

Words of Wisdom from a Mother

by Bill Crews

In the early 1950's, while we were living in Lake Charles, Louisiana and I was working with the church that met at 2nd Ave. & 1st St., we had some visitors whom we knew about but had never met. They were Americans, but had been living in what was then Southern Rhodesia in Africa; he was a preacher. There were five children in the family. In one visit at one church service they made an impression for good that stands out vividly in my memory. The family sat together on the second pew on the right, and I and most of those present took notice of the fact that their five young children were so well-behaved. It was no accident; those parents could have told anyone how it is that some children behave nearly all of the time while others misbehave nearly all the time.

At the Park Forest church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana we were blessed with a very special person, a mother of four children, then ages 4 through 13, who took care of four other children (nephews and a niece), then ages 20 months through 14 years. The two older children were there a full year; the two younger for more than two years. For much of this time the father had to work out of the country, so you understand why I am giving so much credit to this mother. Here is a Christian, a wife, a mother, a wise and gentle person with a sweet personality and a lovely character. How would you fare with four of your own, and then suddenly four of some-one else's? With wisdom, example, love, patience and firm discipline she managed very well. In fact, at church services, she managed eight better than many manage one or two. If I were a young parent, I would take notice and ask her how she did it. Reluctantly and with embarrassment, she prepared for me this list which I pass on to all of our readers:

- "I've always felt that respect works both ways when it comes to a parent and a child.
- "I give the children a right to disagree with me (however, it must be done respectfully), because I could be wrong.
- "I try to stress to the children that not only is what you say important, but also how you say it.
- "When there is a dispute between the children, I try to get them to settle it among themselves for I know that I won't always be there.
- "I am thankful when strangers and others chastise my children. They may have saved them from some danger.
- "When the children are very unruly, I have them write about the rights and wrongs of their actions. Then we discuss how a situation could have been handled differently.
- "I take advantage of current events in the news to discuss with the children what is moral and immoral, what is godly or worldly in God's sight.
- "The children must talk to each other in a pleasant manner; if they do not, they must repeat their harsh words until they sound pleasant.
- "The children know that all of their actions have consequences. They are taught to think before they get into something or do something that can't be undone.
- "The most severe punishment the children sometimes get is the punishment for dishonesty. I tell them that, even though they have done something that is wrong, it is much better to tell the truth, admit it, and take the punishment than it is to lie about it.
- "When we bake goods, we most always make enough to share with others outside of our family. I hope they will get the lesson of sharing from this.
- "I tell the children to try not to borrow anything, but if they do borrow something and damage it,

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