

## Life Lessons for Parents of All Ages:

### "Tips from a Fellow Traveler"

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Sunday, September 2, 2012

What lasting contribution will you make to your children and grandchildren?  
1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

#### I. Faith

- Faith in God is the foundation of an individual's life; it is the bedrock of healthy family relationships.
- Faith is not something you possess.
- Faith is something you DO.
- Faith is what you believe in your head and also what you live in your life.
  - a. faith in God.
  - b. integrity in life.
- Faith is joining our hands with God's hand and making music together.

How can we help other family members make faith and faithfulness central in their lives? We can begin by providing a worthy role model. We can fake to folks outside our families but not to family members---they see our inconsistencies.

Keeping promises to children helps children develop a capacity to trust. If adults in a child's life are not trustworthy, the child has great difficulty developing a capacity for trust. Parents model faithfulness as they remain true to their marriage vows. When parents violate this sacred trust, children are devastated.

- Faith is foundation. Faith provides roots for family. When the things you give your family pass away, faith remains. You can't inject faith in your child. You can live a life based on faithfulness to God and integrity in relationships. It will make all the difference in the world.

#### II. Hope

- Hope is the lens through which we can see the future.
- The key to hope is learning to see our future through the eyes of God.

Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

- Hope is joining our hands with the hand of God as we live toward the future hope God has for us.

What future story do you have for your child? Advice: don't write their story for them. Give them the freedom to write their own story under God.

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### III. Love.

- Christ is the role model for love.
- Love is feeling and action.

Paul says: "Let love be genuine." (Romans 12:9)

- Our love for our family members is genuine when it is a reflection of the same kind of love Christ has for us.
- Christ is both the model and the enabler of love.
  - a. His love was not mere sentimentality.
  - b. His love was not just feelings.
  - c. His love was action.

John 13:34: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

- Christ gave a new command about love.
  - a. Old--love neighbor as self.
  - b. New--love as he loved.
  - c. Christ is the model for love.

Not mere sentimentality. His love was sacrificial; it was self giving.

So, what is this thing called love?

- Love as a universal principle is beautiful.

On paper it's cold, stale, meaningless.

1. **Love is a feeling.** It is a warm feeling that connects us to each other.
2. **Love is an action.** In fact, the focus of love in the bible is more action than feeling. Love is a way of relating to each other.

Jesus becomes both the model and the enabler for love. Throughout his life he was self giving. In his death, he gave his all.

A family therapist suggested that strong, healthy families are able to balance affection and direction.

- a. Love is warm; love is affection.
- b. Love is direction; guidance, limits.

Need both.

#### How will they remember you?

- Not the things you surround them with.
- Not the enrichment or extra curricular activities.
- Not even the education you provide for them.

The things that matter most are those inner values with which your order your life and communicate in words AND action to your children.

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