

The Love That Takes Dying to Self to a Much Higher Level

Children are a great blessing from the Lord. We love little baby beings with all of our hearts, almost instantly. There is something in each one of us that would immediately do just about anything for the safety and betterment of our children.

This love is really, really important because it draws us into an extremely different level of sacrifice and service. By the time you think you are doing pretty well as far as being less selfish, children happen. The dying to yourself part takes a quantum leap when you have children.

From the last sentence to this one, I had walked into my son's room. When I turned the light on, two of the light bulbs over his mirror were out. I walked back upstairs to get light bulbs and went back to his room and replaced them. Then I thought my daughter might have a light out as well. I went upstairs to her room and sure enough, over her mirror, she needed a bulb as well. Then I returned to my table to write this for you. Children provide endless opportunities to serve. We get them up, feed them, make sure they finish their homework, pack a different lunch for each, drive them to school, pick them up from school, clean up after their meals, put dishes away, get them to bed—not to mention, we get them to sports, dance, music or some other amazing activity.

If you have lived through this, you definitely get that having children is a call to service that demands slightly more than you have, so you have to depend on God. Children, in addition to needing so much of our energy and time, also create demands on marriage. The chief demand children bring to married couples are all the small daily decisions and overarching decisions on how to raise them.

You both have limited family experience of your own with the family you grew up with or those of your friends. All parents have strengths and weaknesses, as well as different values, from food to holidays.

You are creating a unique family of your own. There is no perfect family on earth, so do not aim for perfect. Instead, aim for honest, open, warm, godly, goodhearted or values along those lines. Understanding each other and hearing each other is very important.

Your different genders and personalities and current cultural trends create enough variables for your parenting to become a unique journey for both of you. Being parents is an extension of being a servant to each other. You will have ample opportunity to grow in serving. Why do you think grandparents are so much more patient? It is because they have had so much selfishness kicked out of them from decades of marriage and raising children that they actually do look and think a lot more like Jesus.

From a fellow traveler, knowing parenting is a great journey and the journey of a lifetime!

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