and my family. Lord I accept your calling and commission to me to lead my family and to raise up godly children, who will be servants of yours to lead others in righteousness. Lord equip me more and provide for me to continue to do your work and your will, this is my prayer in Jesus name. Amen.*

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“And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.”

(2Chronicles 20:13)

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