

Essentials for Raising God-Fearing Children
Psalm 127
January 22, 2023

Chuck Swindoll:

“It was God who gave the first woman to the first man and God who gave the first child to the first parents. If there is anything God wants us to get right in this life other than our personal relationship with Him, He wants us to get our families right. There is one thing that God makes plain. No matter what else you do in your life, once you become a parent, if you fail in your role as a father and a mother and you fail in your responsibility of raising those children in God's way for God's glory, it doesn't matter what else you succeed in.”

Essentials for God-Fearing Homes:

I. A God-fearing home needs God's blessings

Psalm 127:1–2 (NKJV) *Unless* the LORD builds the house, they labor in *vain* who build it; *unless* the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in *vain*. It is *vain* for you to rise early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

James Dobson:

“You can work hard at building your family, you can be diligent to guard your kids from harm, you can make sacrifices to provide what they need. But if the Lord is not building your home, you're wasting your time. A Godly home must be built by acknowledging your own inability and by daily seeking God's gracious blessing.”

1 Kings 11:4 (NKJV) For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.

A. God-fearing parents know the need of God's grace

Psalm 127:2 (NKJV) It is vain for you to rise early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

B. God-fearing parents understand the balance between faith and works

Psalm 127:1 (NKJV) Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

C. God-fearing parents understand the balance between career and home life

Psalm 127:2 (NKJV) It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

David Livingstone:

“I hope you are playing with your children... In looking back... I have one regret, and that is that I did not feel it my duty to play with my children as much as to teach the [natives]. I worked very hard at that and was tired out at night. Now I have none to play with. So, my good friend, play while you may. They will soon be long gone and out of the home.”

II. A God-fearing home should enjoy the blessing of godly children

Psalm 127:3–5 (NKJV) 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; they shall not be ashamed but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

A. Godly parents communicate their love

1. Verbally communicate to your children their worth
2. Non-verbally communicate to your children their worth

B. Godly parents communicate their actions

Psalm 127:4 (NKJV) Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one’s youth.

1. Arrows must be launched in the right direction

Derik Kidner – British Old Testament Scholar:

“It is not untypical of God’s gifts that first they are liabilities, or at least responsibilities, before they become obvious assets. The greater their potential and promise, the more likely your sons and daughters will be a *handful* before they are a *quiverful*. Children don’t grow into straight, sharp arrows by being left to themselves or to the TV set. It takes diligent effort on the part of a wise father to bring them up in the training of the Lord.”

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child and it takes the rod of correction to drive it far from him.

Takeaway:

Correction isn’t something you do “to a child,” it’s something you do “for a child.”

2. Arrows must be launched at the right target

Jim Elliott:

“Grieve not, then, if your sons seem to desert you. Remember how the Psalmist described children? He said that they were as a heritage from the Lord, and that every man should be happy who had his quiver full of them. And what is a quiver full of but arrows? And what are arrows for but to shoot? So, with the strong arms of prayer, draw the bowstring back and let the arrows fly – all of them, straight at the enemy and all his hosts.”

Closing thought for all parents, but especially for those with children still at home:

Remember that your children are a gift. They are arrows. There are three things they desperately need from you, their parents – (1) Direct them spiritually. (2) Discipline them lovingly. (3) Develop them emotionally. You not only do it for them, but you do it for generations to come.