
Words of Truth

Parents Need To Be The Adult In The Relationship

By: Brian A. Yeager

The culture we live in currently promotes the idea that adults should be childish. You will hear statements such as, "let your inner child come out" made in our society. It is noticeable that the age of maturity in our society has changed, drastically. It is sad when adults need to be told to "grow up". I am not suggesting that "fun" disappears at a certain physical age. At forty-two years old I have plenty of fun. I enjoy life as God permits (Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 and I Timothy 6:17). What we are about to consider is not life expectations through the eyes of Brian, but expectations of maturity through the eyes of God. Furthermore, how that maturity plays into parenting.

When the congregation in Corinth was guilty of abusing the miraculous abilities granted to them through the Holy Spirit, they erred. They lacked spiritual maturity. Consider two statements from contexts that were correcting their abuses. Furthermore, think about what these statements from God teach us about maturity. The Lord, through the pen of Paul the Apostle said this: "*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things... Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men" (I Corinthians 13:11; 14:20).*

Even in spiritual lessons, being childish is considered as immature and unable to handle matters of maturity (I Corinthians 3:1-3 and Hebrews 5:5-6:3). Think about that! When adults fall prey to thinking and behaving as children, how can they be mature enough to be the leaders of their families? Children should not raise children. Now listen, I am not talking about physical age. Katrina and I were very young when we fornicated, repented, got married, and she gave birth to Trevor. We had to "grow up" and be parents at a very young age. Katrina was still in high school. I had just graduated high school. We had to "grow up" very quickly. Looking back and considering people I have seen over the years; we were more mature than some in their thirties and forties are now. That is sad!

Katrina and I knew we had to "grow up" to be parents. We knew we were having a child. I was about to be a father. I knew I had a godly responsibility to raise up Trevor in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). I knew I had to be the spiritual and physical head of my household (Colossians 3:18-21 and I Timothy 5:8). We knew we were having a child, not gaining a new buddy. That lesson needs taught loudly today.

Raising A Child, Not A Buddy

Fathers and mothers are supposed to instruct their children (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20). Solomon, by the inspiration of God, wrote this: *“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live”* (Proverbs 4:1-4). Parenting needs to be thought of as training up a child, not playtime (Proverbs 22:6).

When parents stop being the instructors of their children and they slip down to the role of an equal peer; the role of parenting is lost. Children are not equals with their parents. They cannot be treated as such. Even under the Law of Moses, it was written that children ought to fear their parents (Leviticus 19:3). Children need to understand that dad and mom are not playing games with them. They need to know that there are/will be real consequences at the hands of dad and mom for bad behavior (Proverbs 3:12, Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 19:18, Proverbs 22:15, Proverbs 23:13-14, Proverbs 29:15, Proverbs 29:17, and Hebrews 12:5-11).

Children will not respond well to parents who act just like them. Leaders need to be leaders, not equal peers. Maturity and authority need to exist in any situation wherein someone is going to be taught and corrected. If a parent acts like a two-year old their children will treat them like such. This problem is easily avoidable if we parent God's way. Using God's methods of raising children works!

God's Way Works

Training up a child through the Scriptures works! Consider one of the faithful evangelists (I Corinthians 4:17) we read about in the Scriptures. In regard to how Timothy [Timotheus] was raised we know some things. First, we know his mother was a Jewess that obeyed the Lord, but his father was a Gentile (Acts 16:1-2). Considering who influenced Timothy, think about this statement: *“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also”* (II Timothy 1:5). How did Lois and Eunice succeed in raising Timothy properly? The Scriptures reveal that they taught Timothy the word of God from the time he was a child. Such teaching equipped him unto all good works (II Timothy 3:14-17).

Conclusion

If you want a buddy, get one. If you are a parent or a grandparent, act like an adult. Take the role of training up children seriously. The soul of that child is in your hands. Think about how likely it will be that your children will err if you do not train them up properly (Psalms 106:6 and Jeremiah 9:14). Take the role of a parent seriously!
