

Raising Your Children With Kingdom Culture

The Moravians, who birthed the eighteenth-century global missions movement from the womb of a night-and-day prayer movement, had a banner cry echoed through the centuries. It was first spoken by some of their young missionaries who sailed to the unreached slaves of the Caribbean island of St. Thomas with the goal of sharing the message of the gospel. As they were on the deck of the ship that would take them to a lifetime of service and sacrifice, distraught family members on shore wept and cried out, “Why are you going?” One of the young missionaries cried out for all to hear: “That the Lamb, Who was slain, may receive the reward of His suffering.”

Those words require quiet contemplation to let the full effect reach our hearts. Why did the Lamb of God die? His sacrifice was certainly for our eternal salvation but also for so much more—for victorious, supernatural, abundant life to live and give away. Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

I believe Jesus wants to get what He paid for, including for our children. That means a regular expectation of miracles, signs, wonders, prophetic revelation and an intimate heart connection with the Lord. We want to live what He died to give.

The Diligence Due our Children

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes (Deut. 6:6-8).

In other words, the Bible gives us a parental directive to ensure what God has given us is persistently and effectively passed on to our children.

How do we raise children with a culture-of-the-kingdom mindset? Well, first of all we need to believe it and live it ourselves.

I've been privileged, along with my husband, to be a part of the leadership of a move of God commonly known as the "Toronto Blessing," or what we would call "The Father's Blessing." The Holy Spirit was poured out in power starting in January of 1994. Three million people from many nations came through our doors in the first three years; nightly meetings (except Mondays) went on for 12 years; and there were 5000 salvations in the initial two years with many healed, delivered and emotionally set free.

The first night there that I was overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit impacted me in a couple of ways. First of all, my passion for Jesus was awakened to a radical new degree. Secondly, I received a revelation of the bigness and greatness of God. Oh, I knew God before, but I had made Him too small in my eyes. I had had lots of prophecies about the future and the things I would see God do. Yet, unbelief plagued me, and my experiences of miracles were too few and far between. This powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit left me with a new realization that nothing, absolutely nothing, was impossible with God. At this time we had two small children (we now have six). I immediately began to incorporate my newfound revelation into regular family life.

Instead of reaching immediately for Tylenol when one of our children had a headache or fever, we made our first action prayer for healing. We began to see more miracles of healing.

When finances seemed stretched beyond our ability to have a vacation, we prayed for and began to see miraculous financial

provision. We also taught our kids the biblical mandate of tithing right from early childhood. If they received a \$5 gift, we helped them set 50 cents aside to give to the Lord. Our children wrote letters to children who were sponsored in their name. We paid the support, but they wrote the letters and kept up the contact. All of this taught them the importance of giving financially and seeing miracle provision.

Model Jesus

Helping our children get out of their comfort zones to be used by the Lord for supernatural endeavors will undoubtedly cause us some initial nervousness. Yet, let's not hold back from encouraging our children to step out and risk. The model Jesus used applies to parents.

First, demonstrate it yourself, then do it with them, and finally, encourage them to do it on their own. For example, my husband and I pray in front of our children for many things including financial provision or miracles of healing. We have often prayed with our children for specific needs they may have, such as new friends or opportunities. Then, there are the times when we have seen them take what they have learned and apply it themselves.

When our dog, Micah, had some tumors or growths on his body, the veterinarian thought it was cancer. John and I were thinking in terms of "how much does it cost to euthanize a dog?" Our daughter Zoe would not hear of the possibility of losing the beloved dog, and she began to pray for his healing. At youth group, she would submit a written prayer request each week for her dog to be healed, and she asked all her friends to pray for him. One day we realized all of the growths were completely gone. That was a dramatic lesson for Zoe of the power of prayer—her own prayers and not those of her parents.

Years ago, I remember John Wimber, leader of the Vineyard Movement at the time, saying, "You can't learn how to heal the

sick by reading a book or mastering a technique. You believe what Jesus promised and then you get out and do it.” While praying for people at our church for healings or miracles, my children accompanied me, laying on their hands as I did. While out and about in daily life, such as at the park or while visiting grandparents, we would take opportunities to pray for the sick. When we lived near a retirement home, I asked permission of the staff to take two of my young children to visit lonely elderly. It was a win-win. The residents loved seeing cute kids and received needed visits. My kids learned to reach out to the needy.

Listening to the voice of God and receiving prophetic revelation became normal Christian life for our children. We taught them to judge the prophetic words they received by way of the still small voice, thoughts, dreams, visions, pictures, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, angelic encounters or things in the natural that spoke of the supernatural. We taught them to test them through the lens of scripture, the character of God, the fruit of the Spirit and confirmation from other strong believers. We asked them, as soon as they could read and write, to have their own time with God reading the Bible, praying, and journaling—writing out what they felt God was speaking to them.

And God Brings in the Harvest

As the years progressed, the Lord opened doors for me to speak and minister locally and internationally. As often as I could, I have taken one or more children along on a trip. They don’t just come to see another nation, they also come to minister. Our youngest daughter, Glory Anna, just last month led worship in Belgium at age 13. Zoe, age 17, spoke to the youth in Holland. They both ministered prophetically to many.

Our son Judah was 17 when he accompanied me to Amsterdam. We were ministering alongside members of the Tabernacle House of Prayer right in the Red Light District. I asked Judah not to

look at the windows containing the girls, but he was still able to lead a few team members in playing worship songs right on the bridge over the canal in the midst of the District. A man came asking them what they were doing. They replied, "Worshipping God."

Then they sang a prophetic song over this man, who started to weep under the power of the Spirit. He gave his life to Jesus that day and said he was returning to the wife and family he had left behind. Judah is now a youth pastor.

Gabrielle was 15 years old when she started to lead an end-times study group in our church that people as old as 65 attended. I would make room for her to speak in sessions I was teaching—I took 20 minutes, and she took 20 minutes. She became the favored speaker. Gabrielle is now on staff at IHOPKC along with her husband, leading the evening section of the prayer room and serving as associate director of IHOPU online.

Aquila, at age 12, was on our prophetic team and ministering prophetically to many with maturity. Aquila now teaches English at a Christian school in Geneva, Switzerland.

Truly the possibilities are endless to help our kids live a supernatural, kingdom life. The first step for parents is to believe, live and start kingdom culture in the home and let it go forth from there to the nations.

What excites you most about building a kingdom culture in your home? {eoa}

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and helping believers to walk in passion for Jesus and live out the fullness of their destiny. Patricia and John are the parents of six amazing children.