

Teaching By Example

by Benny Bristol

Two young people were involved in an automobile accident. The young girl, a high school student, was badly injured and her companion was killed. Their parents found from the hospital attendants that the young couple had been drinking at the time of the accident. The girl's father flew into a rage and said, "Just let me get my hands on the person that sold them the liquor; I'll kill him!" After returning home, he went to get a drink to "quiet his nerves" but found that his bottle was missing.

My friends, influence is a powerful thing. We cannot live one way and expect our children to live another! "A father that whipped his son for swearing, and swore himself while he whipped him, did more harm by his example than good by his correction" (Fuller). A large part of their training comes from the example they see in our lives as parents. In the words of a Spanish proverb: "Live with wolves, and you will learn to howl."

Do you want your children to be honest, truthful, and pure morally? If the answer to this question is yes, then you had better show them these virtues in your life. Someone has said that there is a transcendent power in example. We reform others unconsciously, when we walk uprightly. (Mad. Swetchine).

Jesus realized the power of good example when He informed His disciples that: *"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"* (Matt. 5:14-16). Before the world would hear of Christ, it had to see Him in the lives of Christians, and be assured. Things have not changed in this regard today.

The Apostle Paul wanted to follow Jesus' example so that others could follow him. He wrote to the church at Corinth: *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ"* (1 Cor. 11:1). "One watch set right will do to set many by; one that goes wrong may be the means of misleading a whole neighborhood; and the same may be said of example" (Delwin).

"You can preach a better sermon with your life than your lips" (Goldsmith). "None preaches better than the ant, and she says nothing" (Franklin).

The teaching you do is very important, but remember, it must be backed up by a good example. And this is something to think about!

295001