

Sheltering our Children is God's Mandate for Holiness Part 3

We continue in this message to study what are the threats and the hazards that we need to shelter our children from:

III. We must shelter our children from premature and unauthorized romance: * Another experience we believe that God has directed us to shelter our children from is premature and unauthorized romance. * The issue is not only to endeavor to let our children to survive the teen year's physically pure but as well as the emotional purity which is also needed.

Paul makes it clear that emotional purity is also important, saying ***“6 That no one should go beyond and defraud his brother in this matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.” (1 Thessalonians 4:6 KJV)*** Let us read the whole passage that Paul was speaking about moral purity to grasp what is the hazard of the premature and unauthorized romance: ***“1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. 2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)*** * We can notice that it is not enough to draw a line and commit oneself not to go beyond physical morality, but we must also commit ourselves not to defraud others emotionally and romantically. * Boyfriend, girlfriend, dating, courting, and love affairs, are not mentioned in the Scriptures; and many of such relationships are never end up with marriage but with emotional frustration and disappointment, premarital sex, pregnancies without marriage, abortions, children not in a family context, single-parent status with child or children who will not meet their fathers or mothers.

What is defrauding? In business transactions, it is cheating. It is causing another to desire and expect something that will not be fulfilled. Does this ever happen in romantic relationships? Of course, it does! The contemporary dating patterns among modern youth are the essence of defrauding. Most parents find that the regrets of their past romantic relationships continue to cause pain. Many marriages suffer from the baggage of previous emotional bonds that continue to impact the current marital relationship. God calls us to spare our children such sorrows and regrets.

The best modern term for what Paul calls defrauding is flirting. Flirting is an emotional promiscuity. The broken heart syndrome of the dating patterns is not preparation for marital bliss, but rather for divorce. As well as courtship is no more Scriptural than dating. Courting and romancing I found it among birds and animals but not in the Scriptures.

* You will not only ever find the word courtship in the Bible; you will not even find the idea! * Physical purity is not enough, emotional purity is also needed, and sparing young people from defrauding and flirting is a critical issue that is being mostly neglected in today's church.

There is, however, a Scriptural pattern for moving from singleness to marriage without defrauding. * The Scriptural pattern makes it possible for a young man to be a one-woman man emotionally as well as physically, a husband through preparation for Godly marriage, that when the man ready for marriage and capable to handle family from all aspects then God shall provide and show the right woman as he did with Adam, that he can immediately marry and become his wife without the sinful practices of dating, courting, boyfriend and girlfriend. * In such a way a young girl can save her heart as well as her body for the man God has prepared her to marry. As well as the man can save his heart and his body for the woman God has prepared him to marry.

IV. We must shelter our children from ungodly and inappropriate literature: We cannot allow our children to select just anything that strikes their fancy in a public library. Have you noticed how those with perverse agendas have particularly targeted the type of children's fiction to propagate their wicked ideas? We must protect our children from such harm.

* Even with Christian children's literature, we have to be discerning. Some writers portray arrogant characters, haughty, conceited, and streetwise; such rebellious heroes cannot be role models for our children. * As well as some Christian's children stories it narrates a story in the Bible, but they add more drama to the story more than to what is mentioned in the Bible. Therefore, when our children will read these books wrong information will pass to their minds about that particular Biblical event.

V. We must shelter our children from the issue of watching television and got involved with other Media: The Psalmist claimed, ***“3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.” (Psalm 101:3 KJV)*** By watching television programs, we not only set wicked things before our own eyes, but we set wicked things before our children's eyes. Jesus said: ***“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)*** Can we as parents be the reason for our children who believe in Jesus to sin against the Lord? Are we watching television programs and things on social media without discretion and they are imitating us in doing the same? If so with you then it would be better to have a millstone hung around your neck!

Television and social media open the door to temptations that you do not fully resist. Many knew they should get rid of the television, but they just could not because they are addicted to it! Addiction to television and social media can be in two ways.

A. Watching bad programs of forbidden content, theatrical performance and demoralizing, or pornographic.

B. Watching the good program, daily and for a period will have bad effects. Such addiction will make you lazy and prohibit you from doing other important things that you need to

perform. You will be bound in thoughts and emotions toward what you are watching, and that will mislead you to focus on things that are not related to your daily needs and not to do what God wants you to do.

Paul makes it clear, ***“12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” (1 Corinthians 6:12 KJV)*** For example, no rule says, television is a sin, but if you or your children are brought under its power it is harmful. If you are even slightly addicted to television or other social Media then perhaps God calls you to be delivered from such evil grip by simply plucking television and these social Media out from your eyes and out of your life.

Ultimately you need to surrender to God whatever areas that grips your life then you will experience, and your family, the abundant life that He promised, ***“10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 KJV)***

* Our children may fall into the same scenario and they will be addicted, and will not be careful to do their other assignments for the home and their school study; they will not do well in life because they are fully occupied with bad things. * Not only their times but their minds and bodies are occupied with television. They will no more listen to our instructions or doing their duties at home. As well as their sleeping times and hours will be affected. * We need to be careful to protect our children from the potential hazards of television and other social media and their addiction effects. The same that we speak about television we can say the same about computers, mobiles, the internet, Facebook, YOU tube, video games, and other media that give the same bad output as television.

VI. Another issue we have had to deal with is that of modesty: Your children will acquire a taste for certain styles and exposures. **Begin when they are small.** If there is something you do not want your daughter to wear when she is fifteen years old, do not allow her to dress that way when she is four or five years old. From early age boys and girls, should be taught not to expose their body parts in homes and public. What you want to teach your children, observe first in your life.

The purpose of clothing is not primarily to protect us from the elements of heat or cold. It is a modesty! When Adam and Eve sinned, their first impulse was to cover themselves. It did not suddenly get cold. When God rejected their fig leaves, it was at least partly because He wanted more sturdy and modest garments. **Therefore as parents, you check the way you dress because your children will learn from you and imitate you.**

VII. Another issue we must all face is ungodly music: Certain types of music seem to incite the desires of the flesh. **You as parents should be courageous in determining what pleases God and giving your children a taste for Godly music by limiting their experience.** Worldly music is a wicked and perverse world that will flood in our children’s minds and will harm them. But, we can spare our children such regret. We can arrange for each of our children to listen and enjoy the worshipful praise songs.

VIII. We must shelter our children from the idolatry of academic standardization: This is another issue that we need to remove from our lives. As a result of the industrial revolution and

its mentality, we have applied the concepts of standardization and quality control to education. Thus, our whole educational experience is based on comparing one student’s progress with someone’s idea of a norm.

The problem with this is that comparison breed conformity. Paul warns of the foolishness of comparisons, saying, ***“12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Corinthians 10:12 KJV)*** **When we focus on measuring the progress of our children’s study with what is going on in the world, we find ourselves preparing our children for exams and tests rather than preparing them to face life.** Most parents are quite concerned that their children maintain their grade level and score well on standardized tests. When we focus on measuring progress with such comparisons then we are moving toward conformity to the world’s agenda rather than being directed by the Spirit of God and following God’s Word.

This bondage to standardization becomes modern idolatry similar to the failure of the Old Testament kings to pull down the high places. These otherwise righteous kings would eliminate idolatry during their reigns but left the idolatrous shrines in place that tempted the following generation to return to idolatry. * **By our endeavoring to keep our children in line with the educational agendas of the world we are simply keeping the door open for a possible going back to the world’s institutions.** * **We should be careful that our children acquire diligence and Godliness rather than trying to acquire the standard knowledge of the world that puffs up:** ***“1 We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.” (1 Corinthians 8:1 KJV)*** Competition and planting jealousy in the hearts of our children is not the right way that we will raise our children by comparing them and urge them to conform to the standards of the world around them. That will drive them away from God’s presence and His plans for their lives.

My Dear and Beloved: After we discuss all these points that we need to plug out from our lives and the life of our children, and as we do our parts to live our lives for God according to the Scriptures, then we can direct our children in the way they should live their lives to God. If we do such then from their earliest ages we are persuading our children that surrendering to God’s design produces a far superior lifestyle than the vanity of pursuing the world’s emptiness. In such a manner, we are replacing the corrupting influences with holiness, and cultivating hearts after God’s heart.

My challenge to Christian parents is to shelter their children. We are to lead them not into temptation but deliver them from evil, as we pray to God our Father, ***“4 Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.” (Luke 11:4 KJV)*** by protecting them from temptations they have not proven the ability and commitment to reject. We will be held accountable for every influence we allow causing them to stumble. God shall give us and you courage and grace to do that.

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 that had opened my eyes to the variety of threats that I need to protect myself and my

family and children from. Lord thank you for your Word that teaches me how to live my life for you and according to your ways.

Come now to God, and repent and renounce your sins, Repent and renounce your worldliness and your love for material things. Repent of wasting your time on the Media, the mobile, TV, News, games, and being yoked with non believers. Repent and renounce your acceptance to the sinful practices of dating, courting, boyfriend, and girlfriend. Repent of your non willingness to homeschool your children and teach them and protect from the bad influences of the Media, mobiles, games, other children, the other gender, the premature romance, the bad music and literatures, and the non modest dress. Repent and renounce your bad stewardship and your lack of reading God's Word and prayer. Repent of being a bad example to your children in being in bondage with the Media, watching Television and YOU tube, listening to ungodly music and your non decent dress. Repent of your fear of man and your tendency to please people and not God. Repent of the practices of your culture and traditions that contradict the Word of God. Repent of doing your own will and not the will 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 to protect my children from the threats of the Media, the unauthorized romance, the bad music and literatures, the non decent dress and the academic standardization. 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 repented of their sins and committed their lives to shelter their children from the threats that we discussed in this message. Lord provide for them, and protect them and use their life testimony as good example to others to follow you.

Lord bless 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 the Media, the unauthorized romance, the bad music and literatures, the non decent dress and the educational standardization. Lord lead us to reach new people who needs you and needs your Word. 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 new 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.

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