

What a Really Stupid Thing to Say

Raising our daughter, Rachel, has presented many challenges for my wife, Patty, and me. She seems as if she has always been the quintessential “strong-willed child,” a phrase Dr. James Dobson coined in his book of the same name.

Rachel became a teenager in March, and it seems as if the challenges have intensified. I realize I’m probably not telling many of you anything you haven’t heard or experienced before. Indeed, raising a daughter can be tough.

If there is one thing I told myself when I became a parent, it’s that I wouldn’t do or say the things my father did as I grew up. “Lazy” and “irresponsible” were only two of the labels with which my dad saddled me.

Determined not to let history repeat itself, I would always consider Psalm 127:3, which says, “Look, children are a gift of the Lord.” If you knew what Patty and I went through simply to have Rachel, you would understand that attitude.

Parents, let me let you in on a little hint: Words can hurt. Forget “sticks and stones.” Whether you want to believe it or not, your words can have a lasting effect.

My dad has since gotten saved, and we have mended our relationship, but it took a lot of years to do so. I pray that I have not inflicted that much damage on Rachel, especially some words that have venomously spewed from my mouth recently in anger.

Yesterday morning, I carelessly let it slip that “if you don’t show us that you care for us, you make it easy for us not to care.”

Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. What a horrible thing to say to your child—absolutely horrible.

And that's after recently reading this insightful blog by Dr. Michelle Watson titled, "25 Things NOT to Say to Your Daughter, Ever." I really let my emotions get the best of me, and I am deeply ashamed of that. No matter what she's done, Rachel doesn't deserve that.

I quickly texted her and asked her to forgive me, and I quickly asked the Lord to forgive me. I rebuked my words and prayed that they would quickly leave her heart. I ask for your prayers for that as well.

I realize that her obstinacy can be typical teenage behavior, and I realize that we're not the only parents that have to deal with this. It is extremely frustrating nonetheless, especially for a type-A personality like me. To be totally transparent, I'm praying for God to shake me into better behavior.

I cannot claim to know what a young girl endures as a teen. I cannot fathom the wide range of emotions Rachel is experiencing right now. It's difficult enough to grow up in this cold, dark and ungodly society with all the pressures kids must face.

It's comforting to know that I have a prayer shield at work for my family and me. If you are going through a similar situation with your children, know that you are not alone. We at Charisma Media will pray with you and for your children.

Please share your heart and let us know how we can pray for you. While you may not see immediate results, rest assured that God hears you and that He will mend those relationships.

And as I always like to say, "there is that."

Note: Thankfully I can report that my wife, Rachel and I sat

down and had a great conversation last night. I know that I can't make up for what I said, but I pray that those words are loosed from her heart and that we can move forward. Next time I'm tempted, I pray that the Holy Spirit stops me from saying something that "stupid."