



Your Child AS A Leader!



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Leadership In A Child

Every wise father and mother desires that their child become a successful leader, capable of leading a life in all the physical, intellectual and spiritual aspects found in the society he or she lives in. Such a desire is in harmony with God's will, for He created a sound humanity, in possession of authority, so that not one from amongst them may become enslaved.

This is what **Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa**, the fascinating theologian confirmed, when he said:

We are all equal by nature.¹

It is not in our nature, but our love for authority that divided humankind into slaves and masters.²

God granted humanity the right to decide its own destiny (for it is unfitting for one individual to control the destiny of another).³

Enslavement is the destruction of a living being's completeness.⁴

The state of independence and freedom is a wise calling for the will of man.⁵

The main challenge to freedom is for an individual to become his/her own master.

Now we examine a terrific biblical example; one that offers practical means in the sound guidance of raising our children, so that they may develop leadership skills at a young age, while possessing a spirit of humility, and having their own personalities that are pleasing to God, and supportive of humankind's society. This character is that of King Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:35).

1 De Beatitudinibus, 1.

2 De Oratione Dominica, 5.

3 De Oratione Dominica, 5.

4 Contra Eunomium, 1:35.

5 Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium, 23.



A Child Challenges Evil!

One stands in awe before this eight year old child, whose grandfather Manasseh was well known for being one of the most evil kings Judah had ever seen for the length of his fifty-five year reign, with the exception of the last portion of his life, which was no more than a mere year. Well known also was his father Amon, who followed in the evil path of his own father Manasseh. This was what this young Josiah had inherited: he was surrounded by priests and Levites, who did not practice the worship of God in an orthodox fashion; corrupt civilian and military leaders; royal men, who worshipped idols and resisted the worship of the Living God, practiced abominations, and underestimated purity and chastity. It was mentioned that this eight year old boy "did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (2 Chronicles 34:2). How did this child know how to act in such a way? Without a doubt, there is no possibility of an acquaintance between the boy and living prophets such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, for there was no place for them in the royal palaces, and the people did not welcome them. Perhaps the only source for his righteousness was his mother whom history did not mention, but this child's leadership was a true reflection of her successful upbringing.

Leadership In The Eyes Of This Child!

The examination of this child's life from the time of his coronation to the day of his departure is a useful tool in understanding the basis of righteous leadership.

1. He did not deviate to the right nor left (34:2).

Josiah must have learned from his mother to focus his vision on the straight path without deviating to the right or left, and to walk in a moderate path without exaggeration or negligence. Just as King Solomon warns us of evil, he also warns us of being too



righteous: “Do not be overly righteous, nor be overly wise; why should you destroy yourself?” (Ecclesiastes 7:16) With the same spirit, St. Isaac the Syrian says that excessive austerity can cause exactly as much damage as gluttony.

The Lord Christ says, “I am the way” (John 14:6). The righteous leader attaches himself to the Lord Christ without deviating from Him.

The role of the family is to make the home a heavenly icon, so that the child grows in delight towards heaven, enjoying glory on top of inner glory, not attracted to the things in the world, nor shaken by its tribulations.

2. He challenges evil with confidence in God who works within him

When Josiah reached the age of twenty, he purified Judah and Jerusalem from the worship of idols (2 Chronicles 34:3-4). Surely, it was not easy for a young man to stand up against so many men, who had lived so many years immersed in their pleasures and abominations.

He was trained since his childhood that the work of God is greater and more powerful than any opposition!

3. Making use of talents (2 Chronicles 34: 8-13)

As a leader, Josiah did not work alone, but rather succeeded in delegating the work to everyone around, allowing the priests, Levites, the elders, and the workers, and all of the people to feel their worth in their assigned roles. It was said, “And the men did the work faithfully” (2 Chronicles 34:12). Each one felt committed as a leader, driven by self-motivation. They were not led by the orders commanded by Josiah, nor by materialistic rewards offered to them. Thus, the role of the Church, as is the home, is to cultivate the spirit of righteous leadership even in the life of a young child.



4. The Law of the Lord was his approach (2 Chronicles 34: 14-33)

Josiah’s plan was to submit his leadership in the hands of the Lord, to proclaim with Paul, the Apostle, “For we are God’s fellow workers” (1 Corinthians 3:9), fulfilling God’s word with joy.

5. Transmitting the spirit of joy to others

It was said, “There had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem” (2 Chronicles 35:18).

- a. He transformed the atmosphere of the people including Israel, which was not under his authority, from dark grief to glorious joy. Therefore, a leader’s responsibility is to transmit the spirit of joy and hope everywhere he or she goes.
- b. He gave much of his money away, even though the nation was not as wealthy as it has been during the days of David and Solomon. This extraordinary spirit of giving poured splendor on the celebration and festivities.
- c. He urged the leaders to offer plenty to the tribes, in order for them to taste the sweetness of giving and offering.
- d. He even asked the wealthy priests to donate to the poor priests of what they possessed, in order for them to experience the beauty of giving!
- e. He made sure that the Levites sang praises unto God, in order to instill the spirit of joy.

I ask you, do we instill the righteous spirit of leadership in our children? Or, do we move them around like pieces of chess during their childhood, forcing them to do the same unto us, and manipulate us as chess pieces when given the chance?



Let us offer prayers, fasting, and prostrations for the sake of our unborn children, so that the Lord may grant them the spirit of leadership!

The sayings of John Chrysostom about;

Raising Children

St. John Chrysostom warned parents regarding negligence in raising their children, portraying the extensive dangers of this sin, for he did not hesitate to call it, “**the slaughter of children.**”

Your children will always be very wealthy if they accept your virtuous upbringing, capable thereafter of managing their own lives in principle and conduct. Therefore, you should not struggle to make them wealthy, but rather to make them righteous, able to master their desires, and be rich in virtues. Teach them not to think about their deceptive needs, lest they believe that they will be honored according to their social status (materialistic measures).

Watch gently their actions, their acquaintances and friends, and do not expect any mercy from God if you do not fulfill this responsibility.

We do not shy away from doing everything possible and using all means available to provide our children with the best education, in order for them to serve the worldly authorities properly. Sadly, knowledge of the Holy Faith and the service of the Heavenly King is not a priority for us. We allow them to attend theaters, yet we fail to look to bring them to Church and teach them to stand in it with dignity and respect. If we hold them accountable for what they learn in the worldly institutes, why do we not also ask them about what they heard in the house of the Lord?



You say, “What? Shall we ask for wisdom and neglect all that is worldly?” No, you who are highly honored, for this request does not imply the desire for wisdom, but rather the lack of it; thus, destroying and spoiling everything.

If righteous parents strive to provide their children with an honorable upbringing, then we will not be in need of laws, order, judges, or courts, for verdicts are issued and punishments are executed due to the lack of morals in our society.

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Free Publication | نسخة مجانية

Printed by: American Pack
Cairo - Egypt +202 22801119