

## FAMILY MATTERS, MATTER

## Samson &amp; His Parents

Written By  
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**T**eens can be quite creative when it involves doing things off the grid. One eighteen-year-old in my youth group wrote the book on the subject.

His affluent parents splurged and bought him a Trans Am for his first car. Believe me, that car caught everyone's eye, plus that throaty muffler just helped announce its arrival when it pulled up. Yeah, this was a teen that really lacked nothing. I dropped by one day to play video games with him, and couldn't believe he had three hundred to choose from . . . and he complained quite often of being board. Are you kidding me?

Anyway, the teen that had everything really didn't in his eyes because he wanted total freedom to do whatever he wanted to do with his questionable friends. Curfew, however, cramped his style, so he came up with a great way to get around it. On select weekend evenings after he told his parents good-night, he'd stuff his bed with pillows to make it look like a body was in the bed, and, then, he quietly slips out in the wee hours of the morning to party with his buddies.

This gig worked for a while, but their came the day when, for some strange reason, his alarm clock went off in the middle of the night. As the buzzer continued to ring, eventually his father, a former Marine, opened his bedroom door to investigate. Wondering why his son failed to wake up from a deep sleep to turn it off, the father walked over and hit the button. Thinking it strange the noise didn't wake his boy, he reached out and touched his shoulder in an attempt to wake him up. It didn't take a Marine to figure out you can't wake up pillows.

Within the next few minutes I think the entire police force was dispatched to find that coveted white Trans Am and its self-centered, oft-times impulsive, and push-the-boundaries driver. Once the police located the absolutely shocked and embarrassed would be party-animal, they turned him over to his friendly father who, well, had a nice, direct chat with him. What was the topic of that chat? The wise father dispensed wisdom to the boy. He, like a drill sergeant, covered the danger of deceiving and duping parents, the importance of maintaining trust in a relationship, the danger of hanging

around all of the wrong people, and the fact that a lot of sin can occur in the middle of the night. With all of these preliminaries out to the way, the keys to the sports car became the possession of the father, and the young man learned a curfew is a curfew.

What this father (and mother) did represents how parents should function with a child. I know for a fact they poured godly wisdom into their son's life on his good days, and when he slipped out of the house like a CIA agent they continued to remind him the path of wise living. Godly balance. That is what they brought his life. Is this what you bring to your son or daughter's life? Maintaining balance is tough, isn't it?

- An abusive background can cause you to be overly soft with discipline when you should be hard.
- A blended marriage can cause make it complicated for the non-blood parent to address the deviations of a son which isn't his by birth.
- A wayward, obstinate child can wear you down to the point you just throw in the proverbial white towel.
- A child which continually doesn't listen to wisdom you've gleaned from living life and learning to know better, can cause you to second guess yourself.

Ah, now you are shaking your head in agreement because you know what I mean.

When it comes to raising a son or a daughter for God, what counts? From studying the life of Samson and the relationship he had with his parents, one central motif emerges from the historical pages of Judges chapters thirteen through sixteen.

## Speaking Wisdom Is The Way To Grow Wise Children Of Impact (Judges 13 & 16)

What is wisdom? It is insight gained from living life and learning from life, especially as it is studied in light of God's commands and teachings. When Solomon said to his son, "My son, to my wisdom be attentive, to my knowledge incline your ear" (Proverbs 5:1), he directed him to what he had learned in life from God, and what he had learned . . . usually the hard way . . . by living life with all of its tests and trails, highs and lows, and friends and foes. A wise parent, then, shares what he/she knows with their child so they can hopefully make wise choices. A wise child listens and learns and applies so he/she doesn't have to walk down a difficult, costly road. But in the final analysis, it is the parent's responsibility to constantly speak wisdom into the child's life so their life is put in a better position to accomplish much for God.

The backstory of Samson's parents clearly illustrates they were a godly, God-fearing couple. At a time when Israel has been in bondage to the likes of the ruthless, godless Philistines for some forty years, God sent a barren couple a special baby boy. The Angel of the LORD, or the pre-incarnate form of Jesus, the Messiah, appeared to give the mother the good news. He also informed her that this boy would be a Nazarite all of his life, or a man completely devoted and separated for the purposes of God (Numbers 6). Interesting, as a sidelight, how no room is left here for the boy to choose his gender. God chose that for him for His specific purposes. Even in this womb this boy was genetically designed to do God's bidding as Israel's twelfth deliverer. This information, gleaned

from Judges 13:1-7, also serves as a powerful argument against abortion. How dare anyone destroy what God has fashioned in the womb for His providential plans.

From what we can tell from the revelatory story, the parents were people of prayer, they knew their faith intersected with reason, they saw their sin and need for blood sacrifice to atone for it, and they had a respectful fear of God. Consider the narrative:

<sup>15</sup> Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you." <sup>16</sup> The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Though you detain me, I will not eat your food, but if you prepare a burnt offering, *then* offer it to the LORD." For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD. <sup>17</sup> Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that when your words come *to pass*, we may honor you?" <sup>18</sup> But the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" <sup>19</sup> So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the LORD, and He performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on. <sup>20</sup> For it came about when the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw *this*, they fell on their faces to the ground. <sup>21</sup> Now the angel of the LORD did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. <sup>22</sup> So Manoah said to his wife, "We will surely die, for we have seen God." <sup>23</sup> But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have let us hear *things* like this at this time" (Judges 13).

Obviously, these were two godly, wise parents, who, according to verse 24 lived to enjoy the birth of their little boy, Samson, and they lived to watch him grow up and need their input so God's purposes in his life could be maximized. From what we can gather from the ensuing three chapters, which contain four snapshots of Samson's jaw-dropping strength, spiritual victories, and morally topsy-turvy life, it is apparent that the parental balance could have been better.

True, the boy who became a man was responsible for his strengths and weaknesses; however, as the story progresses of his exploits it appears that dad and mom should have been more prevalent in his life. Perhaps that's the story of your parenting to this point, too. You are physically and spiritually there with your child as they grow up, but as they head into their twenties you pull back, sometimes way back, to let them spread their wings. Is that the wisest method? I'm not convinced. Hopefully, from this analysis of Samson's life and relationship with his parents, we can all learn the importance of being around to speak wisdom into the lives of our sons and daughters.

Since the story of Samson is familiar to many, and our time is limited, we shall not pour over every textual detail in these three fascinating and instructive chapters. Our method will be to take our main idea and see how it relates to what I call two historical snapshots from their lives. First, we will get the gist of the historical story. Second, we will consider two observations: what the parents did say, and what the parents should have said. Third, we'll draw practical conclusions for us as parents. And if you are not a

parent, the main motif still applies as a believer for you are called to speak truth into the lives of others around you. So, let's pull the scroll back and get on with it.

### Snapshot 1: Samson Gets Married (Judges 14)

Samson, a man whom God gave super-human strength to in order to defeat the superior forces of the Philistines, was probably in his early twenties when he suddenly found the love of his life. Read on and you'll see what I mean.

<sup>1</sup> Then Samson went down to Timnah and saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. <sup>2</sup> So he came back and told his father and mother, "I saw a woman in Timnah, *one* of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." <sup>3</sup> Then his father and his mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she looks good to me." <sup>4</sup> However, his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. Now at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel. <sup>5</sup> Then Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came as far as the vineyards of Timnah; and behold, a young lion *came* roaring toward him. <sup>6</sup> The Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, so that he tore him as one tears a young goat though he had nothing in his hand; but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done. <sup>7</sup> So he went down and talked to the woman; and she looked good to Samson. <sup>8</sup> When he returned later to take her, he turned aside to look at the carcass of the lion; and behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the body of the lion. <sup>9</sup> So he scraped the honey into his hands and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave *some* to them and they ate *it*; but he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey out of the body of the lion. <sup>10</sup> Then his father went down to the woman; and Samson made a feast there, for the young men customarily did this (Judges 14).

The Bible is far from boring. Sometimes it's downright almost too practical, isn't it? Let's analyze this opening story of Samson's youthful life by studying the two concepts I mentioned above.

*What Did The Parents Say?* When Samson's parents discover their boy fell head over heels over a beautiful young thing from Timnah, they immediately knew she was not a Jew but a Philistine. They also knew that God gave Israel strict instructions not to intermarry with the godless, carnal, idol worshippers of the land lest those marriages pollute and dilute their faith in the living God (Deuteronomy 7). They also knew from Samson's record of the encounter it wasn't *love* at first sight, but *lust* at first sight. Funny how lust can move us quickly away from the wise, life-giving standards of God. His parents also know his request to "Get her for me because she's a ten" is basically devoid of sound, clear-minded reason. At a time when parents arranged marriages, they knew their place, but they also knew their son couldn't have good, sound reasons for marrying a woman for just her outward appearance. There should be so much more to finding a

wife, or life mate, than, “She looks good, Dad, so go and make the marriage happen.” So, how did the father, Manoah, respond? Like any godly man should. Logically he asks the starry-eye Samson if there is not one girl worth marrying in all of Israel. Surely, there is, if he will just put the brakes on his sexual infatuation with this Philistine girl who is out of God’s will.

Samson would have none of his father’s wise counsel but impulsively went ahead anyway. On one of his trips to see the girl with his parents, he happened to be separate from them and encountered a massive lion. Filled with super-human strength from God, he quickly dispatched the beast, which typically weight 420 pounds and are four feet tall at the shoulder.

Later, as he headed down see the girl of his dreams, he noticed a beehive had formed in the carcass of the lion. Like a good son, he gave some to his father and mother, and then, on his marriage day, with his father in tow (Judges 14:10), he proposed a riddle to thirty Philistine “bodyguards” who came to be with the young woman.

<sup>14</sup> So he said to them, “Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet.”

Samson also made a tough wager. If they solved his riddle, he give them thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing. If they couldn’t, then they’d have to do the same for him. After three days they couldn’t solve the complex riddle so they motivated the young bride to use her feminine ways to get the info out of her new groom.

<sup>15</sup> Then it came about on the fourth day that they said to Samson’s wife, “Entice your husband, so that he will tell us the riddle, or we will burn you and your father’s house with fire. Have you invited us to impoverish us? Is this not so?” <sup>16</sup> Samson’s wife wept before him and said, “You only hate me, and you do not love me; you have propounded a riddle to the sons of my people, and have not told *it* to me.” And he said to her, “Behold, I have not told *it* to my father or mother; so should I tell you?” <sup>17</sup> However she wept before him seven days while their feast lasted. And on the seventh day he told her because she pressed him so hard. She then told the riddle to the sons of her people.

Samson, the he-man, definitely had a she-weakness. He, who could take on a warring lion, couldn’t withstand a weeping wife. After seven days of pouting, and crying, he finally gave in and gave her the key to the riddle. She, in turn, gave it to her thirty Philistine friends, who, in turn, used the info to mock the mighty man, Samson. He, in turn, wiped out thirty Philistines in order to acquire their clothing to settle the wager (Judge 14:19). His wife, in turn, was given, by her father to Samson’s best man. As godly as Samson was, as famous as he was and is for being a man of faith who is recorded for his exploits in Hebrews 11, he lived to see how lust, coupled with a bad marriage decision isn’t just costly, it’s destructive and damaging.

In light of all of this, we have to ask . . .

*What Should His Parents Have Said?* First, I find it interesting the mother isn’t mentioned as traveling to the marriage feast. I wonder why? Could she not bring herself to watch her son make the mistake of a lifetime? If so, was it right for her not to be

present? And I also can't help but wonder why the Scripture doesn't record any comments by Manoah. He was present but he was, for all intents and purposes, quiet as a little church mouse. Did he approve? No. Did he continue to voice his disapproval of his son's choice in a wife? No. Should he have? Probably not because after a while an adult child is responsible for their own life choices.

This, however, doesn't preclude Manoah from speaking up and out during the engagement period, which he doesn't appear to have done. Once he said his peace when he first found out about the supposedly bombshell of a girl, he let crickets take over. I don't know about you, but I can think of several wise points which could have possibly added some much needed balance. Points like . . .

- Samson, son, I think you're looking on the outer, not the inner woman. While finding a wife you believe is beautiful is important, what really counts is what she is like on the inside. Does she love the living God? Does she worship Him? Does she read His Word? Does she live her life in light of His timeless, life-giving precepts?
- Samson, son, when her beauty fades, when Botox can't keep the age lines at bay, when the hot Middle Eastern sun weathers her olive skin, when sun spots appear not on the sun but on her body, and when arthritis bends her bones, are you going to be happy with who she is as a woman, and all that this means?
- Samson, son, have you ever considered that a marriage built initially on pure, unadulterated lust is prone to rust? Son, have you consider the wise insight of William Penn when he said, "Love grows. Lust wastes by enjoyment, and the reason is, that one springs from a union of souls, and the other form a union of sense."
- Samson, son, have you forgotten God's call on your life, how you are called to be a separated man?
- Samson, son, do you realize that this decision shows a weakness on your part which your Adversary, the Devil, will most certainly exploit for his purposes later in your life? Don't you realize that once your dreaded enemy understands that a woman can eventually get to you they will use this to their advantage to defeat, disillusion, and destroy you later on down the proverbial road? Don't you realize that many people are watching you a s godly man, some for your good, some for your ill?
- Yes, Samson, son, God can use you to further His holy causes despite your sinful choices, as He did in this episode, but one should not presume upon the providence of God, should they? I don't think this is wise living.

The parents could and should have said a lot of things, but from the historical narrative we find only silence. True, they could have had many heart-to-heart talks with Samson we don't know about; however, for all intents and purposes it appears they backed up and let him live without speaking up and out about his life choices. If this is what happened, it makes you wonder why? Yes, why did they grow silent? Could it be Samson's utter disregard for this counsel concerning his Philistine wife was just too much for them to bear? Possibly. You, as parents, know this drill. A wayward, impulsive

child makes a whopper of a bad decision and it just rocks your world into silence. It shouldn't, but that's just what happens sometimes.

What did Samson need? I'm of the opinion he needed his parents to play a bigger role in his life as he aged and matured. True, he, as a one-man army, held the Philistines in check for twenty years (Judges 15:20). When his countrymen were growing complacent with Philistine domination, when they just wanted to go along to get along, when they didn't want anyone really rocking the political boat, here was one . . . with many weaknesses . . . who committed himself to doing God's bidding. I can't help but wonder how much more he could have accomplished for God had we more insights into the wise words being spoken to him by his father and mother.

What about you and your Samson? Has he done something unbelievably ridiculous, impulsive, maybe even sinful? Have you told him the way he should walk based on the Scriptures? Did he listen? Has he proceeded to blow off your godly counsel? Have you now grown silent in order to let him discover the error of his ways? Be honest with yourself. Is your approach to his rash, carnal activity, digressive, counter-Christian activity as open and active as it should be? Is there something you should say to him before he goes too far down the wrong road? Is there someone you think he should speak to in order to hopefully get his attention?

If you've been out of balance, then I think you know what you need to do. While you are thinking about this snapshot from Samson's life, let's consider one more.

### Snapshot #2: Samson Goes To The Wrong Place (Judges 16:1-3)

Toward the end of his life, when the Philistines used the lovely Delilah to eventually pester Samson into giving away the secret of his strength; namely his hair, he succumbed to sexual temptation when he traveled southwest, of all places, down to Gaza. Prior to this we have no record of him being out of control sexually. Granted, he could have been, but the argument is from silence. What we do know, however, is two women led to his ultimate downfall. First, his appearance with a prostitute in Gaza informed his enemy that women still were his weakness, and second, those enemies would use this information with the gorgeous but cunning and money-hungry Delilah to discover the true source of his out-of-this-world strength.

What happened in Gaza, then, set the stage for his tragic downfall and denigration. Read on and learn.

<sup>1</sup> Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. <sup>2</sup> When it was told to the Gazites, saying, "Samson has come here," they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. And they kept silent all night, saying, "Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him." <sup>3</sup> Now Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

He went where? Gaza. What in the world did he go there for? Who knows? Don't be too hard on him. Haven't you ever placed yourself in a location you shouldn't have been near based on your personal weaknesses?

Alan Reasoner, one of my friends who went home to be with God in his early thirties back in the mid-80s, started going back into bars where he knew everyone after I left him and headed for Dallas to attend seminary. Being in those bars got him into a lot of trouble in the 70s, resulting in him spending many years in San Quentin State Penitentiary. I remember the day he told me he had gone back in. "What are you doing," I asked. "Don't you know you'll meet up with your old buddies in there and they'll tempt you to get back into your old lifestyle?" He agreed but continued to go anyway, and it wasn't long before he was back on acid. Not long thereafter he died in a tragic motorcycle accident.

What was Samson doing? Same thing. How could he have rationalized it? Perhaps he argued that he wanted to get in the face of the Philistines to let them know he was still around after all these years, and that they had better behave themselves. Whatever his reasons were, the Scripture is clear when it states he "saw a harlot there." How could he have missed her for they were strategically located everywhere. Oscar Wilde once quipped words which could have come from Samson, "The only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it . . . I can resist everything except temptation."<sup>1</sup> Right.

Samson fulfilled these words to a tee when he went from seeing to enjoying the harlot. Didn't he realize he could contract some kind of disease? Didn't he realize he could have produced a child? Didn't he realize that sex, as designed by God, is supposed to occur inside of a marriage relationship not outside of it? Didn't he realize that this fatal flaw in his character could wind up causing him to become a fatality in this dusty, dirty, godless town? Didn't he realize that God is holy and would discipline him for uniting himself with a wicked woman like this? He probably didn't think any of these things because he quickly went from seeing to doing. Such is the nature of sin. It blinds, as Jeremiah states,

<sup>5</sup> Why do these people rebel with obstinate resistance? Why do they cling to deceptive idols, refuse to turn back? <sup>6</sup> I listen closely: they speak what is not true; No one repents of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done!" Everyone keeps on running his course, like a steed dashing into battle (Jeremiah 8).

Place blinders on a horse, suit him up for battle, give him a warrior as a rider and then launch him into battle and he'll run headlong into it without looking to the right or the left. He'll charge his target like a laser guided missile. This is an apt picture of what happened to ol' Samson. His sexual desire, coupled with his lack of self-discipline blinded him totally.

Sure, he left the woman at midnight and spoiled the sinister plans of the Philistines to kill him. And, yes, he, by God's might, unleashed another spectacular demonstration of his ultimate, supernatural power in order to get the attention of all the people of Gaza. Concerning this feat, archaeological evidence in the area from Hazor and Ashdod suggests each gate had a thickness of 3.3 feet, coupled with a height of 9.9 feet.

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<sup>1</sup>*Brainy Quotes*, "Oscar Wilde Quotes," accessed June 29, 2017, <https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/o/oscarwilde108207.html>.

The weight would have come in at 10,696 pounds per gate.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this mind-numbing data, Professor William barrack observes,

These figures do not include the bar nor the bronze plating! If the plating were included, it would practically double the weight of the gates . . . The gates of Gaza could well have weighed in the vicinity of 5 to 10 tons! D definitely takes on miraculous portions. Praise must go to Samson's God supernaturally empowered him. . . Samson did not lift the gates and put them down. He then proceeded to carry them from Gaza to the vicinity of Hebron (approximately 36 miles "as the crow flies"). The change in altitude involved approximately 3200 feet (Gaza is about 100 feet above sea level and Hebron is about 3300 feet above sea level) . . . In conclusion, the removal of the gates by Samson was indeed a miracle of unparalleled proportions. The computation of the gates dimension and weight can only heighten that all which the reader of Judges 16:1-3 possesses in the presence of this supernatural feat of strength. Only God's power could accomplish this deed through a mortal being. The God of Israel is truly mightier than the gods of the Philistines!<sup>3</sup>

God, obviously, took a flawed man and used him to accomplish his greater purposes for Israel, but one must pause and wonder what greater purposes could have been fulfilled had Samson never traveled to Gaza in the first place.

With all of this in mind, let's interact with our two practical sub-points one more time.

*What Did The Parents Say?* Zip. Zero. Nada. We don't know if they knew what Samson did in Gaza. If they did, it's hard to wrap your mind around their silence. If they didn't, it shows their relationship wasn't as close as it should have been.

*What Should His Parents Have Said?* Plenty. Let's go down through the list.

- Samson, son, you absolutely no business in Gaza. You shouldn't even be thinking about going there.
- Samson, son, please do not toy with sexual temptation. You may not be strong enough to withstand it.
- Samson, son, I've seen many men in my lifetime get in a lot of trouble in places like Gaza. Be a wise man and learn from their misfortune.
- Samson, son, it's about time you wised up concerning how the Devil uses your weakness for women as a fulcrum against how God wants to use you in a greater fashion.
- Samson, son, if you fly close to the sexual flame you are likely to get burnt.
- Samson, son, one misdeed cannot be canceled out by one good deed. Better to live life doing good deeds they give God the glory.
- Samson, son, . . . I'm sure you can fill in the blank for yourself.

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<sup>2</sup>Donald Campbell, *Judges: Leaders in Crises Times* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1989), 132.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 132-133.

When Samson could have used a word from his parents, all he heard, as far as we can tell are crickets chirping in the background. His parents started out well at the beginning of his adult life; however, they faded quickly as he vacillated between moments of great faith, followed by moments of great failure. What their son needed, I think, was more balance from his parents to perhaps give him the edge to live victoriously more often than not.

Throughout his whole life, Samson, this great man of God, struggled with one fatal flaw. Its name? Lust. Only at the end of his life, when Delilah, another object of his lust, got the best of him, did he finally see the hideous nature of this sin. True, as I've said, he was responsible for his adult decisions, whether they were God-honoring or God-dishonoring; however, it sure would have been nice if this one-man army for God would have had clear, powerful, balanced words from his parents.

How's that balance working out in your life right now dad and mom? Your out-of-bounds son might just be waiting for you to come to his aid and give him some much needed insight into the right way he should go.

Years ago British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge was an argumentative agnostic writer, known also for his heavy drinking and womanizing. One day, as a young man, he learned firsthand about the deception and danger of the sin called lust.

Just after graduating from Cambridge, Muggeridge moved to India to teach English. One day as he was strolling by a nearby river in the early evening, he spotted the silhouette of a woman bathing on the other side. Muggeridge later wrote that his heart began to race with what he called the "wild unreasonableness which is called passion." Overcome by lust, he plunged into the water and started crossing the river. As he approached the woman, he suddenly realized that she was a toothless, wrinkled, and deformed leper. He quickly threw himself back into the river and started swimming in the other direction.

Years later, Muggeridge admitted that the real shock that morning was not the leper, as mind-bending as that would be. Rather, it was the condition of his own heart, dark, with appetites overpowering his weak will. He wrote, "If only I could paint, I'd make a wonderful picture of a passionate boy running after that and call it: 'The lusts of the flesh.'<sup>4</sup>

Stories like this are what a father or a mother should pass on to a child so they, too, will learn how lust twists and distorts one's thinking, making them think its object is beautiful when, in fact, it is not.

Thank God for parents willing to be balanced with their son or daughter, no matter how old they are. Be balanced and God's purposes in their lives will be maximized.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Simon Ponsoby, *Loving Mercy*, (Monarch Books, 2012), 46-47