

Raising Kids By *THE* Book

Lynn “Raynee” Gloden

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Introduction

This book was written in order to help parents parent in a Godly manner. It addresses the need for parents to teach character development to their children in order for morals and values to be at the core of every other life lesson parents will teach their children. In writing this book, I have obediently followed my Lord's will for me, because if it were left up to me, I would have tried to write the next New York Times best seller instead, but God's will be done. ☺

This book needed to be written because our society has agreed and even implemented programs that place the responsibility of developing children's characters on the schools. I do not believe it is up to the schools (or even possible for schools) to teach our children character, but instead, this is something we as parents are responsible for doing. In Deuteronomy 7:20, God clearly gave parents the responsibility for teaching values:

"In the future your children will ask you, 'What is the meaning of these laws, decrees and regulations the Lord our God has commanded us to obey?'"

This is also evident in Psalm 78:5 which says:

"For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children."

Schools have assumed this responsibility because we as parents have not. In colonial times, this was acceptable because the schools taught character development utilizing the Bible, and parents reinforced these concepts when the children came home from school. Today God is not allowed in schools and a lot of times, parents aren't home from work to reinforce the concepts when their children get home from school.

A recent study computed the number of hours parents spend with their children in contrast with the number of hours teachers spend with those same children. Here are the results from the study conducted by Cordry & Wilson (2004)¹:

- ❖ Before a child enters school at the age of five, he will have spent 43,800 hours with his parents.
- ❖ Each school year, the child spends 1,260 hours with a teacher and 7,490 hours with his parents.
- ❖ By the time the child graduates, he will spend 16,380 hours with teachers, and 97,370 hours with parents (52,416 after accounting for students sleeping an average of 8 hours a day).
- ❖ The parent to teacher ratio of time with the child is 76% to 24% waking hours.

Taking into account all this information, whose job is it to nurture, and form children by teaching them character development? Now add into the mix the fact that God gave that responsibility to us, the parents. The

question isn't who should teach character development, it is "how do we teach character development to our children?"

For those of you who are still not convinced that parents need to step up and accept our God-given responsibility to teach morals and values to our youth, and for those who still do not believe our children are in trouble, and for those who do not realize how much time their child is spending on the computer, watching television, playing PlayStation, read on.

Consider these additional statistics²:

- ❖ Children spend an average of 28 hours a week watching television
- ❖ That is 26,208 hours of television viewing by the time the child graduates from high school or 50% of the 52,416 waking hours the parents spend with the child.
- ❖ A television's remote control is "zapped" every three minutes and twenty-six seconds, which has shortened the attention span drastically for our children. Teachers refer to this phenomenon as the "eight minute attention span" because that is the length of time a teacher can hold her student's attention, perhaps due to the frequency of channel surfing.
- ❖ A survey of teachers, 81% of who had been teaching for more than two years, yielded the following results:
 - ◆ 73% of the teachers believe students are less ethical or moral.
 - ◆ 65% believe students to be less responsible.
 - ◆ 60% report students to be more self-centered.
 - ◆ 57% have witnessed a decline in studiousness by students.
 - ◆ 44% stated an increase in student apathy.

As these statistics imply, our children are in trouble—they need us, their parents, and they also need God. Without God, character development cannot be fully nourished. Because God is no longer allowed in schools, parents cannot look to the schools to teach our children character, especially when character is what shapes our child's personality, temperament, interactions with others, and so forth. God gave the responsibility of teaching character development to us, the parents. When we passed this responsibility on to the schools, we failed to honor our Father. Failing to honor God, may explain why our children fail to honor us.

This nation's children—**our** children—are out of control. They are at best defiant, rude, ungrateful, disrespectful, and consumed with feelings of entitlement. At worst, they are: addicts, dropouts, alcoholics, teen parents, gang bangers, or criminals. Before you start thinking that surely all these statistics were for secular youths, let me assure you that our Christian children are just as much in trouble as their counterparts, perhaps more so, as God knows that His children "know better" and expects them to act accordingly. These are our future leaders, and it's time we get a handle on them.

footnotes:

- 1) Cordry, S., & Wilson, J. (2004 Fall). PARENTS AS FIRST TEACHER. *Education*, 125(1), 56-62. Retrieved November 20, 2007, from Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection database.
- 2) *ibid.*

Chapter 1

Our Children in Trouble

One only has to examine the United States Crimes Statistics (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006) to see the urgency of reaching our children. Please note, these statistics are for youths under the age of 10, the percentages were much higher for youths under the age of 18, but I believe these will drive the point home:

United States Juvenile Crime Statistics 2006

- ❖ 271 children under the age of 10 were arrested for drug abuse violations in 2006.
- ❖ 238 children under the age of 10 were arrested for driving under the influence.
- ❖ Persons ages 7-17 are about as likely to be victims of suicide as they are to be victims of homicide.
- ❖ 13 children under the age of 10 committed forcible rape in 2006.
- ❖ 429 children under the age of 10 committed aggravated assault.
- ❖ 346 children under the age of 10 committed arson in 2006.

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- ❖ 515 children under the age of 10 committed a violent crime.
- ❖ 45 children under the age of 10 stole a car in 2006.
- ❖ 2,938 children under the age of 10 committed a property crime.
- ❖ 2,252 children under the age of 10 committed other assaults in 2006.
- ❖ 376 children under the age of 10 were arrested for carrying or possessing weapons in 2006.
- ❖ 13 children under the age of 10 were charged with prostitution.
- ❖ 285 children under the age of 10 were charged with sex offenses in 2006.
- ❖ 1,214 children under the age of 10 were arrested for disorderly conduct in 2006.
- ❖ 595 children under the age of 10 were runaways in 2006.
- ❖ 49.1% of persons arrested for arson were juveniles and 58.0% of those juveniles were under the age of 15.

Website: http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/data/table_38

A question begs to be answered before we get started: Why should we worry about promoting character development in our children when society encourages lying and cheating in order to get ahead? Or when making a buck is considered to be the only way to measure the worth of a person? Status, possessions, real estate, fancy cars, and big houses are viewed as more important than random acts of kindness, helping others, dependability, humbleness, and gratefulness. Our justice system rejects any legal defenses that do not

include blaming parents, mental illness, “Twinkies” or diminished capacity. So, why teach our children morals and values when they will only be penalized for possessing such traits?

The answer is simple because, as God’s children, it is our responsibility to lead others into making changes that will benefit all of mankind. Slavery had to be abolished for many reasons, some of them being because it was wrong and brought pain to an entire race of people. Allowing our children to grow up without character also brings pain to an entire group of people. This pain leads to addiction, divorces, therapy, suicides, and more. The affects of our children not having a strong character are easily evidenced in our nation’s crime statistics, the rate of divorces, the number of teen pregnancies, etc. Being a leader of others for the purpose of affecting change, is something we are called to do, even if we didn’t ask to be, and don’t want to do so. If God gives us the ability to lead, we have the responsibility to lead; not the option of leading, but the responsibility. Paul spoke about this responsibility in Romans 1:14:

“For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike.”

There are no perfect parents, but even if there were, it would not mean their children turned out perfect. In fact, we know for certain that’s not the case. God was a perfect parent to Adam and Eve, yet His children were disobedient. This tells us that parents can never be completely to blame for the actions their child engages in. **God did not give your child’s free will to you, He gave your child’s free will to your child.**

A parent's ability to protect their children is limited to what they are able to teach their children. In Ezekiel 18:4 God makes this clear:

"For all people are mine to judge—both parents and children alike. And this is my rule: The person who sins is the one who will die."

The passage tells us that even if we were willing to take our child's punishment upon ourselves, God will not allow that. This increases the vital importance of teaching our children about God because our ability to protect them ends with either their death or ours. They have to know God before that day comes so they can go from our arms into His. Teaching them about God includes teaching them about punishments.

Some of us grew up with parents whose methods of punishment would be considered to be child abuse by today's standards—we didn't know we were being abused, to us, we were being corrected. We grew up, had our own children, and set about disciplining them the only way we had learned how from our parents: by spanking them. Except something went wrong. Where *we* used to bend over and accept our punishment, nowadays, our children fight us. Spanking them is literally, a knock-down drag-out ordeal. Their reaction is not to contemplate the error of their ways—they don't feel shame or remorse for what they have done—instead, they contemplate running away or calling the police to press charges against their parents. Parents are afraid to parent their children, and who wouldn't be when most six year olds know to tell a teacher if they've been "abused" or know the number for Child Protective Services (CPS).

It seems to me we need to learn a new way to parent. Perhaps a more effective way to parent, one that society would not find reason to interfere with, and one that would honor God.

Interested?