

## 5 GIFTS FOR OUR CHILDREN

Contrary to popular opinion, children are a blessing from God ... and a man who has many children ("a quiver full") is doubly blessed. **Psa 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; ..."

And it's only natural that parents give gifts to their children – all parents do.

- a. In **Matt 7:11** Jesus uses the gift-giving inclination of parents to teach a lesson about the efficacy of prayer.
  - ▶ **Matt 7:11** – "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!"

I'm sure all of you give good gifts to your children, but in the lesson tonight I want to remind you of the best gifts.

- a. The gifts I have in mind are things God teaches parents to give their children.
  - ▶ And, if you will give your children these things, your children will indeed be a blessing.

### 1. You need to give your children A LAW TO LIVE BY.

You have a sacred duty to teach your children the law of God.

- a. **Deut 6:4-9** – "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- b. **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."

Parents, you have the duty to ...

- a. Teach your children the law of God at home ... and when you walk by the way ... and when you sit in your home ... and when you lie down ... and when you rise up.
- b. See to it that your children are present and paying attention when the saints meet and the word of God is taught?
  - ▶ And you need to reinforce privately the teaching they hear in the those Bible classes and public assemblies.

But, parents, it is not enough just to teach the law of God to your children – you must try to teach them to love the law of God.

- a. **Psa 119:97** – "Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day."
- b. **Psa 119:113** – "I hate the double-minded, But I love Your law."
- c. **Psa 119:163** – "I hate and abhor lying, But I love Your law."

Question: How can we teach our children to love the law of God?

- a. Answer: Show your children how they benefit from God's law.

- ▶ Deut 6:24 – “And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day.”
- ▶ Prov 29:18 – “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.”
- ▶ Psa 1:1-3 – “Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.”
- ▶ Prov 3:1-24 – “My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; 2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart, 4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. 8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. 9 Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine. ... 22 So they will be life to your soul And grace to your neck. 23 Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble. 24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.”
- ▶ We must get them to see that living by God’s law will not keep them from enjoying the good life; it will enable them to have the best life.
  - It will help them to have a happy marriage and good family relationships.
  - It will help them to develop true and lasting friendships.
  - It will help them to be successful in the career they choose for themselves and it will help them to have good relationships with the people they work with.
  - It will restrain them from behavior that is harmful and destructive to themselves and to others.
  - It will help them to rise above depression and worry and anxiety.
  - It will help them deal with life’s problems and adversities.
  - It will help them to face death, when that time comes, with hope instead of fear.

Hezekiah is one of many Bible characters whose life was made immeasurably better by his love for the law of God.

- a. We have this summary statement of Hezekiah’s life in 2Chr 31:21 – “And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered.”

But we all benefit from loving and keeping God’s law.

- a. Psa 37:30-31 – “The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice. 31 The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.”

## 2. You need to give your children A LOVE TO LIVE WITH.

I'm talking about a love for the Lord and a love for other people.

We can teach our children to love the Lord and to love others.

- a. The fact that we are commanded to love our brethren (1Pet 2:17; Jn 13:34) necessarily implies that we can learn to love ... and we can teach our children to love.
- b. And the fact that we are commanded to love our enemies (Matt 5:44) necessarily implies that we can learn to love ... and we can teach our children to love.
  - ▶ Obviously, loving our enemies is not something that comes naturally to us.
    - We have to be taught to love those who curse us, hate us, spitefully use us, and persecute us.

The secret to teaching our children to love the Lord is getting them to know the Lord and letting them see the good influence the Lord has on our attitudes and behavior.

- a. So we have to do everything we can to help them to know the Lord ... so they can see Him as He really is.
- b. The more they learn about Him ... about how He was when he lived in this world ... the more they will be drawn to Him.
- c. To put it very simply: To know the Lord is to love the Lord.
  - ▶ He was so good, and righteous, and holy.
    - There was no badness in Him at all.
    - There was nothing shameful hidden in Him.
    - He never harmed anyone.
    - He did only good.
  - ▶ He was so strong, and courageous, and bold.
    - He was so kind and compassionate.
    - He was so humble.
    - He was so sympathetic toward the poor and the oppressed.
    - He was so patient and longsuffering.
    - He was so forgiving.
    - He was so loving.
- d. We much teach our children all the Bible stories about Jesus ... and show them all the wonderful qualities of Jesus revealed in those stories ... so they can really know Him.
- e. We need to show our children what Jesus has done for them already and how they have benefitted from the influence Jesus has had upon us (their parents) ... and we need to show them how they have been harmed when the influence of Jesus has been rejected by their parents (if and when that has been the case).

And we can teach our children to love other people.

- a. Rom 13:8-10 – "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

- b. Lk 6:27-38 – “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. 29 To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. 31 And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. 32 But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. 36 Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. 37 Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

### **3. You need to give your children AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW.**

Let’s look again at **Deut 6:4-9**, where Moses instructed the parents to be diligent in teaching God’s law to their children.

- a. **Deut 6:4-9** – “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- ▶ Notice: “these words which I command you today shall be in your heart” and then “you shall teach them diligently to your children”
  - ▶ What we teach to our children must first be in our hearts and lived in our lives.

Consider the example of Ezra.

- a. I don’t know if Ezra was married and had children or not, but he was certainly the kind of man who would have been an excellent example for children to follow.
- ▶ **Ezr 7:10** – “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.”

A sermon lived is far more powerful than a sermon preached.

Actions really do speak louder than words.

Our children need to see in their parents an example of ... moral purity ... personal righteousness ... faithful worship ... active service ... joyful, enthusiastic, optimistic living.

Your children need to see that the law of God and love for the Lord is in your heart ... and that you're living by His law ... and it's benefitting your life – happiness, peace, prosperity, true friendships, etc.

- a. Matt 5:16 – “Let your light so shine before men (and your children, bw), that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
  - ▶ Example: 2Tim 1:3-5 – “I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, ... 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.”

Your children need to see that your life is blessed in many ways because of your love for the Lord and your obedience to His law.

- a. 1Pet 3:8-12 – “Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”
- b. 1Tim 4:7-8 – “... exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.”
- c. Mk 10:29-30 – “So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time – houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions–and in the age to come, eternal life.”

#### **4. You need to give your children A HOPE TO LIVE FOR.**

Php 3:20-21 – “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, . . .”

2Cor 5:1-11 – “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, ... 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.”

- a. We need to try, as best we can, to get our children to see why we, at times, “groan” and feel “burdened” in this life ... and why we long for heaven.
  - ▶ It is a very difficult task, but we need to try to get them to see that this life is good, but it’s not that good.
    - “Enjoy this life to the fullest extent that you can (and the Bible teaches you how to do that) – but don’t think this is as good as it gets. Heaven is far, far better than this.”
  - ▶ There are no tears in heaven ... no sickness ... no pain ... no growing old ... no dying ... no murders ... no beatings ... no mistreatment of any kind ... no poverty ... no starving to death ... no hunger ...

If we can succeed to any substantial degree to get our children to see this world for what it really is, and heaven for what is really is ...

- a. It will motivate them to be pure and holy.
  - ▶ 1Jn 3:1-3 – “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”
- b. It will motivate them to service.
- c. It will sustain them in trials.
- d. It will be an anchor for their souls.
  - ▶ Heb 6:18-19 – “that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, ...”

We have a divine obligation to instill in our children the heavenly hope that is in Christ Jesus!

## **5. You need to give your children DISCIPLINE WHILE THERE IS HOPE**

Prov 19:18 – “**Discipline** your son while there is hope, And do not desire his death.”

(NOTE: We will talk more about this in the next lesson)

### **Concluding thoughts**

It is not wrong to give our children the material things they need – as a matter of fact, it is a father's responsibility to provide for them.

- a. 1 Tim 5:8 – “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

It is not wrong to give our children the luxuries they want and with which we’ve been blessed – within proper bounds (We should be careful to teach our children not to depend on material things).

- a. 1Tim 6:6-10, 17-19 – “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. 9 But those

- who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ... 17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."
- b. Luke 12:15 – "And He said to them, 'Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.'"

But, it is our sacred duty to give our children a LAW to live by, a LOVE to live with, an EXAMPLE to follow, and a HOPE to live for!