

7 Things I Wish I Knew Before Becoming a Parent

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Introduction

- i. Parenting is extremely important because God revealed Himself as our Father (cf. Heb. 12:9; Luke 3:38).
- ii. God is the model for all parents.
- iii. Knowledge is essential to success in parenting.
 - a. Parents are the primary teachers of their children.
 - b. You cannot teach what you do not know.
 - c. You cannot lead where you are unwilling to go.
- iv. Ignorance can cause destruction.
 - a. Biology will allow one to become a parent, but being able to be a parent in no way means one is ready or competent.
 - b. Parents can destroy their children.
 - c. Parents are not responsible for their children's choices, but they can make it very difficult for them to succeed.

1. I Wish I Had a Healthier View of My Heavenly Father!

- a. As Christians we are taught to emulate God (Matt. 5:48).
- b. The Bible begins with God; from beginning to end God is good.
- c. He created the world for humanity (Gen. 1; Isa. 45:15-18).
- d. He shared His image with mankind (Gen. 1:26-27).
- e. He gave man all things including companionship (Gen. 2:15-20).
- f. He redeemed His children when they sinned (Gen. 3:15).
- g. He sought Noah out to save the world (Gen. 6:8, 13-14).
- h. He informed Abraham about His judgment and tried to save Sodom (Gen. 18:19, 25).
- i. He raised up 15 judges in Israel to deliver His people (Judges).
- j. He sent Jonah to Assyria and He saved everyone and everything in the book (Jonah 1-4).
- k. He sent Christ to die for my sins and the sins of the world (Rom. 5:6-8).

2. I Wish I Knew How Early I Needed to Start Teaching!

- a. Deuteronomy 6:4-10 is among God's greatest instructions to parents.
- b. Our children will begin to process information from the moment they enter into the world.
- c. Timothy was taught the Holy Scriptures from childhood (2 Tim. 1:4-5; 3:14-15).
- d. The world will not wait to teach our children.
- e. The womb is not too early to start talking to and teaching your children about God.

3. I Wish I Knew the Greatest Threats to Children Are in Their Homes!

- a. We child-proof our houses to protect our children.
- b. Physical threats are real and significant, but they don't pose the greatest threats.
- c. There are things that "war against our souls" (1 Pet. 2:11).
- d. What they watch on television impacts their souls (Psa. 119:11).
- e. When they listen to music, they are "learning" something.
- f. We must be careful what we hear and how we hear (Mark 4:24; Luke 8:18).
- g. Who we allow around them will influence them, including aunts, uncles and friends (1 Cor. 15:33).
- h. David's impassioned plea for Absalom was, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" (2 Sam. 18:29).

4. I Wish I Knew the Power of Positivity!

- a. Words are compared to serpents, fire, swords, poison and a host of other things in Scripture.
- b. Life and death are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21).
- c. God is positive; nothing is too hard for the Lord (Gen. 18:14).
- d. God's children must be positive, for success comes from positive thinking.
- e. Nehemiah and Israel built the wall because the people had a mind to work (Neh. 4:6).
- f. Paul could be content in whatever state he was in because in Christ he could do anything (Phil. 4:11-13).
- g. Children need to know they can because God has (Phil. 4:7-10).
- h. Children are not the same.

- (1) The reason for some negativity is children are compared to one another.
- (2) No two children are the same (ex: Jacob and Esau).
- (3) Parent the person the child is, not the one you wish they were.
- (4) God loves each of His children individually and each one is allowed to be himself.
- (5) Jesus knew His sheep by name (John 10:3).
- (6) Positively train up a child in the best interest of each child. They are not the same.

5. I Wish I Knew the Real Meaning of Love!

- a. Love does what is in the highest good of others (1 Cor. 13:1-7).
- b. Love sees others as God sees them—as image sharers of God (Gen. 1:26-27).
- c. Love esteems others above himself (Rom. 12:9).
- d. Love seeks to serve the best interest of others (Phil. 2:5-7).
- e. A loving husband honors his wife (1 Pet. 2:7).
- f. A loving husband is never bitter toward his wife (Col. 3:19).
- g. A loving wife reverences and obeys her husband (Tit. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1-6).
- h. This love is not based on how one feels or how one has been treated (Matt. 5:44).
- i. This love acts like God (Matt. 5:45-48).
- j. I wish I knew this love may not be reciprocated but must still be shown (Matt. 7:12).
- k. Children need to see the love of God modeled before them by parents who love each other and love their children.

6. I Wish I Knew More About Money!

- a. Parents teach their children to love money and then fall apart when their children learn the lesson.
- b. Children are more interested in their parents' presence than their presents.
- c. I would have emphasized contentment (1 Tim. 6:6-10).
- d. I would have emphasized we aren't defined by things (Lk. 12:15).
- e. I would have emphasized being together is better than having a lot of stuff that keeps us apart (Prov. 16:18).
- f. We must not seek riches to the detriment of our souls (1 Tim. 6:17).
- g. Better is a little with love than a lot with hatred (Prov. 15:16-17).
- h. Teach them to give liberally to the Lord and spiritual pursuits (Prov. 3:5-7; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).

7. I Wish I Knew How Little Time I Had with Them!

- a. In 18 years there are approximately:
 - (1) 939 weeks; 6,574 days; 157,788 hours; 568,024,668 seconds
- b. Time is fleeting.
 - (1) Our days are like a shadow (Psa. 102:11).
 - (2) Our days are like a handbreadth (Psa. 39:5).
 - (3) Our days are few (Job 14:1-2).
 - (4) Our days are a vapor (Jas. 4:14).
- c. When we recognize the brevity of time we will:
 - (1) Redeem the time (Eph. 5:16).
 - (2) Distinguish between major things and minor things.
 - (3) Avoid hasty angry words (Jas. 3:1-11).
 - (4) Repair relationships sooner (Eph. 4:26-27).
 - (5) Not dare waste it trying to please people (Gal. 1:10).
 - (6) Live like today is our last (Prov. 27:1).

Conclusion

- i. Being a parent is the toughest, most rewarding and challenging thing one will ever do.
- ii. The home is the factory where the human product is made, shaped and shipped into life on earth and eternity after awhile.
- iii. God entrusts us with this giant task for He knows we can bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).
- iv. Parents, behave like God because your children will behave like you.