

## Sheltering our Children is God's Mandate for Holiness Part 2

It is acceptable, in our society for a parent to protect children from physical dangers like cold, rains, hot weather, sicknesses, etc. But, there are spiritual hazards that are more threatening than mere bodily harm? Jesus said ***“28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28 KJV)*** As followers of Christ, we recognize that spiritual and emotional threats are more significant than mere physical perils.

Imagine the foolish parent who during a violent thunderstorm would tell his children, *‘I do not want anybody to be able to say I sheltered you. You need to go and stand in the front yard’*. I can imagine the children protesting, *‘But Dad it's wet out there. I will get drenched! I could catch pneumonia! And I could get struck by lightning and die! Please! Let me come to the house’*. Picture the foolish parents insist, *‘No. You have to face the real world someday. I am not going to be over-protective. No Sheltering Here’*. Only negligent and foolish parents would allow a child to face overwhelming dangers when it was in their power to protect him.

Admittedly some dangers are beyond our control, and then we cannot help but what of those within our jurisdiction and control we need to help and protect our children from.

Many of us are fearful of accusations of over-protection. Certainly, there is a time to release to our children the responsibility to deal with the circumstances around them. But, such a gradual release should be based on demonstrated faithfulness in handling slightly smaller responsibilities. ***It is negligence to impose upon children responsibilities, and we have a reasonable doubt they can handle. Most of the children cannot handle responsibilities alone and cannot protect themselves from external temptations that carry big dangers therefore we need to be with them along the way, even till the time of their marriage.***

Repeatedly we are warned in Scriptures not to cause a weaker brother to stumble. But for which weaker brother will we be held most accountable? We are most responsible for the little lambs, our children; the Lord has placed in our own families. ***“6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6 KJV)*** The Lord calls us responsible for the influences that we allow to shape our children. We should fear that we deserve the ***“millstone”*** Jesus talked about for making our children vulnerable to temptations through the provisions for the flesh we have clung to in our own life and had allowed them to come into the life of our children.

Therefore, we should pluck out, cut off, and cast away those appendages, figuratively speaking the eyes, the feet, and the hands that Jesus referred to, ***“6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! 8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. 9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to***

***be cast into hell fire. 10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 18:6-10 KJV)***

One day each father and mother will be called to give an account of their parenting. We will not be held accountable for our children's decisions in the future, but for the influences, we are allowed to shape those decisions. Imagine that your children appear before you at the judgment and God saying, *‘Here is how your children turned out. Why did you let them go to the places they went, see the things they saw, hear the things they heard, and do the things they did?’* What types of excuses do you suppose will be acceptable at that moment? You can say to the Lord, *‘But Lord, everybody else was doing those same things’*. What do you imagine the Lord will say? Something like, *‘I did not give your children to everyone else. I gave them to you’*. We might protest, *‘But I did not know they would experience that influence when I allowed them to experience that activity’*. I imagine that the Lord will respond, *‘It was your job to know. I entrusted these children into your hand and you just let whatever influence happened to float by to shape them’*.

We have to pluck out several influences that many Christians consider quite innocent, and perhaps even healthy. But, they are very dangerous.

Whenever we deal with specific points of obedience in applying the Word of God in life and reality we might be misunderstood as being, legalistic. But, Jesus said, ***“15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.” (John 14:15 KJV)*** ***Therefore, when we insist to do what is right then this is not legalism.*** True legalism is thinking that I can somehow earn God's grace. We cannot add a single thing to what Jesus already accomplished through His death on the cross in purchasing our salvation.

Neither is it legalism when we insist to sow what we want to reap. A farmer is not inappropriately legalistic in choosing good seeds. He simply recognizes the unbreakable laws of nature. He is free to violate those laws but will reap the consequences in the harvest he will receive.

God's Word provides several principles and insights that we can ignore, but no more we will be disciples of Jesus! Paul warns us: ***“7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Galatians 6:7 KJV)*** Parents often reap the harvest of their laziness, complacency, and deception in their way of raising their children.

\* Therefore, come today to the presence of the Lord, and allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart and life. Humble down before the Lord, fear Him, and come out from your tradition and the fear of people. Do you want to please God or you want the people and society to be happy with you? \* Fear God and protect your children and the Lord will be happy with you. \* Consider that your children are the first disciples that God wants you to raise for Him. \* Come out from the world and from people's opinions and what they will talk about you. Be obedient and be willing to repent.

***The Influences that needed plucking:*** Some dangers can affect our children, those dangers we ought to put away and remove from our children's lives for them to be protected. These influences are as the following:-

**I. We must shelter our children from the influence of other children:** There is a notion in our culture that states that children are good for children. The most frequently asked question that dedicated Christian parents face when they decide to choose to homeschool and teach and educate their children by themselves is this: 'But what about socialization?' We assume that for children to learn is to spend a fair amount of time with those of their age. But, is this idea Scriptural? Does the Bible anywhere warn parents to provide adequate social interaction for their children with other children? No!

Paul warned about friendships, saying, ***“33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” (1 Corinthians 15:33 KJV)*** It is not that carnal friendships might be bad. There is no maybe here. **Ungodly companionship is inevitably a bad influence in all cases. When you allow your children to have friendship with other children, such friendship sure shall have bad influences on your children.**

Solomon warned his son in saying to him, ***“20 He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.” (Proverbs 13:20 KJV)*** How can you tell if your children are experiencing companionship with fools? Fools are those who are foolish! The Bible tells us where we are most likely to find foolishness: ***“15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.” (Proverbs 22:15 KJV)*** \* This verse tells us that children are an inevitable focus of foolishness. It is the plan of God for children to be nurtured by adults, their parents, rather than by other children. \* The primary reason we do homeschool for our children is to protect them from the fool companionship of other children. \* Some might call this harsh by not allowing our children to intermingle with other children, but we are convinced that God has called us to take seriously our role as protectors of our families.

The scriptural directives to ***“6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6 KJV)*** and ***“6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7 KJV)*** are given to parents, and not to some other institution. Leaders in the church are ***“12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:” (Ephesians 4:12)*** \* Leaders in the church are for the equipping of the saints and not to do the work for the saints. \* The church needs to train parents to take responsibility for discipline and discipling their children. We as a church stand beside the parents, train them, help them, encourage them, and build them up in the way that God wants them to raise their children in a Godly manner.

\* Homeschooling and protection from intermingling with other children need to continue and even include the college time study up to the time of marriage. \* Marriage is the time that the child had become an adult, mature, and can lead a family.

**II. Another major area of sheltering need to be implemented relates to the children's imagination:** Paul wrote, ***“5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV)*** What kinds of imagination might be

displeasing to God and thus need to cast down, and brought ***“into captivity to the obedience of Christ”***? Jesus gave us a couple of examples of ungodly imaginations. He said, ***“21 Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” (Matthew 5:21-22 KJV)*** In other words, to imagine hateful things about another is a sin just as murder in physical life is. Again Jesus said, ***“27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28 KJV)*** What Jesus is telling us here is that it is wrong for us to imagine inwardly anything that would be displeasing to God. But are our children ever inclined to pretend something God would not want them to do in real life? Do children, in their play, ever pretend to be rude, disrespectful, violent, etc?

When you as spiritually discerning parents pass the toy section in department stores you must be deeply grieved; have you noticed how many of today's toys are downright ugly? Many of today's toys are utterly ugly and repulsive. Someone is trying to shape children's sense of beauty and we must protect our little ones from such a bad influence. \* **These ugly shapes are the demons' faces and figures in hell! In addition, have you noticed how many children's toys and electronic games are linked to imagining occult activities? Does God want our children casting spells, practicing witchcraft, and saying magical incantations in real life? Does God want our children to carry guns and injurious weapons? Of course, not! Then, how dare we allow them to imagine such things in their play? \* The purpose of children's play is practice for real life. We are not recommended to allow them to practice for what God calls abominations! Many computerized games and play stations are rich in such programs and we need to protect our children from that all. \* There is no point to buy toys, dolls, PlayStations, mobile games, or video games on television. There is nowhere in the Bible children will have toys to play with. They do not need such. Their real games are their work and activities with their parents in the house to do the chores and works in the house.**

Teen dolls for girls like Barbie dolls and the rest of the dolls in the market need not be in our girls' hands because such toys encourage little girls to focus on the worldly ways to become beautiful the very things Apostle Peter warns against in ***“3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” (1 Peter 3:3-4 KJV)***

Toys, dolls, PlayStations, mobile games, or video games on television teach our children laziness, cripple them, and make them non-fruitful in their study and their house chores. It teaches them to be a time-waster, rebellious, having anger, fighter, answering back, etc.

\* Toys, dolls, PlayStations, mobile games, or video games on television are a waste of financial resources. \* They will also steal the hearts of our children from their real teachers, their parents, and they will put the children in a wrong and unsafe atmosphere, and hinder the real training the children need to pass through in life. \* They will block the minds of the children; they might even teach them the wrong things and put them into serious bondage.

Internet, social media, mobiles, and the rest should not be given to the children; these instruments are used only for work and communications, but not for entertainment.

**My Dear and Beloved:** Prevention is easier and better than treatment. Many times we had said to ourselves 'Why I was not aware, why I allowed that, why I had approved that?' Do you want to continue in this regret attitude? Regret will not bring any fruit. But, repentance sure will bring fruit and God's blessings as you commit yourself to obey God and do your part and protect your children from bad influences. *"6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" (Matthew 18:6-7 KJV)*

Let us pray . . . .

**My prayer:** Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for the teaching and the corrections that I received in this message about the dangers that I need to protect and shelter my children from. Lord thank you for all your goodness and blessings to me and to my family and children.

*Come now to God, and repent and renounce your sins, Repent and renounce your non willingness to teach and raise your children in a Godly way and your non willingness to homeschool them and teach them and protect them from the bad influences of the other children. Repent of your worldliness and wasting your time on the Media, mobile, news, yoked with non believers and your lack of reading God's Word and prayer. Repent of your fear of man and your inclination to please people and not God. Repent of your laziness, anger and the rest of your bad attitudes and your bad example to others who want to follow Christ. Repent of your culture and traditions and the practices that contradict the Word of God. Lord forgive me, I repent and renounce the following sins \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Lord I commit myself to apply all what I received in this message in the life of my children; to shelter them from other children and the bad effects of the games, PlayStations, Media, mobiles, Television, YOU tube, etc. Lord, I commit myself to homeschool my children, to read your Word with them and to implement in my life and the life of my family and children, and to have regularly with them family worship. Lord I commit myself not to conform to the pattern of this world, neither to my culture nor to my tradition. Lord provide for me and protect my family and children so we will continue to serve you.*

*Lord, bless my Brothers and Sisters who committed their lives to shelter their children from the threats that will corrupt their lives. Lord use them to serve you and to do your works and will. Lord set them as good example to other to follow you.*

*Lord help us as your church to continue to teach our members and train the parents how to shelter their children from the threats of the world and the bad influences of other children and the Media and how to raise them in the fear of God. Lord add to us more Godly marriages and families. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need in our*

*lives to go on and evangelize, and make disciples and train workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the Whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.*

Sheltering our Children is God's Mandate for Holiness Part 2. Matthew 10:28. Matthew 18:6-10. John 14:15. Galatians 6:7. 1 Corinthians 15:33. Proverbs 13:20. Proverbs 22:6, 15. Deuteronomy 6:6-7. Ephesians 4:12. 2 Corinthians 10:5. Matthew 5: 21-22, 27-28. 1 Peter 3:3-4.

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