

# *Equipping The Saints*

*"...For the equipping of the saints for the work of service..." ~ Ephesians 4:12*

October 25, 2015

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## **Teach Your Children To Love Worship**

**(By Forrest D. Moyer)**

A very serious problem exists among religious families: sometimes their children who have been brought up "in the church" are anxious to "get out of the house" so they won't "have to go to church" anymore. This is a perplexing problem fraught with serious consequences. Why does a child want to "get away from" the church? What kind of children from what kind of families do so? I don't know all the answers to questions like this, but let me suggest a few thoughts.

I believe that one real source of this attitude is that children are not taught to love the worship of the Lord. From the time they are infants the parents are yelling at them on Sundays to "hurry up and get up 'cause we have to go to church" with the emphasis on "have." Nothing is said about the joy of worship. Nothing is said about the wonderful privilege that is ours. Children are taught that "going to church" is a drudge. No wonder they want to get away from it.

When children are in the assembly, often they are allowed to play with all sorts of toys and games. This causes them to think that the assembly is some place to play games; and then when they are older and too big to play games, they are bored with what is going on. Many children are not taught to sing. They are

allowed to play when worship to God in song is being rendered. If they are not taught to sing as tiny tots, then as they grow older they will not sing. Parents, do you teach your children the words to songs at home so they will know them and be able to join in the singing? It is a sad sight to see teenagers just sitting and looking around instead of singing. No wonder they have no interest. They are not taught reverence during prayer. They keep on playing instead of being taught to always bow their heads in reverence. If you took your child to the funeral of a loved one, would you give him games to play? Would you allow him to “do his own thing” or would you teach him reverence and respect for the dead? No, our worship is not a funeral, but it is holy and children need to be taught that it is.

They must be taught to study the Word. Are you studying the class lessons with your children every day? Are you teaching them to enjoy that part of the day and really look forward to it? If this is the environment of a child, you will seldom see him wander away from the Lord. Those who are taught to study the Bible are the ones who listen to sermons and lessons. They are the ones who will understand much more of the lessons that are being presented. (And, by the way, what happened to the teenagers all sitting at the front? What an inspiration that is to the whole congregation!) These are the ones who grow up to love the Lord and stay with Him.

Friend, what are you teaching your children? To love God and His worship, His word, and His people? What you teach your child, who is a tiny tot now, will determine where he will be when he is old. Seems like Solomon said something like that somewhere.

# The Elder Brother of the Prodigal Son

(By Bob Myhan)

Many people fail to realize that the third parable of Jesus recorded in Luke chapter 15, is nowhere, in the inspired text, called “*the Parable of the Prodigal Son.*” In fact, the parable is given no name either by Jesus or by Luke. A more accurate designation would be “*the Parable of the Two Sons,*” since there are two sons in the parable.

It is also important to notice the background for the parable. **“Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them”** (Luke 15:1-2).

Jesus spoke the parable to illustrate difference in attitude between the sinners who had repented at His preaching and the self-righteous Pharisees and scribes who had refused to accept the sinners who had repented. The prodigal, or wasteful, son represents the sinners who were repenting at the preaching of Jesus, while his elder brother represents the Pharisees and scribes.

The younger son, though he had left his home and had wasted his inheritance, had returned home with a humble and contrite heart. The father forgave him and treated him as though he had never left. Likewise, **“there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents”** (Luke 15:10).

1. But the elder son was self-willed, in that he **“would not go in”** to celebrate his younger brother's return (v. 28). The Bible

clearly condemns our being self-willed (2 Pet. 2:10; Titus 1:7).

2. He was also self-righteous, in that he claimed, “**I never transgressed your commandment at any time**” (v. 29). Such an attitude is the result of pride and arrogance, and is also condemned in the Bible (Luke 18:10-14; Rom. 10:1-3).

3. He was self-centered; he complained, “**....you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends**” (v. 29-30). The Bible teaches that we should be centered on others, rather than on self (Phil. 2:1-4; Rom.12:3).

4. He was just plain selfish; he did not want to share his material possessions with his brother (v. 31). Those who are centered on others will share their possessions with them (Luke 3:11; Acts 2:44).

In short, he had all the wrong attitudes toward self, which resulted in the wrong attitudes both toward his brother and toward his own material possessions.

**Notes:**

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**AM Lesson:**

*Comprehending Christ's Church:  
What Is The Universal Church?*

**PM Lesson:**

*The God of Creation*

*"Go therefore and make disciples..." (Matthew 28:19-20)*