

Project 78

Part 3

Even when both parents are physically present in the home, the father, and sometimes the mother as well are often spiritually and psychologically absent. This coupled with other factors have had devastating results on the family.

- Since 1963, violent crime has increased over 500 percent.
- Illegitimate births have increased 400 percent.
- Divorces have increased 400 percent.
- Children living in single-parent homes have increased 300 percent.
- Teenage suicide has increased 200 percent.
- S.A.T. scores have dropped almost 80 points, despite huge increases in support for education.

“Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.”

Psalm 127:1-2

Many people have said this and you have probably heard it: “My wife and I have agreed that we don’t want to force our religion down our children’s throat. We want them to have the freedom to make up their own minds about that.” Often when this is said the person says it sincerely and it may sound wise, even sophisticated, but in reality it is fundamentally devastating to the child and absolutely rebellious toward God. To be religiously neutral at home in itself is a form of religion--an anti-God religion.

- **As I was preparing this message, I stumbled upon the *United Communities of Spirit, it began in 1969 and have 8924 members, from 98 nations, in 247 faith groups. It's purpose is to link people of diverse faiths and beliefs who want to work with others to build a better world. It goes on the assumption, (not a Biblical one), that all humanity is part of the same spiritual family. It has defined itself as a "confluence" – a “politically correct” church association that are united through many perspectives and traditions and voices, into a common framework and forum. Here is what they have to say about themselves:***

“Our members have a variety of options for expressing themselves, and telling us about their beliefs, their insights, their tradition. They can...select and add to a "list of the Names of God", enter and select brief "belief tenets", add Credos and Prayers and Mantras and Affirmations, etc.

Through our network tools, we do what we can to seek for the common core shared by our members, and we provide a variety of ways for our members to link to one another around principles and concepts that they hold in common.” (www.origin.org)

- **Challenging Fact: If neutrality is the attitude of the parents it will become the religion of their children.** Most loving parents want their children to know about God and moral living. But somehow in the hustle and bustle of life, they never get a chance

to take stock of where such training will come from. Many are hoping that the one hour out of 168 hours in a week will be dynamic enough to impact their children enough to fly right and make straight "A's". But the most dynamic place that has the greatest impact than any other in society is in the home...the place where a child's mind is made up for life.

"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

1 Timothy 5:8

Providing for your family means much more than bringing home the check or putting bread on the table. It includes the provision of all the elements of a Christ-like home: teaching and modeling God's Word in an atmosphere of love, grace, patience, loving discipline, understanding, and encouragement. This would also include modeling biblical values, priorities, and pursuits.

A survey taken a few years ago revealed:

- Over half of the teenagers could not name even one of the four gospels.
- In multiple choice questions:
 - Some decided that the epistles were the wives of the apostles
 - Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
 - Moses was the father of Jesus.
 - Answers like these would be hilarious if they were not pathetic!" (from a message by Haddon Robinson).

Who Is Our God? Psalm 78:12-20

The Avenging God:

"¹² He did miracles in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan."

The Providing God:

"¹³ He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand firm like a wall."

The Guiding God:

"¹⁴ He guided them with the cloud by day and with light from the fire all night."

The Satisfying God:

"¹⁵ He split the rocks in the desert and gave them water as abundant as the seas; ¹⁶ he brought streams out of a rocky crag and made water flow down like rivers."

They sinned even more...

They Tempted God In His Patience:

"¹⁷ But they **continued** to sin against him, rebelling in the desert against the Most High."

- **Continued-** *yacaph* {yaw-saf} 3254- to add, increase, do again

Outdoing their former sins, going into greater deeps of evil: the more they had the more loudly they clamoured for more, and murmured because they had not every luxury that pampered appetites could desire. It was bad enough to

mistrust their God for necessities, but to revolt against him in a greedy rage for superfluities was far worse. (Treasury of David)

They Tempted God In His Provision:

¹⁸ They willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved."

They Tempted God In His Power:

¹⁹ They spoke against God, saying, "Can God spread a table in the desert? 20 When he struck the rock, water gushed out, and streams flowed abundantly. But can he also give us food? Can he supply meat for his people?"

Have you ever had enough? (Megan sitting next to me trying to swat her)

Psalm 78:21-23

- *He became angry and burned several of them up for not believing or trusting God. (vs. 21-22)*
- *He overwhelmed them with manna from heaven and quail from the east (vs. 23-30)*
- *But in the midst of His provision, they angered God and killed many...they kept sinning.(vs. 31)*
- *They kept sinning. (vs. 32-33)*

God got their attention:

*³⁴ Whenever God slew them, they would seek him; they eagerly turned to him again. ³⁵ They remembered that God was their **Rock**, that God Most High was their **Redeemer**."*

Psalms 78:34-35

- *When He started slaying them: "they started turning to Him." (vs. 34-35)*
- *They remembered that God was their Rock, their Redeemer. They remembered, "Oh, that's right, He's my dad, He can tell deal with me.*

● **Proverbs:**

"My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in."

Proverbs 3:11-12

● **Hebrews: Discipline Vs. Curse**

⁶⁵And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

Hebrews 12:5-6

⁶⁷Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? ⁸If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. ⁹Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

Hebrews 12:7-9

¹⁰Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

Hebrews 12:10-11

Many people do not realize that some of the difficulties in their lives are a result of sonship, not demonic hardship. But we refuse to believe that we would go through anything difficult if God is involved. The disciplines of a son or daughter prepare them for the demands of an adult or mature life. In this case, *“that we may share in his holiness.”* God will only share what looks like him! He will not excuse a trait that does not reflect His!

Many people move from the point of discipline to live under a curse. I believe it is transitional and that we actually determine which dimension we will live in. **When we become ungrateful, angry or discontented with God because of what seems to be the lack of action on His part to rescue us from some challenging difficulty in life, we move toward the insubordinate to the illegitimate; from difficult but blessed to separated and cursed.**

How Do We Skirt The Issue?

“But then they would flatter him with their mouths, lying to him with their tongues; their hearts were not loyal to him, they were not faithful to his covenant.”

Psalm 78:36-37

They became professional at lip service to God but never quite give him their lives or their priorities. A child is known by his ways, or so it says in Proverbs, and our ways are always directed by the priorities that we continue to strive for.

Much research has been developed in the area of setting priorities. Basically you can take all the thoughts and boil them down to this simple point:

“To have more purpose, passion, success and meaning in your life can only take place when you know your core values, then every decision you make will be easier because you know what is important.”

“Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.”

Psalm 127:1-2

Prioritizing Effective Living For God

Three Important Truths Concerning Priorities

There are three important truths which can help you understand the importance of Biblical priorities and encourage you to pay whatever price is necessary to establish them in your life.

1. **All priorities demonstrate our core values system and all core values are always passed on to the next generation.**

1. **We are all products of what our parents valued**

Illustration- Young Man: We are always trying to find out how to do life right. How to love right. How to raise our kids right. And I would say, if you are not than you many not be doing anything right! I once read the story of an ordinary man: one wife, two sons, comfortable house, meaningful vocation. All went well until one night one of the sons became ill. Believing the illness to be nothing serious, the parents gave the child an aspirin and went to bed. The child died during the night of acute appendicitis. The grief and guilt of that experience drove the man to alcohol. In due time, his frustrated wife left him. He was now a single parent with one son, Ernie, and an alcohol problem.

With the passing of time, his alcoholism led to the loss of his job and eventually the loss of his house, possessions, and self-respect. Eventually he died in a lonely motel room, alone. But the son turned out to be a well-adjusted, hardworking, generous adult. Knowing the circumstances of his rearing, somebody asked the son, "I know that you and your father lived alone for many years. I know something of his problem with alcohol. What did he do that caused you to turn out to be such a loving, kind, and generous person?"

Upon reflection the young man said, "As long as I can remember from the time I was a child until I was eighteen years of age, every night my father would come into my bedroom, kiss me on the cheek and say, 'I love you son.'" Love really covers a multitude of sins. (Bobbie Gee, "A Legacy of Love," in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, ed. Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen (Deerfield Beach, Fla." Health Communications, 1993), 117-118.

- **What our parents prioritized, they valued.**

- God says, "You can't do life without me!"

2. **We are all living as a result to what we prioritize.**

- **Our priorities are our values.**

- The person who gives priority to God values God.
- The person who gives something priority above God values something more than God. It is that simple.

The same is true of **family**; the person who give priority to family highly values family.

- When God sees us putting Him first, He knows we value Him. Therefore, He blesses us.
- When He sees that something has replaced Him in our lives- not that we have renounced Him or changed our minds about Him, but that we have simply re-prioritized Him to a position less than first- He knows He is being devalued.
- There is a breakdown in our relationship when God is mis-prioritized.

- **Breakdown With Our Spouses:**

- Genesis 2:24 is God's first command related to marriage and it says that we are to “leave” our fathers and mothers. To leave doesn't mean that we forsake or neglect our parents in favor of our spouses; it simply means that our marriage has priority above them. In fact, not only must we give our marriage priority above our parents, but we also must do the same in every area of life with friends, jobs, hobbies, talents and interests, with exception to God.
- **Our children reflect whether they feel a position of priority...**
- **Prioritizing Your Family: The Five Love Languages**

Gary Chapman wrote a book called *The Five Love Languages of Children*. It emphasizes the importance of discovering your child's primary love language and speaking it regularly. Every person has one of these love languages and when one of these actions are activated toward a certain individual, the sensation is the same as saying, “I love you.”

Love Language #1: Words of Affirmation

Giving a child or any person of that matter, positive words about him or her is giving them a personal assessment of them. The following are all words of affirmation:

- “Good job!”
- “Thanks for your help.”
- “I like the way you did that; I can tell you worked hard.”
- “I appreciate it.”
- “Great play.”
- “thanks for your help this afternoon.”
- “You look really strong.”
- “You are so beautiful.”
- “I love you.”

These expressions of affirmation are important in communicating love to all children, but for the child whose primary love language is words of affirmation, they are his emotional lifeblood.

Love Language #2: Quality Time

Quality time involves giving the child your undivided attention. For the child whose primary love language is quality time, nothing will suffice but giving him extended periods of attention. This time may be spent reading books, playing ball, riding bikes, taking walks, or simply taling as you drive to the restaurant. These are the times that make the child feel loved. The words “I love you” apart from spending quality time with this child will seem like empty chatter. The parent's words may be sincere, but the child will not feel loved.

Love Language #3: Physical Touch

We have long known the power of physical touch as a communicator of love. Research has shown that babies who are touched frequently in a loving way grow up with better emotional health than those who are left unattended. Touch is crucial to all children, but it is in receiving affectionate touching that some children feel most loved. The manner in which this touch is given will certainly have to be modified as the child gets older. Hugging a teenager in the presence of his friends may cause feelings of embarrassment rather than love. But if the teen's primary love language is physical touch, he craves the touching when the friends are not around.

Love Language #4: *Receiving Gifts*

Giving and receiving gifts is a universal expression of love. A gift says "Dad/Mom was thinking about me." When you return from a trip and bring a child a gift, it says that he was in your thoughts while you were away. This does not mean that you must give the child with this primary love language everything he requests in order for the child to feel loved. It does mean that there must be a significant number of gifts given or the child will not feel loved. The gifts need not be expensive. It is truly "the thought that counts."

Love Language #5: *Acts of Service*

Doing things for the child that you know the child appreciates is another of love's basic languages. Preparing meals, washing clothes, providing transportation, helping with homework, and attending a child's sporting event are all expressions of love. To the child whose primary language of love is acts of service, such acts become essential to the child's emotional well-being. Fixing the bicycle means more than getting the child back on wheels; it is applying the oil of love.

Out of the five love languages, each child has a primary and secondary love language. These two are more important than the other three. If a parent consistently speaks the primary love language and the secondary love language of a child, the child will feel loved. If the parents do not speak these consistently and regularly, the child may feel unloved although the parents are expressing love in any of the other three languages.

Discovering A Persons Love Language

1. *Observe how they express love to you and others.*

- If you see them regularly tell you and others what a good parent you are or how good other people are, their love language is likely words of affirmation.
- If you see them bringing you gifts of drawings and special things than more than likely their love language is giving and receiving gifts.
- Touch

- Acts of Service
 - Time
2. **Observe what is requested of you most often.**
 3. **Listen for what they complain about most often.**
 - If they are critical of you because you don't do something with them they may be expressing that time is their language.
 - If they complain because you don't give them gifts,
 - Or, they complain because you never notice what good things they have done, words of affirmation would be in order.
 - If you hear them say that, “no one ever helps me around her.” is a key sign that acts of service could be their language.
 - Often our children are not afraid to raise their arms up and say hold me, but as they get older, this form of touch is not so easy and can become awkward. The key thing is to find new ways to touch that satisfies the need of an individual without making them feel strange or threatened.

Three Important Truths Concerning Priorities

1. **All priorities demonstrate our core values and all core values are always passed on to the next generation.**
2. **Biblical priorities promote health and growth in the most important things in our life. Wrong priorities promote growth in the fields that we don't want things to grow.**

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
Matthew 6:21

- **Carol** needed to know that I prioritized her. I loved watching pro football and was a huge **Dallas Cowboy fan**. I heard a crazy teaching about laying my life down for my wife. What I saw was I idolized “football” more than my wife. I decided to lay it down and not watch it again. In two years my wife started watching it and it was a demand that I be home on Monday nights to watch Monday Night Football. Guy's, eat your heart out!
- Many times I have had **people in my office** and I have talked to them about which **field they are sowing** in and what kind of harvest could they expect. For instance, if every day was like two days ago, what would the outlook of your life be? If you keep sowing a day like you did two days ago you can expect one of two things, either good harvest or bad!

Moses Instructs The Parents About Biblical Priorities

“Remember today that your children were not the ones who saw and experienced the discipline of the LORD your God: his majesty, his mighty hand, his outstretched arm; the signs he performed and the things he did in the heart of Egypt, both to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his whole country...”

Deuteronomy 11:2-4

● ***It Wasn't the Children Who Saw:***

- What God did to the Egyptian army, horses and chariots (vs. 4)
- What God did to Dathan and Abiram when the earth opened up and swallowed them and everyone in their families, their tents and every living thing that belong to them. (vs. 5-6)

● ***It Was the Parents Who Saw:***

“But it was your own eyes that saw all these great things the LORD has done.”

Deuteronomy 11:7

1. **The Commands (vs. 8a,22)**

“Observe therefore all the commands I am giving you today...”

Deuteronomy 11:8a

“If you carefully observe all these commands I am giving you to follow...”

Deuteronomy 11:22

2. **The Complements (vs. 8b,9,21,23-25)**

- So that you may have the strength to go in and take over the promise land. (vs. 8b)
- So that you may have a long life in the area the LORD God has promised you. (vs. 9& 21)
- So that the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you. (vs. 23-25)
 - Every place you set your foot will be yours
 - No man will be able to stand against you
 - God will put terror and fear of you on the whole land, wherever you go.

3. **The Check: (vs. 10-12)**

- The land you are taking over is not like where you have been...Egypt. (vs. 10) You planted and had to bring water to irrigate it.
- The land you are going to is a land of mountains and valleys where God's water falls from heaven.

“It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end.”
Deuteronomy 11:12

4. **The Catch: (vs. 13,22b)**

- Faithfully obey the commands that Moses gave.
 - To **love** the LORD your God
 - To **serve** him with all your heart and with all your soul

“...to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways and to hold fast to him...”

Deuteronomy 11:22b

5. **The Cut: (vs. 14-15)**

- I will send rain in both seasons, the autumn and spring for new wine and oil
- I will provide grass for your cattle who will eat and be satisfied

6. **The Caution: (vs. 16-17)**

- You will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods
- Then the Lords anger will burn against you
 - He will shut the heavens so it will not rain or yield fruit
 - You will parish from the “good” land

7. **The Custom: (vs. 18-25)**

- **Memorize these words in your mind and heart**
- **Tie them as symbols on your hands and foreheads**
- **Teach them to your children: (vs. 19)**

A sign of a loving family is that the parents will be actively involved in giving guidance to their children. In the ancient Greek world, two words described the function of parents: **teaching and training**.

- The Greek word for **teaching** is *nouthesia*, which means literally “**a putting into the mind.**” In the Greek way of thinking, this was done by verbal admonition; thus, teaching by words.
- The word for **training** is *paideia*. It is sometimes translated “**nurture,**” at other times “**chastening.**”
 - To the Greeks, training always involved action. It had both a positive and negative aspect. The **nurturing aspect** may have involved hugging and kissing a child, whereas the **chastening aspect** may have involved physically restraining him from danger, but

the emphasis in both was upon taking action.

- To the Greeks, teaching and training were the two wheels upon which the chariot of child rearing was to roll. (*Five Signs Of A Loving Family*, Gary Chapman, Northfield Publishing, Chicago, 1997, pp.85-87)

- **Four Positions of training: (Deuteronomy 11:19)**

1. When you sit at home
2. When you walk along the road
3. When you lie down
4. When you get up

- Write them on the on the **door frames of your houses** and your gates. (vs. 20)

8. The Champion: (vs. 23-25)

- Drive out people greater than you (vs. 23)
- Where you place your feet will be yours (vs. 24)
- No man will be able to stand up against you (vs. 25)
- People will have a fear or reverent respect of you (vs. 25)

9. The Challenge: (vs. 26-28)

- God sets before us a blessing and a curse
 - The **blessings hinge on our obedience** of the commands of the Lord
 - The **curses hinge on our disobedience**

10. The Charge: (vs. 29-32)

- **Proclaim on Mount Gerizim the blessings**
- **Proclaim on Mount Ebal the curses**

Because I made a decision of my will to change where I was prioritizing the treasures of my life, my time, talents and wealth- which is contrary to my emotions- my emotions followed. Regardless of what your emotions are telling you to do, honestly examine where you are giving your best and where you should be giving your best. If it is not with God and your family, you are making a mistake, you are sowing in the wrong field.

Three Important Truths Concerning Priorities

1. **All priorities demonstrate our core values all core values are always passed on to the next generation.**
2. **Biblical priorities promote health and growth in the most important things in our life. Wrong priorities promote growth in the fields that we don't want things to grow.**

3. The three essential priorities are God, family, and church.

- *If God and family are your highest two priorities, than church will be third. You need all the support of Godly influence that you can possibly get and you don't need to assist in distractions.*
- *Our devotion to God is a personal issue. It has to do with our personal devotion to Him. Things such as prayer, the study of His Word and commitment to a devoted life to worship and serve Him is our first priority.*
 - *We need to be careful that we don't confuse God and Church. Giving God priority means that we seek and serve Him on a personal level moment by moment. It means that He goes where we go and that he is invited as Lord into our relationships, financial decisions, traumas, successes, conversations, and thought life.*

"Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'"

1 Corinthians 15:33

All Concessions or Compromises That You Make In Your Life Takes Place When You Are Taking Actions That Do Not Agree With Your Priorities

- No one is angry with a baby because it messes it's diaper. But the last time I messed Carol got real mad at me. I'm happy to tell you the truth that Carol has never been unhappy with me for that reason.
- There are people who never come to God's preferred position with Him because they never establish standards that support what they would call their "core values"
- There are people who were at one time powerful in the Lord, but because they have rationalized with things that were not written in the Bible as sin. But the issue was not "sin" or if you were going to hell or not, but the issue was, are you going to be in the position where the flow of heaven can flow through you because of your obedience to God.
- The Call of God on my life has been a call to lay down things that were not necessarily sinful, but were distractions to the priorities God had called me to.

God Is Merciful: Breaking The Cycle

³⁸ Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. ³⁹ He remembered that they were but flesh, a passing breeze that does not return."

Psalm 78:38-39

"Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

James 4:14