

# Stewardship

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*“I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.” I Samuel 1:27-28a*

**GOD WANTS PARENTS** to understand that the precious children in their care are gifts from Him. As parents, we are only stewards of them, for they actually belong to the Lord. Because God desires to guide our children, to parent them through us, we must choose to submit daily to His authority and control over our lives. Only then will the desires we have for our children be based on God’s desires, rather than on our own. Have you ever chosen to “give your child over to the Lord,” to dedicate his life completely to God? Are you committed and resolved to raising him according to the absolute truth found only in God’s Word, the Bible? Have you come to a genuine understanding that because God loves your child even more than you possibly can, He alone knows what is best for him? God is gracious to give us the gift of children. How, in return, are you giving your child back to Him?

*Dear Father God, You alone are the giver of all good gifts. Thank You for my life and for giving me the gift of life in my child. I recognize that I am only a steward, Father. His life belongs to You. Please forgive me when I fight to have my own way, instead of releasing control to You. Your ways are perfect. I choose to trust completely in You and Your holy Word. God, I release control of my child to You. Teach me to guide him fully in Your truth. Please fulfill Your perfect will and purpose in his life. Thank You. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture: Psalm 127:3, Proverbs 16:3**

# Examine Behavior Objectively

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*Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right. Proverbs 20:11*

**IN THE SAME** way a child can be recognized by his physical attributes, he can also be identified by his actions. Just as someone might refer to a child as blonde, stocky, or tall, he can also be known as kind, loving, mean, or disruptive. Because God's children should reflect Him in their actions and behavior, parents should diligently work at correcting undesired behavior in their children. In order to evaluate a child's behavior correctly, a parent must be able to view the behavior objectively. This is achieved by choosing to see the child the way God does, from His perspective. Each behavior, choice, or action must be compared to the correct example of behavior found in the absolute truth of God's Word. The Bible, God's standard, is perfect and never changes. Choosing to test actions by comparing them to this standard produces an objective viewpoint. The decision to promote or change a child's behavior can then be determined by whether or not the conduct exemplifies truth. Scripture reveals not only what the Lord requires for obedience, but also provides beneficial instruction to assist in promoting obedient behavior. Habits and behaviors established at an early age could be tough to change later in life. With that in mind, train your child to be Christ-like. Mold his character based on the attributes of God.

*Dear Lord Jesus, Your ways are perfect. Thank You for entrusting me with this precious child. Please forgive me when I fail to view his actions objectively. Enable me to see him the way You do. Train me and my child to model Your life. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture: Titus 1:15-16, I John 2:3-6**

# Instruct With Clarity

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*They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read. Nehemiah 8:8*

**IN THIS VERSE,** Levites are instructing God’s people in His Law. As parents, God has given us the great responsibility of instructing our children in His law, the Bible. Since God desires complete obedience to His Word, it is not enough to merely read the Bible to a child; he must grasp its meaning. As you train your child to be obedient to Scripture, explain God’s purpose in each instruction. Because “why” gives meaning to “what,” your child will then not only know what he is being asked to do, but also will understand why he is being asked to do it. Remember, genuine obedience to God’s Word is exemplified in life application. Therefore, if a child has been given instruction, but does not follow through in action, a parent may need to clarify the meaning of the instruction through communication. A child can only be held accountable to obey when he has fully understood the required expectation. Asking your child questions will allow you to become aware of his understanding. Since God requires parents to guide children in His truth, they must choose to personally apply themselves to consistently increase in knowledge and comprehension of God’s Word. Parents choosing to use Scripture in training children will find both reason and purpose in His perfect instruction.

*Dear God, I cannot parent without Your wisdom. Thank You for the Bible. Please help me equip my child with knowledge, understanding, and application of Your perfect Word. Teach him the benefits of choosing to obey You. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture: Job 28:28, Psalm 119:125**

# Plan Purity

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*But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself in this way. Daniel 1:8*

**AN ESSENTIAL PART** to living a life of purity is choosing to be resolved to do so. Daniel, before being appointed as servant to a pagan king, was proactive by becoming resolved or resolute to not defile himself. As a genuine servant of God, Daniel set himself apart to live according to God’s Word. He chose to live a life free of impurity, being careful to honor God in every way. Since the food and wine offered him might have previously been presented to idols or pagan gods, Daniel chose to abstain from it. He understood that even a small compromise could disqualify his witness and hurt his reputation for godliness. For this important reason, he prepared in advance to stand firm on the principles of God. Children, too, are faced with numerous ways to potentially compromise truth. Therefore, parents should train them to identify possible impurities by engaging in conversations to consider the content of today’s music and entertainment. Talk openly and honestly about the adverse effects of poor nutrition, cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs. Explain to your young person that the smallest drop of poison contaminates “the whole” and examine steps necessary to remain pure and pleasing to God. Train your child to be sensitive to true convictions and choose to walk, as Daniel did, in obedience to God.

*Dear Holy God, Thank You for setting a standard of purity for our lives. Please aid my child, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in being resolved to a life of purity, set apart to You. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture: Psalm 119:9, I Peter 1:13-16**

# Fully Equipped

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*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. II Peter 1:3-4*

**OUR HOLY GOD** desires His children to escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. Although desire can be stimulated by something external, the root of desire is internal. For this reason, a parent's training should focus on the internal. The Lord has given each believer, through the knowledge of Him, all he needs for life and godliness. Teach your child that when he accepted Christ as Savior and Lord, he became equipped with the power of the Holy Spirit. God provides believers with the indwelling Holy Spirit to control desires at their place of origin, from within. Because the Spirit is continually available and unlimited in every way, your child has immediate access to the power to withstand the world's temptations. Further explain that knowledge of the Bible gives each believer the potential to discern good from evil. Therefore, since a child will often base choices on information available to him, diligently teach your young person to rely on biblical truth. Show your child that he is fully equipped to escape the corruption in the world when he chooses to live under the authority of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Most Holy God, Please equip and empower my child with Your truth and teach him to escape corruption. Thank You. Amen.*

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*Additional Scripture: II Corinthians 7:1, Colossians 1:9-14*

# Choose Victory

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*“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. II Kings 6:16-17*

**WHEN ONE CHOOSES** to live for the Lord, he will often find himself on the front lines of spiritual warfare. Choosing to follow the truth of God’s Word despite peer pressure and loss of popularity can be very difficult. Teach your child that God wants His children to experience victory in every situation. Encourage your young person to stand by faith on the Lord’s Promises, rather than being fearful. For example, God is faithful. He is our salvation, refuge, and strength. He will never leave us or forsake us. Also, educate your teen to better understand spiritual warfare. Scripture tells us that the enemy is not pleased when we live in opposition to him. Therefore, we should not be surprised by the conflict. However, any battle we face is God’s to fight—not ours. Therefore, train your young person to understand that when he chooses to walk in obedience to God, His supernatural power and authority is available to him. Because almighty God is more powerful than any circumstance, when we choose to rely fully on His power, the enemy is at an overwhelming disadvantage. There is truly victory in Jesus.

*Dear Lord God, You are unlimited in knowledge and power. Please teach us to choose faith in You, over fear. Help us see things from Your perfect perspective as Elisha’s servant did, rather than from our own limited point of view. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture:** II Chronicles 32:6-8, Jeremiah 17:5

# God Led

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*Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. Deuteronomy 8:2*

**A YOUNG CHILD** is often naïve about the reality of hardships. As he matures, however, a child will not only begin to recognize trying family circumstances, but will also begin to encounter and deal with more personal hardships. Since God has purpose in all things, teach your child that God has eternal purpose in hardship. Hardships, though challenging, are not viewed negatively by those who have been trained to trust in the truth of God's Word and His purpose. In this verse the Lord reminds the Israelites that He led them in the desert. Show your young person that sometimes almighty God Himself leads you to desert places, and He will also triumphantly lead you through them. Because God desires total dependence on Him, He will use trying circumstances to humble us and to rid us of pride and self-reliance. Help your child realize that it is during tough times, not ease, that faith and trust in the Lord are tested. Train your young person to embrace times in the "desert" as opportunities for learning and preparation. Teach him that God not only desires to reveal your child's spiritual condition, but also wants to teach him more about His nature and truth.

*Dear God, Thank You for never leaving me in tough times. I cannot make it in life without You. Help me train my child to trust fully in You and the power of Your Word. Please lead him by Your perfect will. Stretch his faith, Lord. Teach him, especially in difficult times, to depend on You. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:3-5, Psalm 78:52**

# Pass It On

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*After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. Judges 2:10*

**AS YOU CONTINUE** to train your child according to the truth of God's Word, help him to know that we are always just one generation away from people not knowing the Lord and all He has done. Teach him the importance of remembering all God has done for him in the past, to focus on His current work, and to look forward to the great things He has in store for the future. Train your teen to establish spiritual goals for himself by consistently seeking God's will and asking the Lord to reveal what He desires to accomplish. In doing so, you will help promote spiritual growth. Also, remind your child to currently and consistently point others to Christ by acknowledging God at work in the details of his life. Challenge him with questions to ponder: If we do not openly acknowledge the mighty works of God, who will? If our daily conversations include everything but the truth of Jesus, how will others ever come to know Him? If you do not tell people about Jesus Christ, who will? Further express God's desire for your child to raise his children, your grandchildren, according to biblical truth. It is only through daily application of God's Word that another generation will walk faithfully with the Lord.

*Dear Lord God, Your name alone is worthy of all praise. Please enable my words and actions to consistently reflect Your character and truth. Enable my life to be a testimony of Your faithfulness to the generations that follow. I ask, even now, for future generations to choose Your truth for themselves. Amen.*

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**Additional Scripture:** Exodus 3:15, Psalm 145:1-7