



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Sunday** September 24, 2023

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**Text:** Psalm 127:1-3

## “The Declaration of Independence” July 4, 1776. Of the 56 signers:

17 served in the military; 11 had their homes destroyed; 5 were hunted and captured; Abraham Clark had two sons imprisoned on the British starving ship Jersey; John Witherspoon’s son was killed in battle; Francis Lewis’ wife was imprisoned and died from the harsh treatment; many, such as Thomas Nelson and Carter Braxton, lost their fortunes; and 9 died during the War.

1. **John Hancock** signed first, saying: “The price on my head has just doubled.”
2. **Benjamin Franklin** said: “We must hang together or most assuredly we shall hang separately.”
3. **Samuel Adams** said: “We have this day restored the Sovereign to whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come.”
4. **John Adams** wrote: “I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shews, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this time forward forever more. You will think me transported with enthusiasm but I am not. I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure, that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means. And that Posterity will triumph in that Days Transaction, even although we should rue it, which I trust in God We shall not.”

A patriot without religion in my estimation is as great a paradox, as an honest man without the fear of God. Is it possible that he whom no moral obligations bind, can have any real Good Will towards Men? Can he be a patriot who, by an openly vicious conduct, is undermining the very bonds of Society? ... The Scriptures tell us, “righteousness exalteth a Nation.” - **Abigail Adams, November 1775**

James Madison, the primary author of our American Constitution, correctly observed that “**The advancement and diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty.**” Our founding Fathers left the citizens of this wonderful country a great gift, but it is of little worth if it is not received and opened. In much the same way, the gift of Jesus Christ, the One whose birth we celebrate during this joyous season, cannot be realized until it is personally received.

*"The vanity of the world, and its insufficiency to satisfy the soul of man, has been a long settled conviction of my mind. Man's inability to secure by his own merits the approbation of God, I feel to be true. I trust in the atonement of the Savior of mercy, as the ground of my acceptance and my hope of salvation." - Henry Clay, Secretary of State, U.S. senator and representative, 1829*

1. In Galatians 5:16-17 we read, **"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. (17) For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."** Someone wrote, **"Once you expose yourself to evil you end up thinking about the wrong things all the time. And it's especially hard to resist temptation when it's all you think about."** The best way to beat temptation is by avoiding it whenever and wherever possible. Don't expose yourself to evil. Cloth yourself with Christ.
2. In Ephesians 4:26-27 we read, **"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: (27) Neither give place to the devil."** The Apostle Paul allows for anger that is not sin by warning the Ephesians not to allow their anger to cross the line, **"Be ye angry, and sin not."** So when is anger righteous indignation (as in Jesus' case in the temple) and when is it sinful? Perhaps it depends on the purpose and intent of the anger. Sinful anger is self-centered—we are defending ourselves by attacking others. Righteous indignation defends the cause or standing of another. Sinful anger wants to hurt, whereas righteous indignation wants a miscarriage of justice to be set right. Sinful anger broods and is never resolved, but righteous indignation says its piece and is done. **"If something arouses your anger today, make sure your anger doesn't cross the line."**
3. It is right for the preacher to comfort the distressed, but it is also the preacher's duty to distress the comfortable. **Bob Jones, Sr.**
4. Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation, for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company. **George Washington**
5. Quick prayer... **"Holy Spirit help me to never grow numb to Your presence. Fill me up with a deep hunger for Jesus."**
6. Childhood is a time of character building. Teenage years are a time of character testing. Adulthood is a time of character reaping.

In His Amazing Grace,  
*Pastor David Miklas*

# “How to Raise a God-Fearing Child”

**INTRODUCTION:** As we begin this message on “How to Raise a God-Fearing Child” let me call your attention to **FOUR** passages of scripture.

**NUMBER 1. Psalm 127:1-5:** Children are more than a product of the mating instinct, where by children become the exclusive property of a mother and father. They belong to God.

“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. (2) It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. (3) Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. (4) As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. (5) Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”

Notice again in verse 3, “Lo, children are an heritage OF the Lord...” Two facts are announced here:

1. Children come from God. They are His before they are ours.
2. God entrusts them to us as a sacred care. We are to raise them for Him and unto Him.

Someone wrote:

“The home is the center of development where children learn WHO they are, WHY they are in the world, and WHERE they are headed. It is the place of earliest and most lasting instruction. It is the seminary of eternity. Parents have the solemn duty to bring their children into intimacy with the Lord and prepare them to live with Him forever. The years they spend at home are the most critical of their lives. During that time they are neither toys for our amusement, nor slaves to do our errands. Neither are they to be the targets of our irritability and impatience. God considers the raising of HIS children a sacred stewardship. Once they leave our shelter, we will have done all we’ve going to in meeting God’s requirement as mothers or fathers. But until that time, the Bible insists we are responsible for the spiritual upbringing of our offspring.”

**NUMBER 2. Deuteronomy 6:4-9:** Here we read,

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: (5) And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. (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. (8) And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. (9) And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

In verse 4, we have the Theology of God. There is only ONE God and this truth was to be passed on to the world.

In verse 5 we have the human response to the reality of God.

In verse 6 we have the personal commitment to passing on this message.

In verse 7 we have the parental communication from parent to child.

**IN SPEECH** verse 7a. Godly conversation is to flow out of the parent’s mouth, constantly speaking the things of God.

**IN SYMBOLS** verse 8. Even when there was silence, there was to be a visible commitment to the law of God. Here it was symbolized in what they wore.

**IN SURROUNDINGS** verse 9. All over the house should be reminders, that this is a Godly Christian home.



10. Make Sunday a big deal in their lives; magnify the importance of the House of God by being at all the services.

It is during these years you need to seek to bring them to **FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST** and encourage them to get saved. **CHILD EVANGELISM** is oh, so important!

Make the most of these nine **NO NONSENSE** years from 3-12, since they will go so quickly. Before you know it, you have come to the second stage.

**SECOND: The REALITY YEARS** - All of a sudden before you realize it, your **ADORABLE, CONTROLLABLE, LOVABLE,** children move into their **TEENAGE YEARS.**

They now have come face to face with reality.  
They no longer accept your explanations.  
They have begun a journey of questioning everything.  
They are looking to see if you are either genuine or a hypocrite.

These are very critical years for your Middle school and Senior High school teenagers, because they will either be a **LIVING TESTIMONY OF THEIR GODLY PARENTS,** who have instilled the **FEAR OF GOD** in their lives or they will **DRIFT** away from the Lord.

Perhaps your family is there right now. You may ask how I have handled this stage. As I recall, they seemed to be on one wave length, and I was on another. They didn't want pat answers. They were looking for the **REAL THING.**

You need to show the reality of Christ in your life. If Christ is not real in your life, a teenager will see right on through you. You talk with teenagers long enough and you will hear them say "Christ is real in my parent's lives." Or you will hear them say, "Christ is not real in my father's life or in my mother's life. Their lives are ALL TALK, IT'S ALL A SUNDAY SHOW, CHRIST IS NOT REAL." They will go on to say, "The Halo in church comes off and is folded up and put away once they arrive home. CHRIST ISN'T REAL TO THEM, WHY SHOULD HE BE REAL TO ME?"

I am saying if you are going to raise a **GOD FEARING CHILD,** your faith must be real. Someone said, "You cannot impart what you do not possess. You cannot bring your children to the level of spiritual maturity unless you possess the reality of Christ in your soul and life."

**INCONSISTENCY IN ADULTS** is the number **ONE** reason for spiritual failures in the lives of Christian teenagers.

If the Word of God is so important, why don't my parents read it?"  
If church is important, why do we only go 50% of the time?"  
You say God is to be trusted, my parents don't trust Him, why should I?"

If you are going to show your teenagers the reality of Faith in God, in Christ, and in the Word of God, you **MUST** show that reality **CONSISTENTLY** in your lives.

Here are **ELEVEN** things you need to impress upon your teenagers during their **REALITY YEARS:**

1. Recognize we live in a sinful world and you better commit yourself to making sin exceedingly sinful or else you will have sin overcome your children. Say it over and over again, "**SIN DAMAGES, SIN DESTROYS and SIN DAMS.**" Make sin exceedingly sinful which means, if that show or video is sinful for your child, it is also sinful for you to watch.

2. In Ephesians 4:22-24 we read, "**That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness**

**and true holiness.**" Here learn the principle; everything I remove as an influence that is **EVIL** for my child I must then replace it with something **GOOD**. We don't need to compete with Hollywood, but we need to have child and teenage ministries that are alive.

3. Expose them to Godly hero's, sacred music and Godly books.
4. Face crises in life together, in prayer, as you pray daily for your family by name.
5. Help them to interpret life's daily events in light of the Word of God.
6. Teach them that they can only be saved by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
7. Teach them that they must obey you as you obey God in the raising of them. For you must, one day, give an account to God for them.
8. Teach them the "**fear of the Lord**" that translates into being not only disciplined by you, but also disciplined by God.
9. Teach them that this world is a **TEMPORARY** training ground, and a place of preparation for eternity. They are only "**pilgrims and strangers**" on this earth.
10. Teach them that they have two natures. The one nature is ruled by self, the devil, and this world. The other nature is ruled by the Holy Spirit, if we daily yield to Him.
11. Teach them by **RESTRAINT**. There are some parents who say, "Pastor, I trust my son or daughter to do right." Let me ask you where did you get that hole in your head? Oh, I could not trust my children because of the **OLD SIN NATURE THEY WERE BORN WITH**. You make a grave mistake if you think you can leave a son or daughter alone in a parked car or alone in a house without anything happening.

Bible teaches "**abstain from fleshly lust which war against the flesh.**"  
Bible teaches us that "**Evil companions corrupt good morals.**"

Parents you need to place some restraints around your teenagers to enable them to fight the battles of temptation and lust.

**First, there must be the reality of Christ in your life.**  
**Second, there must be the reality of life.**

They must be made to face the reality of eternity. In II Corinthians 5:10 we read, "**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**" Here we discover that one day we will all stand before God at the Judgment seat of Christ, where we will all give an account of our lives, and our works will be evaluated.

Therefore in view of this you need to teach your teenagers **ETERNAL VALUES**, the value of living for the Lord, the value of Soul Winning and the value of serving others.

**We have come through the Childhood and Adolescent years. Here is where you can apply the NO NONSENSE approach. You then go through the difficult teenage years. These are the reality years.**

Children will grow up faster than you would like for them to. They will go off to school, get married and move away. Hopefully you will be blessed with grandchildren. Now, for the most part, you think your parenting is done; your child-training days are over. However, you soon realize you are still training, because you are faced with the third stage of how to raise **GOD-FEARING CHILDREN**.

**THIRD:** Now there must be **TRAINING FROM AFAR** - The best way to emphasize this point is by an illustration from the life of King Hezekiah. As you skim over II Chronicles 29-32 you will find there is no reference to Hezekiah's wife or family even though he had

both. But in these chapters you will discover something of Hezekiah's relationship to his God.

As you go back into the history of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah in the books of II Kings and I & II Chronicles, you will find with the kings of Judah one man did that which was **right in the sight of the Lord** and another did that which was **evil in the sight of the Lord**. Unfortunately, most of the kings did that which was wrong in the eyes of the Lord.

King Hezekiah was one of the exceptions who did **right in the eyes of the Lord**. Not only did he want to do what was right in the sight of God, he also desired all his subjects to do what was right in the eyes of God as well.

Notice in **30:1** He wanted the nation to serve God as he served God.

**“And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel.”**

But they didn't all have that same desire as we read in, **30:17-18a**.

**“For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD. (18a) For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written...”**

As a result notice what Hezekiah did. **30:18b** says, **“But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon everyone.”** This man had a spiritual problem in the kingdom. What was he going to do? He handled it the only way possible **“HE PRAYED.”**

Here was a young King at the very outset of his reign facing a spiritual problem. He prayed. Notice from **30:18b-27**, God gives the answer.

**“But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon everyone. (19) That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. (20) And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people. (21) And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the LORD. (22) And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers. (23) And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness. (24) For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves. (25) And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. (26) So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem. (27) Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.”**

A spiritual problem arises and immediately Hezekiah seeks God's face and God answers. By now, you should recognize you deal with one issue and you say praise the Lord that problem is behind me. No sooner you say that then another problem takes its place and you say where did that problem come from? However, as someone said, **“Every problem for a child of God is a prayer problem.”**

Notice in **II Chronicles 32:1,9** you have the Assyrian King Sennacherib attacking Jerusalem. “After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.” Reading down to verse 9,

He wanted to lay waste to Jerusalem.  
He wanted to destroy Hezekiah.  
He wanted to lead the people from following the God of Israel.

What did Hezekiah do? Notice **32:20-23**,

“And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven. (21) And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. (22) Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side. (23) And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.”

Hezekiah has been faced with a **SPIRITUAL** problem and he prayed. Immediately, he is faced with a **POLITICAL** problem and he also prays.

Now Hezekiah is faced with another problem, notice **32:24**. “In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.”

From **II Kings 20:1-11** we find that Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and cried out to God, and God answered his prayer adding fifteen more years to his life. So I am saying to you, it appears no matter what his problems are, he is talking to God. He is applying Jeremiah 33:3, “Call upon Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things that thou knows not.”

Now in **II Chronicles 32:32-33** we read,

“Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. (33) And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

From these words we find, for the first time, that Hezekiah did have a son. And when you read the next chapter you come across one of the **bleakest, darkest chapters** of all of Israel's history.

Notice **33:1-2** where we read,

“Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: (2) But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.”

Now when you read that you say, Here is a father who honored the Lord. Here is a father who prayed:

in the midst of a **SPIRITUAL** problem, and God answered.  
in the midst of a **POLITICAL** problem and God answered.  
in the midst of a **PHYSICAL** problem and God answered.



Here was a father who did what was right before the Lord, yet he has a son who lives like the devil.

You might be saying, "Pastor, I have done everything I know how to bring up my Boy and Girl in the **NURTURE and ADMONITION** of the Lord. I took them to Church, they memorized scripture. **They loved the Lord. They were saved. NOW LOOK AT THEM, they are living like the Devil. WHAT DO I DO?"**

Follow me as I read **33:9-10**.

**"So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. (10) And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.**

Now when a man is out of fellowship, God uses two means to bring that man back to himself:

**1.** There is the **WORD OF GOD**. Notice again **V.10**, "**And the Lord spoke unto Manasseh...**" I don't care what your life is like or what you are involved in, but the Lord is speaking to you through His word right now. However, if the Word of God doesn't change you...

**2.** There are the **WORKS OF GOD, 33:11-13**. "**Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. (12) And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, (13) And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God."**

When God brings **TRIALS** and **DIFFICULTIES** or **HARDSHIPS** or even **TRAGDIES** into a man's life and places him on his back, all of a sudden that man looks up and cries out, "God I now realize you are speaking to me."

Now when you read **verses 14-16** you'll find a vast change in Manasseh's life. "**Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.(15) And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. (16) And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel."**

There was repentance; a desire to return to God; and a desire to make restitution for the things he had done wrong.

When I read that, the question comes to mind, "**Why did all this take place?**" I believe it was because God was honoring the life and prayers of a godly father.

Now if Hezekiah prayed when he was beset by **SPIRITUAL** problems,  
And if Hezekiah prayed when he was beset by **POLITICAL** problems,  
And if Hezekiah prayed when he was beset by **PHYSICAL** problems,  
I believe he must have prayed when he had **PERSONAL** problems also.

So Manasseh stands here as a monument to the prayers of a godly father. His father is dead, but these prayers are tracking that son down until that son finally comes back to God and repents.

Listen, you and I influence the future of our children - **NOT BY THE WAY YOU LIVE BEFORE YOUR CHILDREN, BUT MORE SO BY THE WAY YOU LIVE BEFORE YOUR GOD.** When a father

and or mother are walking with God, and they PRAY FOR THEIR FAMILY, that family cannot escape the results of the impact of those prayers even after the father and or mother dies. I sincerely believe that GOD HONORS THE PRAYERS OF A GODLY PARENT.

I believe that the prayers of my parents are still having an impact upon my life as well as upon the lives of those in my family, including the children and grandchildren they knew.

Parents,

You'd better take your stand with Jesus Christ.

You'd better make a conscious break with the ungodly system of the world.

You'd better commit yourself to your family remembering the promise in Proverbs 22:6, "**Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**" As you keep on doing it God's way and keep on praying, I believe God will honor it.

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "**How to Raise a God-Fearing Child**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know. Please send an e-mail to, [pdmikBBM@aol.com](mailto:pdmikBBM@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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