

Worthy Women's Words

The Relationship of Mother to Children *by Joella Pickup*

“**A**nd Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.” What a short scripture describing such an extensive task! The first word we notice in Luke 2:52 about Jesus is that He increased in certain attributes. He grew and expanded in the following graces: *mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially.*

Mental: Mother very soon begins to educate her babies in the knowledge, skills, and sense of responsibility children will need to survive and be successful human beings. She delights in teaching them numbers and letters. When they go to school she notes the quality of that secular education and encourages their learning. Many mothers even homeschool their children. She monitors the music, the literature, the TV, and the movies her children engage in. She encourages reading well and lets her children figure solutions to problems by themselves, while standing by to give any necessary help. Though she encourages knowledge and education, she will emphasize wisdom, which

is foreseeing the end of a matter at its beginning. A Christian mother will teach her children to think of consequences first before following their impulses. Doesn't your mother do that, too? Do you appreciate her for it? Mother can help you understand life's problems, someone you can go to for comfort and wise advice.

Like the worthy woman of Proverbs 31, Mother can rejoice because she is a successful nurturer.

Physical: It cannot be stressed enough that the health of a child begins at conception. Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, even aspirin can cause problems for the unborn. Most pregnant women are nauseated during the first trimester, but medication is seldom prescribed because it can have disastrous results in the formation of the body of the child, such as no arms, deformed spine, hands and feet like

flippers. Just one Thalidomide pill for nausea can poison a fetus. I knew a little girl one time who was afflicted in that way. Her brain was not damaged, but she never grew more than about three feet tall. She was sick a lot and did not live very long.

Breastfeeding is usually best for baby, but some women do not do so, sacrificing that privilege on the altar of a career or a selfish concept of personal freedom. I was so thrilled to know that my daughter and my daughters-in-law were determined to breastfeed my grandchildren.

Regular medical and dental checkups and lots of “TLC” are essential to the physical well-being of a child. Good food and regular, nourishing meals are important for a child to be bright and responsive. Teach your children to eat green and leafy vegetables, to curb sweets and high fat foods for their health's sake, and you and your husband be good role models yourselves!

Children need to play, not only for physical but emotional health. Regular hours, bathing,

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teeth cleaning—those good health and safety habits must be taught. Teach your children to be careful around things that might cause accidents and watch that they do not put things in their mouths like small objects, dirt or bugs. Don't let your darlings play in the street or bully playmates. Your children must learn to be responsible for their own actions, to feel the pain carelessness brings. A study was made some years ago which found the average teen watched TV six hours a day, ate snack food for lunch or went on grossly debilitating diets, stayed up till the wee hours, often experimenting with mind-bending drugs. So often a young person out of those habits is difficult to impossible.

Spiritual: Have you ever thought of what sort of little boy Jesus was?—that John the Baptizer was? I imagine they both were thoughtful, self-sufficient, and strong. Since John's parents lived in a town in the mountains of Judea and Jesus' home was in Nazareth, I can imagine they did not really know each other growing up. It is possible that John's parents died while he was in his teens, because they were already advanced in age when John was born. Luke 1:80 says that John spent his time in the deserts.

As a young lad, Jesus probably learned the carpentry trade from Joseph. We deduce that He was strong, quiet, thoughtful, kind, and possibly very drawn

to children and animals. It seems possible that Joseph died when Jesus was in His teens or twenties. Both Jesus and John understood early what their lots in life would be; they had been carefully taught about responsibility by their earthly parents (Luke 1:13-17; 2:40). John must have often pondered his duty to God set upon him from his birth as prophesied. Well before Jesus was twelve years old, He must have begun to prepare Himself for His Father's business. They had full lives as children and wonderful, God-oriented home surroundings, which modern parents should provide for their own children. Another example of spiritual concern was the home life Eunice and Lois provided for Timothy. It is in the home that training of the child in the work of God is found, a duty that cannot be relegated to the congregation's classes nor to any other persons than the parents.

Social: Mothers are role-models, for good or bad, truth or falsehood, for industry or laziness. Sometimes we learn much from watching someone else, and children are great imitators! What entertains you and how you act around others will influence them to do the same. But the problem is that your children's peers will often have enormous influence over them, too. Parents must teach their children how to interact with the various members of the family, with neighbors,

school friends, and people in public. Thus children learn self-confidence, to laugh at little troubles, and to overcome them wisely. Like the worthy woman of Proverbs 31, Mother can rejoice because she is a successful nurturer.

Sometimes a mother does not sense when to taper off being the main person in a child's life. There have been times when I have had to apologize for interjecting myself too much into my grown children's business. But on one occasion, I remember telling one of my sons that even though he was grown and was his own boss, he would never cease to be my son, and therefore he would always be in the position of benefiting from my advice. I said I was his mother and he had better not forget it! I figured that rebuke went rather well with 8th verse of Proverbs 1 which says, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the precepts of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." You know, when you can forgive your parents for being who they are, for what they have done, or not done, then you will have succeeded in finally growing up, my dears! It is then that you can truly become friends with your parents, and that is like icing on a cake! We have ten grandchildren now, and I find as an older woman that I am still in the nurturing business. How grand it is to be a *grandmother!* ❀