



SIMPLICITY IN PARENTING

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In order to survive in today's times, we need to keep our goals simple. We teach our children to dream big, yes, but we also need to make sure they keep well-grounded in their values. Failure to do so would give our children a false sense of vanity or a mistaken notion that they can do whatever they want in order to become who they want to be. By all means let us encourage them to reach higher and grow stronger. But let us not blind them with promises that they'll always have an all-encompassing blanket of protection from us.

It can be tempting to give everything we can to our children. They are, after all, our offspring and they deserve nothing less. However, unless we teach our children to temper down their desire for the grander things in life with the simplest values of life, they may grow up believing that the sun rises and sets for them and the world is always at their feet. Children who have been raised to be too proud and sure of themselves grow up to be too assuming and arrogant of themselves. The spoiled brats that we teach them to be in their childhood grow up to be the tyrants of the future. If our children never get a taste of defeat, they can never relish their triumphs. If our children grow up to believe they can get whatever they want, they won't ever find satisfaction in their future.

We live in a world where those who do not hold tight to the train of life may end up getting left behind. However, holding tight to the train of life does not give us the warrant to step on the rights of people just to get things our way. All people have rights and those rights are fundamentally the same. Just because we live in a wealthier sphere of existence does not mean we can easily sideswipe other people on our way to the top. Keeping everything in proper perspective and in simple terms for our kids makes them more compassionate towards their fellowmen. Leaving no one behind, not even your greatest sworn enemy, is the Christian way. Paying mere lip service to good old fashioned values is hypocrisy of the highest order. Unless we truly live what we teach and become good examples of simple living to our children, we will never be able to teach them humility and brotherly love.

Let us inspire our kids to live good lives with simple values and concepts. Let us motivate them to reach farther than they can grasp, but always remind them that their feet need to be planted on the ground. In doing so, we would be doing what we have been preordained to do as their parents: teach them to live simple, holy lives.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How have you been taught by your own parents? Use concrete examples, as needed.
2. Why is it important to teach our children about humility and simplicity?
3. Would you call living in today's world simple? Why or why not?
4. Why is it easier to indulge our children with whatever they want than to argue with them?
5. If our children grow up being spoiled rotten by us, what would be potential problems for them and for us in the future? Cite examples, as necessary.