

Lived experiences is always the best teacher

From our last discussion we focused on the fact that our faith must be transmitted through our lived example. Those around us watch and learn from the example we give. God also uses our families to help us learn to change. We all pick up sinful habits along the road of life that are often exposed in these familial relationships. Out of love for them we may choose to concentrate on ending those behaviors or we may selfishly rebel and demand that the family endure with our sinfulness. This is a challenge to every parent who seriously cares about raising their children in the love of Christ. In particular, how do we raise young boys to become Men of God? This is often an afterthought rather than a calculated decision of your will.

Once again, God's transforming wisdom plays a role in that a Father must be pursuing his own masculinity in Christ for him to teach his son. If not then he is left to teaching his son the World's false truth about what a Man should be. Mothers must also be nurturing their sons by helping them practice these Christian virtues. Together, they will be able to impart on their son the virtues and attitudes of love that a Man of God must have to enter the Beatific Vision (Heaven).

What is a Man of God and how do we teach young men to become them? First and foremost, we need to understand that the world is feeding on young children and indoctrinating for the soul purpose of being used. They will learn quickly the road to selfishness and if their young minds are like sponges. Remember this, if you don't train your children in the way they should go, the world will do it for you and you will hate the result. Take a week and examine what are the sources for masculinity that they are receiving from?

Although some parents would like to totally remove all negative resources, that isn't always possible. They must learn to think critically about their sources. They must learn how to stand up to these negative messages and reject them. They must become sources of positive influence to their male friends and sources of security for their female friends.

How do parents do this? **BY THE EXAMPLE OF THEIR PARENTS!** Fathers have a unique responsibility to train their sons to respect women and acknowledge their dignity. Where do you get the training manual for this behavior, Deacon Ralph? I hope you already have one – the Bible. God's plan for training is a lived experience. Sons (and Daughters) must observe their Fathers treating their Mother with love, tenderness, and respect. They must see them open the doors for their Mothers and Sisters. They must speak to them in love and courtesy. If Dad loses his cool, yells, and sins by his words or deeds, his Son must witness Dad seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

Mothers play an important role as well. They too must live the truth laid out in the scriptures. They must expect all those behaviors from their sons. They must demand that as the only acceptable behavior from them.

Looking at this method of training your kids in life, we see very quickly that if Mom and Dad do not live this out in their lives, their children will not do it either. Rather, they will do exactly what they witness. If Dad or Mom is self centered, their children will follow in their example. If Parents scream as a method of manipulating others, guess what the kids will be doing as they get older. If we don't work to kill the selfish, sinful habits with us, we will bring to fruition what the scriptures say: "The sins of one generation are passed on from one to the next." All too often, our kids won't turn to God because their parents haven't. For that, we shall be judged. There is no doubt that the God's path toward righteousness calls us to live it and give it. Giving it without living it only creates confusion and rebellion in our youth. **Parents need to be what they want their children to become!**