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FATHERS

By Charles Coats

I am the father of two boys, Brandon, age 8 and Ben, age 6. Having these two children and having a father of my own, I can speak somewhat authoritatively on the subject at hand. By no means do I mean to imply that I have all the answers to being a father or that I never make a mistake. I do, however, I have some experience at this, and I do have the greatest guide-book ever given — the Bible.

It is with the principles God laid down that I wish to address the matter of being a father. I am not addressing the ability to produce children, but the ability to be a father, a daddy, to our children. I have a saying on the wall of my office that says, "Any man can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a daddy." This is what I wish to discuss.

Fathers are supposed to be the head of the family (I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23). In too many families, this is either not true or unsure. This leads to serious problems in the home and causes a great deal of confusion for the children. Wives need to always remember that they voluntarily place themselves in subjection to their husbands (Eph. 5:22).

Fathers are to love their wives and treat them as precious vessels (Col. 3:19; I Peter 3:7). The idea expressed here is that the woman is like a priceless vase that is given a place of honor and handled with loving care.

Fathers are to teach their children about God (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21). It should be every Christians goal to get to heaven and to take as many as possible with him. This

should be especially true concerning his family. In some cases, the wife is willing to train the children to be Christians, but the father is not. This is not only a shame; it is a sin! Fathers are commanded to train their children to be Christians. "Go ye into all the world" (Mark 16:15) begins at home.

Fathers are to be examples of Christian living (I Tim. 4:12; Matt. 5:16). The hardest thing for a child to do is to try to get to Heaven following some of the examples set before him. Fathers, you need to keep in mind that "little eyes are watching you."

Fathers, who are daddies, carry a great load of responsibility. Let all of us who are fathers remember what God expects of us and give to God and our families 100% of our ability in fulfilling this role.

Christian Young People and the Public Schools

By Bill Graddy

When we leave the land of the living, all we will leave behind will be what we instilled in our children. Thomas Campbell said, "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die." Although we see much child abuse today, Godly parents protect and provide for their children. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of thy youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." (Psalms 127:3 - 5). The greatest advice parents can give to their children is found in I Timothy 4:12

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity!" Parents are free to educate their children as they please. They may choose private schools or public schools. Since this article is dealing with the public schools, then we will address ourselves to this subject. The public schools come under a great deal of criticism and always will because they are public. The taxpayers have a field day on the public schools because they feel they are paying for them; therefore, that gives them a right to censure. With this we are in full agreement. The public school system is a great system and we believe that children can receive a quality education by attending public schools. Regardless of where we educate our children, parents are the key. If children come from homes that have spent the first six years teaching them the right attitudes, and continue to help them as they go through school, they will succeed. Schools do not "make or break" children! Parents and teachers do.

In the public schools there are many temptations for the students. However, children will have the same urges on any campus. Environment does not control emotions. Emotions can be supervised, but emotions cannot be controlled by faculties or parents. Each child must deal with his own passions and problems. The schools always welcome parents as advisors and chaperons. The PTA is the organization through which the parents may become involved. A part of growing up is making hard decisions and dealing with reality. Will I become a cheerleader? Will I wear shorts in physical education classes? Will I attend the junior-senior prom? Will I drink alcohol and partake of drugs? This will, in large measure, be determined by early home training.

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FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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(Proverbs 22:6). There is always a way provided for Christians. (I Cor. 10:13). The student does not have to be a cheerleader. Long pants can be worn in physical education classes. (If parents will write a letter of protest, this will be respected). The words, "revellings" and "laciousness" (Gal. 5:19, 21) teach that dancing is sinful and ". . . they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5: 21). In the same context alcohol and drugs are condemned as "drunkards" will receive the same punishment. Mixed bathing is another problem, but I Timothy 2:9 teaches us what Jesus wants us to do. When school activities cannot be participated in by Christians, **parents MUST provide an alternative!** Since our children will have the same desires to do many of these things, we must show them both by precept and example the scriptural way. Most of us love to swim. Camps operated by brethren provide a place where we can swim separately. On the night of the junior-senior prom, parents (not the church) provide a night out with the teenagers showing them they can have fun doing other things besides dancing and still be pleasing to the Lord. We must learn early in life, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (I John 2:15).

Young Christians have an excellent opportunity to set the right example at school and be models for other students. Remember I Timothy 4:12. When lives are worthy to emulate they will be followed and respected. Students with

good morals generally make good grades and thereby gain attention and admiration from both their peers and their teachers. HERE is where the "leaven" (I Corinthians 5:7) is needed. Christ did not teach us to horde life in hybernation and live secluded lives in nunneries. Rather the concept is, "Go ye into all the WORLD, and preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE." (emphasis mine, BG), (Mark 16:15) We do not live in an utopia. The greatest challenge is where the opportunities are most pressing! Although we know Christians who are teachers in the public schools who do not wear the name in a worthy manner, there is a vast difference between the principle and the abuse of the principle. The public schools today are where we need convicted young people and teachers. The opportunities are rich and ripe for the evangelization of lost souls. People who are lost are looking for role models and examples worthy to emulate. The public schools are as rich fields ready unto harvest, but the reapers are few. (John 4:35). The public schools are as laboratories ready for the young and the old alike to practice the precepts of Christianity. WHERE ARE THE FIELDS GREENER? Did not the early church start at Jerusalem and go out from there? Parents always must help their children to cope with the problems of life. As we help one another to maturity, we gain the victory by obeying the sacred scriptures. From these we learn that we are in the world, but we are not of the world. (John 17:14). With a solid scriptural base, the inward man is renewed daily, (II Corinthians 4:16), making the necessary adjustments. In the

public schools we can get a good education, let our light shine for the Lord, and be a leavening influence for God every day in a place where it counts most. Parents who love the Lord and their children will help them to achieve these worthy goals.

**CHILDREN - A Reward
 But A Responsibility**

By Dan Winkler

"Are you boys twins?" So went the question. It was with the impetuosity of Peter that our oldest responded, "Yes, and we live together too!" (Twins, they are not.) Then, there was our second son's description of a sesame seed bun to his mother. Of course, everyone recognizes a sesame seed bun as the "hamburger with peanuts on top."

(1) **Children are such a reward.** Any parent can rehearse statements of profundity as voiced by their children. How sweet are little children! Their brows are unfurrowed by the cares of life. Their hearts are untarnished by lingering disappointments and so tenderly full of trust. Their souls, unblemished by iniquity, gaze through eyes of precious innocence. "Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psalm 127:3). Children are such a reward!

What would the world be without them? They must be coaxed to eat; washed morning, noon, and evening; and, dressed three times before going anywhere. At times, they fray maternal nerves and wear

These statistics were compiled by Brother Bobby Key over a 20 year period as the preacher for the church in Miami, Oklahoma. This survey involved 143 Christian young people.

CHRISTIANS MARRIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS	CHRISTIANS MARRIED TO CHRISTIANS
Total 79	Total 64
Left the church 57	Left the church 5
Remained faithful 22	Remained faithful 59
Converted mates 14	Divorced 2
Divorced 25	

YOUNG PEOPLE, MARRY A CHRISTIAN!!

thin paternal patience. Then, there are the heartaches that accompany the precision and aftermath of discipline. They are a handful to be sure, but, they are such a source of joy. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them" (Psa. 127:5), and the "joyful mother of children" (Psalm 113:9).

(2) **Children are such a responsibility.** The potential rewards generated by children do not come automatically. "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15). This passage projects a malady and a remedy. The remedy, of course, demands paternal responsibility. "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself causeth shame to his mother" (Prov. 29:15). Thus the challenge is to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Prov. 22:6). Again, parents are told, "Correct thy son, and he will give thee rest; yea, he will give delight unto thy soul" (Prov. 29:17).

The New Testament sets the following charge before fathers: "Ye fathers provoke (*parorgidzete*, "arouse to wrath, exasperate") not your children to wrath; but nurture (*ektrepheete*, "nourish up to maturity") them in the chastening (*padeia*, "education which aims to the increase of virtue") and admonition (*nouthesia*, instruction) of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Children are a reward, but equally true, they are a grave responsibility! What a tragedy it would be to forfeit them as blessings by failing to fulfill paternal responsibilities.

(Taken from *Four State Gospel News*, Bobby Key, editor)

NEGLECTED CHILDREN

By Charles Coats

From the days of World War II to our day and time, we have seen an increase in the number of working women. Researchers are telling us that nearly 50% of the work force is composed of women. This has created two shortages - jobs and mothers. It is to the shortage of mothers that I wish to speak in this article.

Many reasons have been offered for mothers going to work. These reasons have ranged from "economic necessity" to "I want something to do." While mothers working may "solve" some of these problems, it creates a more serious problem -- **NEGLECTED CHILDREN.**

In the last few years, we started hearing of a group of children known as "Latchkey Kids." This name was attached to them because these kids would carry a key to their house in order to let themselves in when they returned home from school. It was learned that this became a necessity because both father and mother worked away from the home. The child would have to come home from school, let himself in an empty house, and remain there alone for, in many cases, several hours.

This condition led to some serious problems with these children. Let us notice some of these:

(1) We are now seeing many children who are very disrespectful and undisciplined. This is no surprise when the child has to remain alone to fend for himself. Let's face it! No child is prepared to face life's problems unsupervised.

(2) Many of these children have, what I consider, severe mental problems. I have known children who were discipline problems, who were rebellious to their parents, and who had a great fear of being left with anyone. Children have been known to cry at babysitters or be depressed simply because they are being, in their minds, abandoned. (I wonder if there might be some connection between this and the rising number of suicides among young people.)

(3) A recent study has found that "Latchkey Kids" are more likely to experiment with sex. This study covered kids in the 12 - 15 year old age group, and found that 40% had had some type of sexual experience at home (heavy petting, etc.). Source: *Springfield (MO) Daily News*, "Latchkey Kids Found More Likely to Experiment With Sex," 11-25-85)

(4) This same article revealed that these children are also "terrorized." They "live in constant fear." This, of course, is understandable. Knowing our society as you do,

how would you like to be an 8 or 9 year old and come home alone to an, hopefully, empty house? I can imagine the parents' instructions to their child would go something like this: "Here's your key to let you in this afternoon. Now, you remember to come straight home. We'll be in about 6 or 7. Remember don't talk to strangers. Don't accept a ride from someone you don't know. Don't answer the door. Don't let the person on the phone know you are alone. We wouldn't want someone to pick up our little boy, and never see you again, would we? You have a good time now. We'll see you tonight."

These problems are not limited to the "Latchkey Kids" only. We see many of the same problems with children who are left with babysitters or in day-care centers. There is a solution to these problems. We need to start rearing children like God said do it. Let the husband "bring home the bacon" and let the wife "cook it." It is not a demeaning job to be a mother and a housewife. In fact, to do it right is the hardest thing any woman will ever do, but it will be that for which she will be rewarded the most (cf. Prov. 31). We need more women who realize that the greatest thing they can possibly do is keep the home as a place where the husband will look forward to returning, and where the children will be trained to be Christians.

God, in all his wisdom, started things out this way. To Adam, God said, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. 3:19). To Eve, God said, "in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). One of the things the older women were to instruct the younger women was to be "workers AT home" (Tit. 2:5, emp. mine, C.C.).

One might counter this article with the argument that women worked in the New Testament. One of the two of record is Lydia (Acts 16:14) whose household was with her and was composed of women ONLY. The other is Priscilla (Acts 18:1-3). It needs to be noted that

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Paul dwelt with Priscilla and her husband, Aquila, and made tents, because they were of the same profession. Priscilla worked with her husband, Aquila.

Let's be frank! Why do most women work? Is it not that they might have more things? Even those who begin working to ease a "financial crunch" usually keep working once they see that money coming in. We need to be careful that we do not become materialistic (Matt. 6:19, 20) or lovers of money (I Tim. 6:10).

While having both parents might allow us to have many nice things, the result is still neglected children. They are the real losers. We cannot buy their love. We cannot even buy their happiness. They need us -- daddys AND mammas.

Much more could be said on this subject. However, I hope that what has been said will be enough to help us realize that we need our mothers to stay home for the sake of the children. Let us all ask ourselves, "Am I the kind of parent God wants me to be for the well-being of my children?"

Walk A Little Plainer, Daddy

Walk a little plainer, Daddy,
Said a little boy so frail.
I'm following in your footsteps,
and I don't want to fail.

Sometimes your steps are very plain.
Sometimes they're hard to see.
So, walk a little plainer, Daddy,
For you are leading me.

I know that once you walked this way,
Many years ago.
And what you did along the way,
I'd really like to know.
For sometimes when I am tempted,
I don't know what to do.
So, walk a little plainer, Daddy,
For I must follow you.

Someday when I'm grown up,
You are like I want to be.
Then, I will have a little boy
Who will want to follow me.
And I would want to lead him right,
And help him to be true.
So, walk a little plainer, Daddy,
For WE must follow you.

How To Become A Christian

The most important question ever asked is: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). Let us notice God's answer. First, you must have faith in the "author and finisher of our faith"; Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:2). This faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God (Romans 10:17). "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). With the belief and trust that Jesus is the Redeemer, you must repent of your sins. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). In repentance, one turns from sin, **STOPS** serving Satan and **STARTS** serving the Lord (Matt. 3:8; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19). With this new attitude,

you are ready to confess your faith in Christ. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9, 10). Now, you are ready for the final step in becoming a Christian — baptism into Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Please read Mark 16:16; Acts 2: 38. Now that your past sins have been forgiven, the Lord has added you to His church and you are a Christian (Acts 2:47; 11:26).

For further study, contact a member of the church of Christ in your area.

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