



Understanding My Children

Nurturing Children or Raising Cain?

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- “Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers.” (Socrates, 470-399 BC)
- “If you want children to keep their feet on the ground, put some responsibility on their shoulders.”
- “Children will not remember you for the material things you provided but for the feeling that you cherished them.”
- “How many children does it takes to turn off a light bulb? Three. One to say, ‘What light?’ and two more to say, ‘I didn't turn it on.’”



Understanding My Children

- Psalm 127:3-5 - “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. 5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them...”
- Eph. 6:4 - “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”



Understanding My Children

- “Men are generally more careful of the breed and care of their horses and dogs than of their children.” (William Penn)
- “How can it be an important career to teach other people's children about mathematics, and a small career to tell one's own children about the world around them? A mother's function is laborious, not because it is minute, but because it is gigantic. I will pity mother for the hugeness of her task; I will never pity her for its smallness.” (G.K. Chesterton)



Understanding My Children

- Adults intuitively know that there is a Divinely generated link between love and discipline in raising children.
- Children instinctively look for love in discipline just as an infant instinctively nuzzles for his mother's breast.



Understanding My Children

- 1Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12 - “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. 8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us... 11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, 12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”



Understanding My Children

- Heb. 12:5-6, 10-11 - “And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives... 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”



Understanding My Children

- As parents, the greatest blessing we will ever give our children is to give them back to God
 - Gen. 18:19 - “For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”
 - 1Sam. 1:22 - “But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there forever.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Insist that your children obey your instructions
 - Eph. 6:1-3 - “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: 3 that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth”
 - “The thing that impresses me the most about America is the way parents obey their children.”
(King Edward VIII, 1894 - 1972)



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- “There was a time when we expected nothing of our children but obedience, as opposed to the present, when we expect everything of them but obedience.” (Anatole Broyard)
 - Prov. 30:11 - “There is a generation that curses its father, And does not bless its mother.”
 - Prov. 29:15 - “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Jesus and His parents
 - Luke 2:51 - “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them”
- Eli and his sons
 - 1Sam. 2:12, 22-24, 3:13 - “Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD... 22 Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 23 So he said to them, Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. 24 No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD'S people transgress... 3:13 For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Praise; don't just punish
 - Punishment without praise will break a child's spirit
 - Col. 3:21 - "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."
 - If you must punish, make the punishment fit the offense.



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Give them what they need, not necessarily what they want
 - Matt. 7:8-11 - “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- “It is not giving children more that spoils them; it is giving them more to avoid confrontation. (John Gray, Children Are From Heaven)
- Say “yes” every time that you can, and “no” every time that you must.



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Be consistent
 - In teaching and correction; follow through and stay in control
 - Practice what you preach
 - 2Tim. 1:5 - "...when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also."



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Do not show favoritism
 - Favoritism caused suffering and sorrow in every Bible family that practiced it
 - Abraham - Isaac over Ishmael
 - Isaac - Esau over Jacob
 - Jacob - Joseph over his brothers
 - David - Absalom and Adonijah
 - Recognize and respect individuality among your children while remaining impartial in your treatment of them



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Work together
 - Gen. 27:6 - “So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother...”
- Children sense conflict between parents and are adept at exploiting it
 - Matt. 12:25 - “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Find and develop each child's "way"
 - Prov. 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it."
- Don't try to make him or her into what you wanted to be, but did not become. Parents who live vicariously through their children exploit them



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Encourage individuality without abandoning what is right
 - Encouraging a child's interest in music and art is good; arranging for them to learn dance is sin
 - Encouraging energy and ambition is good; allowing them to run rampant is sin



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Give direction and discipline fit for each
 - Ecc. 5:18-19 - “Here is what I have seen: It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; for it is his heritage. 19 As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor-this is the gift of God.”
 - Ecc. 12:1 - “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, I have no pleasure in them”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Each child may need different kinds of discipline, depending on his response
 - Jude 22-23 - “And on some have compassion, making a distinction; 23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Set godly examples

- Isa. 39:4 - “And he said, What have they seen in your house? So Hezekiah answered, They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them.”
- Prov. 4:1-4 - “Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; 2 For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. 3 When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, 4 He also taught me, and said to me: Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Set godly examples
 - Love God - Matt. 22:37 - Obey, worship, and put Him first
 - Love man - Matt. 22:39 - Honesty, fairness, kindness, courtesy, and mercy
 - You children will notice and imitate your behaviors



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Pray for God's Help

- Judges 13:8-9 - “Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said, O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born.”
- James 1:5-8 - For wisdom
- Phil. 4:6-7 - For assurance



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Be patient
 - Start early in life
 - Lois & Eunice and Timothy
 - Hannah and Samuel
 - Jochebed and Moses



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Be patient
 - Stay the course
 - Prov. 19:18 - “Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.”
 - Prov. 23:13-14 - “Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. 14 You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Repent and confess to your children when you sin against them
 - James 5:16
- Parents can sin against their children
 - Col. 3:21



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Seek counsel

- Titus 2:4 - “that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children”

- Prov. 11:14 - “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

- Prov. 15:22 - “Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.”



Divine Guidance In Understanding My Children

- Filter the well-meaning advice, suggestions, recommendations of others through the sieve of truth
- Beware of intrusive meddlers
 - 1Peter 4:15 - “But let none of you suffer as a... busybody in other people's matters.”
 - Everyone is an expert: “Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children and no theories.” (John Wilmot)



Lessons

- “The Hebrew word for parents is horim, and it comes from the same root as moreh, teacher. The parent is, and remains, the first and most important teacher that the child will have.”
- “When we choose to be parents, we accept another human being as part of ourselves, and a large part of our emotional selves will stay with that person as long as we live. From that time on, there will be another person on this earth whose orbit around us will affect us as surely as the moon affects the tides, and affect us in some ways more deeply than anyone else can. Our children are extensions of ourselves.” (Fred Rogers)