

February 22, 2026 (Lesson 12)

## TEACHING BIBLICAL PRACTICES IN THE HOME

1. **Commit Your Children to the Lord** (1 Samuel 1:20-28)
2. **Persist in Parental Prayer** (Job 1:1-5; Luke 11:9-13)
3. **Promote Christlike Behavior** (Romans 12:9-13)

**Central Truth:** Christian parents should create a hunger for God and His Word.

**Focus:** Observe and emulate godly practices for parenting.

**Evangelism Emphasis:** Christian parents must give priority to evangelizing their own children.

**Golden Text:** “For I know him [Abraham], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord” (Genesis 18:19).

The first lessons we learned as children did not come from school but from home. We learned how to walk, how to speak, how to obey, and how to be responsible from the instruction and encouragement of our parents. We learned lessons about sharing, loving, and forgiving from interacting with our siblings and others. The foundation of our character and personality was formed in the home. Eventually, we entered formal schools ready for the next steps in the education process.

Those who grew up in genuinely Christian families also became aware of God and His Word through the teaching and example given in the home. We learned to pray, worship, give, and honor God by observing and obeying the instructions of our parents. Their godly behavior became a pattern for our speech, thoughts, and conduct. Exposure to a larger community of faith through church services and activities served to confirm the lessons we were taught and the lifestyle we followed.

The importance of the home to the formation of a Biblical worldview in our children cannot be overstated. Studies reveal that emerging generations are increasingly demonstrating Biblical illiteracy, and many are leaving the church. One Barna Group survey of people aged sixteen to twenty-nine reported, “A new generation is more skeptical of and resistant to Christianity than were people of the same age just a decade ago” (*barna.com*). We might be quick to blame the godless worldview that

characterizes the societies in which we live. However, the church has always functioned against the headwinds of culture and found a way to thrive. Jesus has assured us of victory (Matt. 16:18). We do not need to feel powerless to effect change. If the trend is to be reversed, it must include a reemphasis and recommitment to teaching Biblical practices in our homes.

## **1. COMMIT YOUR CHILDREN TO THE LORD**

### **A. Hannah's Promise (1 Samuel 1:20-23)**

<sup>20</sup> Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. <sup>22</sup> But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever. <sup>23</sup> And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the Lord establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

The Bible explicitly states children are indicative of God's blessing on a family (Ps. 127:3). Among the Israelite community, having numerous children was a sign of God's pleasure. Conversely, barrenness was thought to be a sign of God's judgment. Near the end of the period of the Judges, Hannah found herself unable to conceive a child. Tormented by her inability and her rival's animosity (1 Sam. 1:6-8), she desperately sought relief from God. In her prayer, she made a vow that in return for God's mercy, she would consecrate her child to Him (v. 11).

God answered Hannah's prayer, and she remembered her promise. She had specifically requested a son, whom she named *Samuel* ("asked of God"). The naming of her child was the first step in his consecration, for that name would forever connect his life to God (v. 20). In Bible times, the naming of children was often a declaration about their personality, potential, or destiny. When mentioning his name, people would be reminded that Samuel was God's response to his mother's plea, and ultimately to the nation's need for godly leadership.

The next step in the fulfillment of Hannah's promise was to present Samuel to the Lord. She determined to wean him first, and then complete the vow. An infant dependent on his mother's sustenance would have been of no use in the priestly order. Children in Israel were customarily weaned somewhere between the ages of eighteen months and five years. "According to Jewish custom, the time when a child is weaned is cause for celebration. A weaned child has survived the fragile stage of infancy and can now eat solid food rather than breast-feed from his or her mother" (*gotquestions.org*). Samuel was likely brought to Shiloh at the age of three.

### **A Mother's Prayers**

The impression that a praying mother leaves on her children is lifelong. Perhaps when you are dead and gone your prayer will be answered.—D. L. Moody

#### **B. Hannah's Gift (1 Samuel 1:24-28)**

<sup>24</sup> And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young. <sup>25</sup> And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. <sup>26</sup> And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord. <sup>27</sup> For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: <sup>28</sup> Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.

As she fulfilled her vow, Hannah brought gifts and a sacrifice to observe the solemnity of the occasion. Two bulls were normally required—one for the burnt offering and the other as an offering of gratitude—in the yearly worship activity. Hannah and Elkanah brought a third bullock, perhaps intended to honor Samuel's consecration. Hannah's piety and commitment were displayed in her willingness to surrender her only child to the God who had removed her shame.

She reiterated her pledge as she presented Samuel to the priest, declaring her intent to give him to the Lord. The word translated as *lent* comes from a root word meaning "to inquire" or "demand."

It is the same word used in Exodus 12:36 where the Egyptians “lent” the children of Israel the things they requested. In both instances, the action was giving or surrendering something that had been asked for. In Hannah’s case, it was her act of dedicating her son to God and His service. She gave Samuel back to God in acknowledgment that he was God’s gift to her.

In addition to Samuel, the Bible notes the presentation of other children to God. The birth and infancy of Jesus are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, but in Luke 2:22-24 more details are given as He was brought to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. Mary and Joseph were careful to honor the Mosaic Law by consecrating the Christ-child. During Jesus’ adult ministry, numerous children were brought to Him in anticipation of His blessings (Mark 10:13-16). Though His disciples initially frowned upon the practice, the Lord endorsed and commended the parents’ actions. Jesus reinforced the truth that children are precious to God and He is concerned about their welfare.

The custom of dedicating children to the Lord continues in the Christian church. In recognition of God’s gift to them, parents present their children back to God in a symbolic action intended to consecrate their lives to Him. It is an honorable ceremony that often involves the extended family, along with chosen godparents, who affirm their willingness to raise the children in a godly environment. Prayers are offered and blessings are pronounced in this act of dedication that marks the child as belonging to God.

Sometimes special songs or poems are offered in recognition of a child’s dedication. One classic poem written by John H. Gower states, “We bring them Lord, in thankful hands, and yielding them up to Thee; joyful that we ourselves are Thine, Thine let our offspring be” (*romper.com*). The ceremony and celebration of a child’s dedication is an important demonstration of a family’s commitment to God. Parents should be encouraged to offer their newborns back to God in consecration. It is a fitting initial step in laying a foundation for godly instruction in the home.

§ *In what ways should Christian parents follow Hannah's example?*

## **2. PERSIST IN PARENTAL PRAYER**

### **A. Job's Intercession (Job 1:1-5)**

<sup>4</sup> And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. <sup>5</sup> And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Job's story is a revealing look at a man whose piety and integrity were tested. Through it all, he remained faithful to God. Though he suffered horrible losses, he refused to curse God for his troubles. His example inspires and instructs us to maintain our hope in God during our occasions of suffering. The first chapter of Job confirms his devoted and consecrated lifestyle. He is described as "blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil" (v. 1 NKJV). His ten children were evidence of God's favor on his life (v. 2). He was very wealthy and known as "the greatest of all the men of the east" (v. 3).

Job's righteousness is further certified in the priestly functions he undertook on behalf of his family. The festive gatherings of his children occasioned his penitence and prayer on their behalf to cover any sins they may have committed (v. 5). He dutifully offered burnt offerings for each of them, seeking God's forgiveness and mercy. He modeled for us a loving father genuinely concerned for his children's spiritual and moral well-being. Job's desire was for his children to serve God, and he practiced his devotion before them as an example.

The actions of Job in spiritually covering his children should inspire us to persistently pray for our offspring. As he interceded on their behalf, we should consistently present our children to God in prayer.

### **A Father's Prayers**

Kayleen Reusser recounts the testimony of Gareth Wiedekehr, a WWII American sailor. His ship once came under heavy enemy fire in the Philippines, and death was an imminent threat. He survived and shared how he felt God speaking to him in that moment, “I am sparing you and all your shipmates because your father is conducting family worship at home and is praying for you at this time” (*lookoutmag.com*, July 2015).

## **B. The Heavenly Father’s Generosity (Luke 11:9-13)**

<sup>10</sup> For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? <sup>12</sup> Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11 begins with Jesus praying in an unnamed location, followed by a disciple’s asking Him to teach them how to pray. Something about Jesus’ constant connection with the Father stimulated their desire to know and communicate with God in a similar way. In response to the request, Jesus presented a model prayer, told a parable on prayer, and offered encouragement about praying. In the model prayer, He urged them to address God as “Father,” likening their connection to Him as that of a loving parent with his children. Through this approach, we learn to relate to God as our heavenly Father who loves us, cares for us, and is committed to our welfare. In turn, we can teach our children to view God in the same manner.

In verses 9-13, Jesus encourages us to seek God’s answer in any situation. Regardless of the level of need driving our supplication, we can pray confidently and expectantly. In simple and difficult matters, God is ready to respond if we *ask*, *seek*, or *knock* in prayer. The needs and issues related to our children are often the subjects of our prayers. We can pray tenaciously and patiently, knowing God will listen and respond. We should be “persistent in prayer . . . for this is the will of God for [us] in Christ Jesus” (1 Thess. 5:17-18 Amp.).

As we pray, we can trust God to generously provide the answers we need. Jesus was not teaching that we can expect to receive exactly what we ask for, but that God knows exactly what is best for us. Like a loving parent, He gives us what we truly need and so satisfies our desires. His Word indicates the provisions and blessings He has determined to give to those who petition Him. Prayers informed and guided by Scripture lay hold of the purposes of God for our lives. Indeed, “the possibilities of prayer run parallel with the promises of God” (E. M. Bounds).

The undeniable goodness of God is emphasized in Luke 11:11-13. Jesus contrasted the sinful nature of men with His Father’s righteousness. Additionally, their “good gifts” such as nutritious food are surpassed by God’s gift of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of our earthly fathers satisfy our temporal needs, but the gift of the Holy Spirit addresses our spiritual needs now and forever. The Holy Spirit will be our constant companion and guide, leading us to the truth of God (John 14:16-17), and He will partner with us in prayer (Rom. 8:26). As we pray for our children “in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18), we are praying in agreement with God’s will in their lives.

§ *What does Jesus’ parable in Luke 11:5-8 teach about the necessity of persisting in prayer?*

### **3. PROMOTE CHRISTLIKE BEHAVIOR**

#### **A. Love Sincerely (Romans 12:9-10)**

<sup>9</sup> Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. <sup>10</sup> Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.

In Romans 12, Paul teaches about the believer’s position in Christ. Redemption distinguishes us from an unbelieving world and requires us to lead transformed lives. Consequently, Paul’s instructions reveal how we are to think and act as members of Christ’s body. His practical directives apply to our service roles and functions as well as to our interactions with others. These behaviors should be modeled by believing parents before their children.

In verse 9, we are directed to love freely and “without hypocrisy” (NKJV). Essentially, we should love like God loves. His *agape* is pure and without condition, and it should flow through us. Worldly love, by contrast, is conditional, biased, and prejudicial. Holding evil in disdain (“abhor . . . evil”) while being attracted to good is also characteristic of how we should live. Our connection to God means we should love what He loves and hate what He hates. These principles need to be taught to our children.

Verse 10 addresses the “brotherly love” that should mark the fellowship and interaction of believers. We are expected to practice kindness and generosity in our dealings with each other. As members of a spiritual brotherhood, we are to display a fraternal affection wherein we reveal our mutual concern. In fact, we are directed to prefer or favor others as a sign of honor. The potential for selfishness and rivalry among our children can be countered through living and teaching these Biblical directives.

### **Nine Winners**

During the Special Olympics held in Seattle, Washington, several years ago, the crowd was stunned by an incident in the 100-meter race. When the signal was given, all nine of the runners took off as fast as they could, but one of them stumbled and fell. As he lay crying on the track, the other eight turned back to help him up. They then linked their arms and walked to the finish line in unison, and the crowd gave them a ten-minute standing ovation (Matthew Sickling, *sermoncentral.com*).

#### **B. Serve God; Share With Others (Romans 12:11-13)**

<sup>11</sup> Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup> Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; <sup>13</sup> Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

We are to demonstrate Christlike behavior in every circumstance and experience of life. Verse 11 may appear to point to three different expectations, but taken together the phrases offer one general

directive related to our service to God. “Not slothful in business” means “never be lazy” (NLT). Therefore, the believer is to serve God with a ready and willing disposition, and a vibrant and passionate spirit. As Jesus dutifully fulfilled His Father’s will, we too should honor our Lord with enthusiastic service.

The challenges of life can evoke reactions such as distress, anger, and depression. As transformed believers, our renewed minds can enable us to respond in more positive ways. Being joyful, patient, and prayerful (v. 12) are attributes that can enable our children to navigate the nuances of life as they grow older. Teaching them that God empowers us to trust His promises and believe His Word sets a strong foundation for their lives. Knowing Jesus is with them in every experience will comfort and encourage their faith.

Christian brotherhood is evidenced in our compassion and care for others. We should readily share resources to meet the needs of our fellow “saints” (v. 13). This was modeled in the early church (Acts 2:44-45), encouraged by the Apostles (1 John 3:16-17), and continues in our day. Paul urges us to be hospitable and charitable. The environment of the home is an excellent place to communicate these truths.

Two siblings were arguing over who should get the last brownie. Each insisted they were entitled to it and refused to give in, so their mother decided to point them to the Bible. “What would Jesus do?” she asked. The older sibling immediately responded, “That’s easy. Jesus would just break the brownie and make five thousand more!” (*ministry127.com*).

§ *Why is it vital for Christian parents and grandparents to model the behaviors listed in Romans 12:11-13?*

## **PARENTING IS GARDENING**

Parental responsibilities to our children include their spiritual and moral development as well as their physical and emotional well-being. To neglect our duty to teach Biblical practices in the home is to invite chaos and confusion into our children's lives.

In "Parenting Is Gardening," Kelly Keller said parents "need to pull the weeds in our own hearts first, before they grow too big. And we need to address the weeds in our kids' hearts—with tender care, not disturbing the soil too much. We encourage the growth of the good seed with daily waterings in Scripture, in prayer, in encouragement. But then we wait" (*gospelcoalition.org*).

### **Daily Devotions**

- M. Hannah Gives Samuel to God (1 Samuel 1:24-28)
- T. David Exhorts Solomon (1 Chronicles 22:6-16)
- W. Job Intercedes for His Children (Job 1:1-5)
- T. Joseph Hears and Obeys (Matthew 2:13-15)
- F. Jailer's Family Converted (Acts 16:25-34)
- S. Orderly and Industrious Life Commanded (1 Thessalonians 4:9-12)