



FAMILY VALUES (Devotion for Parents)

THEMES: Developing Godly Character in Children

I Samuel 9:1 (NRSV) *There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish.*

Kish is chiefly remembered as the father of Saul, the first king of Israel. Kish lived in a turbulent time. The people of Israel had failed to conquer Canaan. They were led by judges who responded to crisis and enemy invasion(s) but could not maintain spiritual health in Israel. The nation wavered from generation to generation. One generation would worship God. The next would turn away from God to the idols of a neighboring nation. Instead of following God's leadership, the nation asked for a king.

One day Kish sent Saul to find several donkeys that had wandered off of their family's property. Saul never found the donkeys, but he did meet up with the prophet and judge, Samuel, during his search. The Bible records that Samuel was feared and respected, as a man who had been dedicated to God from his birth. God had arranged this divine appointment between Samuel and Saul. After that meeting, Kish's son returned home as the newly anointed king of Israel. When Kish sent Saul after the donkeys, he was preparing his son for the responsibilities he would inherit one day. He trained Saul without knowing his son would become king. Like Kish, we may not know what paths our children will follow. If a parent develops convictions in a child (when the child is young), the child will not betray those convictions when he is mature. **Proverbs 22:6** states, "*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*" We do know that a stable marriage allows the children to feel safe in the home environment. A stable environment in the home, is the best place to teach important, godly values.

In his book, "*Kids Under Construction*," Bishop Ricki D. Pavlu, explains that it is a parent's responsibility to teach character AND to model character. *Children will imitate your actions when they are younger and imitate your lifestyle when they are older.*

To build proper relationship with lasting influence in the child's life, Bro. Pavlu taught the following:

1) GIVE THE CHILD TIME;

-A general rule in spending quality time with your child is to spend more time listening than talking; Maintain eye contact with your child and be attentive to every word he/she says.

2) GIVE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE;

-A child is much easier to discipline and responds much better to instructions when

he/she feels loved. That love has a *reciprocating effect*. When a child knows that

someone loves him/her, it tends to make him/her want to return love.

3) VERBALIZE YOUR LOVE TO YOUR CHILD;

-You can never express love to your child too much. However, you can definitely under

express your love. Never assume that your child knows that you love him/her. Love must

be demonstrated verbally and by action.

4) BUILD RELATIONSHIP (It is the foundation for discipline & influence with your child)

- Initially, a child may obey out of fear of punishment. However, if there is no relationship

(ex. quality time, verbalizing of love for the child)...the child may begin to feel hostile

toward the parent and lead into destructive behavior (disobedience, rebellion, drugs, etc).

There are kings, preachers, nurses, missionaries, teachers and other types of heroes living in your children's rooms. Ask God to help you develop the wisdom and discernment you need to be the best parent you can be.

DO YOU WANT TO GO DEEPER?

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: How do you help your children develop skills they will need every day? Tell of one (1) strength or talent for each of your children. If you, as parent need to work on re-balancing discipline, spiritual teaching and fun with your child/children....which area needs improvement? Is there a biblical lesson that you learned from your Parents/Grandparents/ Pastor, that you want to teach to your children?

PRAY: Lord, help me to see my children, as you see them and to treat them as the wonderful, irreplaceable treasure(s) you created.

MORE SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 29:17, Proverbs 22:6; Exodus 12:26-27; Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:15; Proverbs 19:18; Proverbs 23:13; Proverbs 13:24; Colossians 3:21; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; I Chronicles 22:1-12; Ecclesiastes 7:9; Philippians 4:8; Romans 12:15; Hebrews 12:5-11; I Timothy 3:4

Your child's best inheritance are the godly values you teach them.