

FAMILY

Scripture: “Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.” **Proverbs 17:6** (NIV)

I will never forget the day my first grandchild was born. What a happy time! After all the years of raising my own children, with the struggles that it brings, I could now see the fruits of my labors in my grandchildren. It was a though life's cycle was now completed. First, I was a child. I grew up, became an adult, got married, and then became a mother. Now my children were reproducing tiny composites of genes with some of me in them.

When that first squeaky word came from my grandchild's mouth, it was the most beautiful thing I ever heard. It was sweet music and more sweet than anything Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, or Handel could have ever composed. Then one grandchild lead to two, then three, and then five. It seemed to be like the energizer bunny as the numbers kept going up. When I hear of folks who have perhaps twenty grandchildren, or family reunions with as many as five hundred people, I think about how fortunate they are, especially if the original mother and father instilled Godly values into their children, who now are doing likewise.

Every individual in a family is important and counts. The beauty of family does not have to be blighted when there has been divorce and remarriage. We can accept stepchildren and love them unconditionally, just as we do those who are born into the family. Everyone needs acceptance, and a child with factors such as a divorced home, death, or abandonment needs more than those born into the family naturally. It is easy to favor one above another, particularly those who share our physical characteristics or disposition- characteristics that we secretly admire in ourselves. However, we must love them all equally. But isn't that just how God sees it? We are all members of one body/family, but every member is equally important. Our heavenly father doesn't see us as stepchildren, halfbreeds, or “baggage”. He sees us simply as “CHILDREN of God.”

I admire greatly those grandparents, who because of circumstances beyond their control, are raising their grandchildren. I read of a famous athlete who attributed all of his success to his grandmother who raised him. What a struggle, but more importantly what a reward!!! Remember, no matter what your role is in one's life, your efforts are not in vain and the heavenl Father above will reward you for your endeavours.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for making me apart of your family. Thank you for not seeing me as a stepchild, halfbreed, or “baggage”, but rather see me as just ONE of your children. Help me to love the unloved. Help me to show others their value in your eyes regardless of their present circumstances. Give me your eyes, ears, and heart to love them like you do. In Jesus Name, Amen!

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Taken from the ideas of Nancy Corbett Cole