

Life Lessons

with Sandy Anderson
www.buildinternational.org



Speaking Blessing Over Your Children

Recently, I watched a movie (*Taare Zameen Par*) about an eight-year-old boy, Ishaan, who had dyslexia. His parents were not very understanding toward him and they punished him for not working hard at school.

One day, a new art teacher bursts onto the scene and infects the students with joy and optimism. He breaks all the rules of “how things are done” by asking the students to think, dream and imagine. All the children respond with enthusiasm, all except Ishaan.

With time, patience and care, the teacher discovers that not a word of affirmation, encouragement or faith has been spoken over this child by his parents. He meets with Ishaan's parents and tells them a story. He tells them of the natives in the Solomon Islands. When they need land for farming, they gather around a tree and curse it by speaking bad, demeaning words to it. Eventually, the tree dies and falls over.

True or not, it is a powerful allegory. Whether you're a parent, grand parent, teacher or in a position of authority, you can speak **LIFE** into the people God brings in your path.

Parents need wisdom to raise their children in a healthy, wholesome atmosphere in their home. I, as a parent (who has made many mistakes), want to share **five practical tips** to help you.

1. Speak blessing over your child. Fathers, this applies especially to you. Even God voiced His approval before His Son began His public service (Mark 1:11). Every time you speak blessing, approval and encouragement to your child, you instill self-esteem, confidence and courage into them. Overlook flaws and instead praise your child when he does something right. Remember, your child has your DNA; good or bad, it originates from you!

2. Train your child. King Solomon, in his wisdom, wrote, “Train up a child and they shall not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:8) The best thing you can do **for** your children is to deposit the Word of God **in** them. Put the Word of God (and His principles) in them when they do not need it, and it will come out of them when they do need it. Children cannot figure out what you expect of them. Instruct, drill and demonstrate until it becomes a part of them. Remember,

whatever training your children receive from you in the first twelve years, is most likely how they will behave the rest of their lives.

3. Discipline your child. Children need boundaries. Whether you believe in corporal or capital punishment, make sure to enforce it. Charles Manson, a notorious criminal who murdered scores of people, was sentenced for crime at the age of thirteen. Left to himself at a young age, Manson had no boundaries. Remember, an occasional hand of blessing applied to the seat of your child will not kill him, but it will most certainly bring correction and direction for his life. Unlike pop culture, which lauds a spirit of entitlement, remind your children that when they do not obey, they are exercising their right to be disciplined!

4. Smile! You are on candid camera! In life, more is caught than taught. You can tell children about obedience, respect and discipline, but unless you display the same character in your everyday life, it will be of no effect. Whether you realize it or not, your children are like walking cameras, mentally recording everything they see you **do**. If you do not treat your spouse with love, honor what is noble, and show respect for authorities, you can expect the same from your children toward their siblings, classmates, teachers and society.

5. Talk to God. Mothers, the most powerful weapon in your arsenal is prayer. You can worry or you can pray. Prayer is more effective.

Here is a **sample prayer** I pray over my children: “Father, I bless (name your children). They have the mind of Christ. They can do anything that comes their way today. My children are good-looking, intelligent, and full of excellence and favor. People just want to be good to them. They will be leaders and not followers. Thank you, Father, that they have your creativity and positive attitude. They are a blessing to our family and to everybody they meet. They are blessed and no evil shall come near them.”

Parents, **show** your children how much you love them. Talk to your child, touch and hug them often, and spend time with them. Remember, you can only expect **from** them what you put **in** them.

God bless you and your family!