What Are Your Greatest Treasures?

Your greatest treasures are those that you can enjoy throughout eternity. The children whom you bring into the world and train up in the ways of the Lord would certainly qualify as eternal treasures. The riches of God’s truth, would you invest in them, increase the value of your treasures. Give your child a gift more valuable than money—praise your children.

How is praise more valuable than money?

One of the basic needs of your children is for approval from those whom God has placed over their lives. Without this approval they will feel frustrated that they cannot please you, and that will lead to self-rejection. The intense need that your children have for praise is demonstrated by the fact that they will willingly sacrificed money, time, and effort in order to get it.

What does it mean to praise your children?

Praise is given by pointing out a particular character quality in another person and telling how that quality as expressed through word, deed, or attitude has benefited your life.

Examples: “I am so pleased by your initiative! You saw that the dishwasher needed to be emptied and did it without being asked.” or “You practiced self-control by not touching or asking for anything in the store. That is encouraging to me!”

How does praise differ from flattery?

Praise acknowledges a Godly character quality that a person has developed by responding to the grace of God. Flattery exults a person for characteristics for which God or others are primarily responsible. Flattery is often an exaggeration of the truth and it’s given with ulterior motives. It promotes pride in the one receiving it. Thus the warnings, “A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet (Proverbs 29:5) and “...a flatterling mouth worketh ruin” (Proverbs 26:8).

Examples: “You are a beautiful child.” “You are a genius.” “You never make a mistake”

What do you need to know in order to praise your child?

It would be wise to memorize precise character qualities and their operational definitions.

Examples: Patience—“Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it.” Contentment—“Realizing that God has provided everything I need for my present happiness.”

Why is it vital to memorize these character qualities?

Every character quality is demonstrated in the attributes of God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the more we learn about character, the more we understand about the nature of God. By knowing character qualities, we also understand why things happen to us since all things work together for good to conform us to the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See Romans 8:28–29.) It is only as you can identify and explain specific character qualities that you will be able to give meaningful praise.

Is it wise to soften blame with praise when giving correction?

No. Is very important that you separate praise and blame. When you praise your children, you should focus only on the good things they have done. Combining praise with blame can be appropriate for a summary evaluation such as was given to the churches in Revelation. However, if you make it a practice to praise your children and then conclude the praise with correction, they will not be able to enjoy the praise. While you are praising them, they will probably be wondering what they have done wrong. Furthermore, the praise will probably be taken not as sincere but only as a preparation for reproof.

Correct example: “Your cooperation in the home is a great encouragement to me. I especially appreciate your cheerful spirit in doing your chores.” (At a later date) “We need to discuss the matter of punctuality and how we can build this quality more effectively into your life.”

Incorrect example: “You are helpful around the house, and I appreciate that. However, you are consistently late for family events, and that keeps others waiting.”

What should be the proportion of praise to reproof?

A safe proportion would be 10 times of praise for everyone time every proof. Children need constant reassurance that they are pleasing the Lord and you. The more you give precise and sincere prayers, the more your correction it will be effective. Even a look of disapproval will be an effective reproof for a child who is looking to you for approval.