

**Parents as RAISERS—Selected Scriptures—1/11/2026 Evening**  
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As we celebrate parent-baby dedications this evening, I want to share a little bit about parenting with a biblically Christian mindset.

Fathers and mothers must be involved in this task and so must fellow believers in the church as we encourage one another.

As Christians who care about kids & anyone with kids, we need to think biblically about child-raising so that we can help each other.

When we hear truth about parenting together as a church, it gives us all a responsibility to help each other apply that truth.

It gives everyone a right and responsibility to help us parents and it gives us parents the accountability we need to help us parent rightly.

I know I need to be reminded what the Bible says about parenting each & every day.

So I'm going to share with you my daily prayer acronym for my role as a parent—I'm going to share what I pray basically every day.

Many of you have heard this from me before, so I pray the review is helpful for you as it is for me each day.

The bulletin gives the acronym—Parents as RAISERS—r-a-i-s-e-r-s.

Parents raise children—so we are raisers of them—and I use “RAISERS” as an acronym to describe aspects of parenting.

This does not cover everything or every verse on parenting & I don't share my thoughts because I did everything right.

There are no perfect parents & parenting does not guarantee certain outcomes.

Each person is responsible & only God can save and sanctify.

Yet that's the supreme desire of Christian parents, isn't it?

Above all else, we want our children to be right with God, to be genuine Christians, & to go to heaven.

And that means children need to know God.

They need to be shown what God is like & how to relate to Him.

And think of it—how does a child form much of those ideas?

Children form ideas about God from their parents even if their parents don't believe in God or talk about Him.

But children of Christian parents especially relate to God based on how their parents have related to them.

Turn to 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5 & let's think on our evangelistic role.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5 says nothing specifically about parenting, but it helps to apply general beliefs to the work of parenting.

I want to key on verse 20, but read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:18-21. [READ]

The first letter in my acronym is R—for representatives—parents are representatives from God to our children.

#1—parents are representatives from God to our children.

The 'we' in this passage is we Christians who have been reconciled to God that applies to us as Christian parents.

We represent God in the ministry of reconciling sinners to Him.

We are ambassadors standing for God before people, modeling to them what He is like and speaking to them on His behalf.

And that is especially true about how your child views God—his or her thoughts of God are shaped by what he or she sees in you.

That’s scary if we know how far from godliness we fall; but it’s also a wonderful opportunity for good.

In all the error and dangers of our world, we can pass on a proper view of God to the next generation through our children.

Children are gifts from God, precious treasures worthy of all the efforts and investments we can make in their spiritual good.

So we must be committed to godliness in all ways as our kids watch!

Consider some possible relational habits developed at home.

If you manipulate & bribe, you may be teaching your kids to make deals with God rather than to trust His Word & His grace & obey Him.

Or if you scream & punish in anger, you may raise rebels who resist God or compliant kids who just go through the motions.

But if you are loving and self-controlled with discipline, you may raise kids who value God’s standards as loving protection and direction.

Or if you whine and threaten but seldom follow through, you may raise disrespectful kids who don’t trust that God will follow through on His promises or warnings.

But if your rules of discipline and reward are clear & are followed consistently, then you may raise kids who gladly cling to God’s promises and righteously fear sins He warns against.

Of course, those examples are only possibilities, not certainties.

They suggest how parents may set patterns for how kids relate to God.

Of course, there’s always hope—God can transform wrong patterns into right ones by His grace both in parents & kids.

But to represent God rightly to our kids, we need to know God rightly.

We are not God—we need to be sure children know that—but our character will shape their view of God’s character.

As well, Hebrews 12:5-11 quotes Proverbs 3:11-12 as it likens God’s Fatherhood to human fatherhood in His loving discipline.

Turn over to Hebrews 12:5-11 and let’s read that. [READ]

Chastening, or discipline, is an essential part of loving parenting.

Earthly parents should discipline and teach respect because God models fatherhood by disciplining and teaching respect.

Reverential respect for God—the fear of God—is the beginning of wisdom & knowledge, as Proverbs 1:7, 9:10 say.

And this is an aspect of representing God that we cannot do with everyone; but we must do with our children.

Discipline relates to 2<sup>nd</sup> letter in my prayer acronym—A for Authority.

Parents are the God-ordained authority over their children.

God’s fatherly relationship has discipline as an expected part of love.

So Proverbs 13:24 says, “*He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*”

Absence of discipline is absence of love.

Brief temporary pain can be a reminder but not an injury.

And that should be done in love as Hebrews 12 says, not in anger.

Discipline requires self-control & explanation for learning.

We all need to learn God's chastening in a secure relationship of love.

Kids can learn the protection and blessing of living by God's wisdom as parents apply God's ways to their lives.

They can learn the truth of Proverbs 29:5, *The rod & reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*

So we need to remember that discipline is an expected part of parenting—it shouldn't surprise us.

Proverbs 22:15 says, "*Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*"

Foolishness is bound up in there trying to get out and conquer and we need to go to war against it to protect our children.

Just as God chastens us to get our attention and point us in the right direction, so we must do the same for our kids.

Parents must model God's chastening because children have the same sinful tendencies and potential that parents do.

As Proverbs 19:18 says, "*Discipline your son while there is hope, And do not desire his death.*"

Proverbs 23:23-24 says, "*Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you beat him with the rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with the rod, And deliver his soul from hell.*"

Training children with discipline leads them to see their sinfulness so that they can be rescued from that sin.

To neglect discipline is to diminish hope and allow them to follow the path that leads to death and hell.

We can correct and warn and encourage by appealing to God's goodness and the blessings and protection of His ways.

We can plead with children in evangelism and discipleship.

But we always remember that as parents, we do so as the authority.

The most basic unit of society is the family and just as in every other unit of society, there is a structure of authority.

In society, according to Romans 13, government has authority.

Ephesians 6 & Colossians 3 mention roles in the work realm.

Marriage & church & everywhere in life have authority structures.

So we must all learn to live under authority if we are to flourish under God and His appointed leaders on earth.

And it is crucial that parents be faithful to God's call as the first authority experienced by children.

Turn to Ephesians 6 to read this in Ephesians 6:1-4. [READ]

Parents are the authority that children are to obey and honor.

And this is right—this is good and just and fair and wise.

God gave the child to the parents so it only makes sense that the parents are the authority in the relationship.

If kids obey and honor parents, blessing will come to them.

Please hear that, kids—God gave you parents for your life to go well.

Ephesians 6:1-3 says the path to life going well starts with you obeying and honoring your parents.

Happiness doesn't come by getting what you want.

A good life doesn't come from new toys or clothes or games or better friends or a different home or school.

God says a child's life goes well when you obey & honor your parents.

And we as parents need to seize this promise for our children.

Our kids' lives improve when they learn obedience.

Learning to live under authority happens best when children are young and they receive consistent, loving discipline.

When training children to obey, we must help them see God's authority & see their sin as sin against the God who loves them.

And since God is the focus, how you teach obedience matters.

Obedience after giving 2-3 threats is not biblical obedience.

Nor is it obedience if they do part of what you want but they do it however they want.

As well, it is not obedience after they ask questions and talk back and decide if they like the idea and want to do it.

Remember: we are training kids for the way they relate to **God** & even how they will relate to employers & other authorities.

If we do not consistently live this role, we may be provoking our children to anger as Ephesians 6:4 warns against.

Colossians 3:21 also says, "*Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart.*"

That does not mean we never to do anything a child doesn't like.

It does not mean we don't persevere with a sinning angry child.

Rather it means we remain consistent & faithful & loving.

And it means we encourage & show patience & forgiveness.

As children grow in respect for God's authority through their parents, it builds a trust that can allow more freedom.

That is the freedom to live under God's authority rightly.

When kids handle freedom well, parents can grow trust in them.

Communication and trust in the relationship are vital as a child remains under authority while enjoying increasing freedom.

And what's also vital in this is a 3<sup>rd</sup>, letter in my prayer acronym—I for instructions—parents are Instructors from God for their children.

Look again at Ephesians 6:4. [READ]

After the negative warning, Paul gave positive instruction.

The picture is feeding and nourishing a child by providing the needed discipline and instruction.

Instruction, or admonition, involves putting the right things into children's minds by teaching and warning and counseling them.

They need to be taught about God from His Word.

Kids do not automatically think rightly.

We must warn children of error & commend the truth to them.

We can use what they study at church or in school, but we must personally be involved in the education of our kids.

It is dangerous to assume they'll get enough Bible without personally investing to be sure they understand the truth.

Remember what happened one generation after Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land by God's wondrous works.

It was 2 generations after God's miraculous works through Moses led Israel out of Egypt & through the wilderness.

Judges 2:10 tells us that after all of Joshua's generation had died, *"there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel."*

One generation after entering the Promised Land, a generation arose who did not even know Yahweh or what He had done.

2 generations after the Exodus, people didn't know God or His works.

Please don't let that happen to our children's generation!

Psalm 78:4-8 says, *"We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, & His strength and His wondrous works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, & appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should teach them to their children, That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children, That they should put their confidence in God, & not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments, & not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not prepare its heart, & whose spirit was not faithful to God."*

If the clear biblical truths about everything we believe are to be passed on, then we must teach them to our children.

No matter whether you have kids or not, you can help in this work by serving in church and helping families in their homes.

But parents, we most of all must throw off anything that hinders us from being faithful instructors for our children.

And I say throw off hindrances because this takes time and we need to give up what hinders us from teaching our children.

We only have them for a few years—that project or hobby can wait until they are older—but the children can't wait.

And instruction in the ways of God is first & foremost.

Who cares if they succeed in sports or academics or anything else if they don't spiritually run to win with a deep knowledge of God?

Only the Word of God & souls of men will never pass away.

Everything else is going to burn—are you teaching your children to hold tightly to future firewood or timeless treasure?

You don't have to be a gifted Bible scholar to sit down with your kids at whatever age and read the Bible together.

You can read Bible picture books or books with biblical perspectives on issues your child is facing.

You can go over sermons & lessons & verses.

You don't have to invent a new curriculum—just spend time teaching your children the Bible both formally and informally.

How you teach relates to the next letter—S for Shepherds.

A parent is R—a Representative, A—an authority, I—an Instructor, and S—a shepherd from God to your children.

We cannot merely teach children and leave them to themselves.

We must do far more than merely unload our dump-truck of information and go on our way.

We need to be there for kids to answer questions, to help in times of need, to guide and counsel them in many ways.

We are neither merely a drill sergeant authority nor merely a distant informative instructor.

We are shepherds to our children, tenderly leading and providing spiritual nourishment and cleansing and care.

Jesus' shepherd relationship with us as His sheep in John 10 provides helpful insight for this role, as does Psalm 23.

The Good Shepherd knows His sheep & His sheep know Him.

So parents can strive to model that intimate love relationship as shepherds of their children.

That involves investing time in relationships with our kids.

It means asking questions to draw them out to know their thoughts.

That takes time and loving persistence through good and bad.

Shepherding our children also means being willing to sacrifice for them as Jesus sacrificed for His sheep.

In summary for you parents, be a representative, an authority, an instructor, and a shepherd from God to your children.

Then 5<sup>th</sup> in our acronym, a parent is an EXAMPLE from God for his or her children—E in RAISERS is for Example.

Turn to Deuteronomy 6 with me to think about this role of example to children—let's read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. [READ]

We see again in verse 7 the primary role that teaching has in biblical parenting—God commands that you teach the Bible to your kids.

But more than teaching alone, these verses depict a lifestyle.

The main command here is to love God & then verses 6-9 show how love for God is demonstrated.

Verse 6 mentions our thoughts & verse 7 mentions our speech.

What's in our hearts & what we talk about display our love for God.

And verses 7-9 cover every place in life—everything from resting and sitting to rising and walking, inside or out.

Loving God means all of life is dominated & directed by God's Word.

Such a life influences everyone around, especially children.

You are teaching others by what you talk about in the car, at church, at the store, at home, on the phone and in every other area of life.

Your example is being continually absorbed by your kids & they will imitate what they see & hear.

Little ears are always listening.

Think of this as distinct from representing God to them—think of this in showing an example of what it looks like to trust God, to obey God, to seek forgiveness from God & others.

Think of it as obeying God's Word in the little & big things.

As Deuteronomy 6 says, we can teach all the time so that biblical truth is viewed as part of every detail of life.

We want faithfulness embedded on their consciences as normal.

Realize this: your home life is drawing the grid in your son's or daughter's mind for what normal life is like.

Think on that—what pattern for normal are you setting at home & in your church commitment & prayer life & finances?

And listen, singles & siblings: this applies to you too—you are an example to younger people whether you realize it or not.

All of us are influencing people all the time, far more than we imagine.

The Bible has many principles & illustrations of the power of example & we don't have time to list or mention any tonight.

But you know it—so seize the chance to pattern love & holiness and wisdom and faithfulness so that your children accept that as normal.

And then also remember that the special home life of Adam & Eve produced both Cain & Abel.

Remember that they did not have to contend with a worldly culture & did not have to protect from peer pressure, social media, the internet, entertainment, materialism, or secularism.

Yet in that protected home with parents who had interacted with God face to face, their first son born murdered his brother.

So we also always need to be parents who pray as I try to remember in my 6<sup>th</sup> acronym point: a parent is a Requester from God.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> R in RAISERS is for Requester, as in requesting benefits in prayer with God.

Even if we could be perfect parents—and Adam and Eve must have come closer than us—we depend on God to save & change & bless.

You and I can't do that for them, but we can pray for them.

We can pray for God to do what only He can—save, sanctify and ultimately glorify our children.

And every one of you can pray for the children you know.

If we don't pray for the kids in our church—and especially if parents don't pray for their kids—then who will?

Since God promises to act through the prayers of His people, will you pray for the children, for the next generation?

Be a Requester—an intercessor, a prayer warrior—on behalf of your child and the children in this ministry.

Pray for them and pray for their parents.

And pray finally, that God will help parents love sacrificially.

That's the last point in my acronym, RAISERS, the 2<sup>nd</sup> S is for Sacrifice—a parent is to be a sacrifice from God for children.

When God wanted to show His Fatherly love, He sacrificed.

God defined love by sacrifice & calls us also to sacrificial love.

Romans 12:1 says to, "*present your bodies a living & holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*"

Parenting is an act of worship in which we submit ourselves to do what God says for His glory and the child's good.

That may require sacrifice of comfort or leisure time or hobbies or plans or opportunities for overtime or career advancement.

But it is for God's glory and your child's good, so such things shouldn't even compare on the balance of importance.

Philippians 2 is another text to meditate on for our parental role.

To be a Christ-like parent, we need to set aside the importance we attach to our time and stuff and reputation and appearance.

We only have a few years to train kids' hearts in God's ways.

I've heard plenty of stories of people wishing they would have sacrificed to have more time while their kids were young.

But I've never heard anyone wish they spent less time with their kids.

Please be a spiritual and practical sacrifice for the children.

You can do that if you are not a parent & you must if you are a parent.

Will you sacrifice your life for the next generation?

If you are a Christian, Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for you; won't you sacrifice yourself for tomorrow's church?

Let's pray for God to help us in applying these truths.