

Endangered Children!

Joe Slater

The late Steve Irwin (“Crocodile Hunter”) once held his one-month-old son in one arm while dangling a chicken in front of a 13-foot croc with the other arm. Angry audience members flooded the phone lines to protest Irwin’s stunt, and he was reprimanded by the Department of Family Services in Queensland, Australia. Officials later determined that Irwin had not endangered his son; no charges were filed.

Back in 2004 when I saw the footage of Irwin’s baby within a few feet of a big crocodile’s snapping jaws, I hit the panic button; my heart jumped into my throat! But how concerned are we when children are in danger of perishing in a different manner? Peter wrote of Satan, our adversary, as “*a roaring lion,*” walking about “*seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Peter 5:8).

Make no mistake – Satan is after anyone he can catch, including your children (yes, that includes grandchildren). Danger lurks from a hundred sources: immorality, drugs, vulgar entertainment, false religion – you can extend the list indefinitely. But do we ever put them in unnecessary danger? Are we providing the protection and training they need to serve God victoriously? Here are some practical points:

Teach them the word of God. Give them a solid foundation of Scripture. When Satan tempted Jesus, our Lord used the Scriptures to resist him, and Satan left. Are you teaching your children the Bible at home? Are you taking advantage of Bible classes at church?

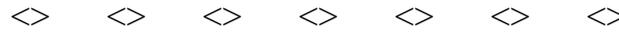
Instill good habits within them. It’s far easier to start good habits than to break bad ones. Begin early with clean language, courtesy, hard work, Bible study, prayer,

and consistent church attendance. This is another list you can extend indefinitely.

Say “no” when necessary, and stick to it. The inmates do not run the asylum! God gave children to parents for a reason. Learning to accept “no” for an answer instills humility and discipline. Let’s face it – we don’t always get our way in life.

Set the right example – let them serve with you. Children will be more likely to imitate what they see than to do what they are merely told. Take them with you to visit shut-ins. Help them invite their friends to Bible class. Bring them with you to work and service activities.

Sooner or later our children must face Satan and his temptations on their own. May God help each of us to equip them to do so triumphantly!



KNOWING CHRIST BETTER

“That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection” (Philippians 3:10)

Carefully read Philippians 3:7-21. We can know Christ better if:

1. We sacrifice something to be a Christian, vv. 7, 8
2. We suffer for His sake, v. 8b, 10
3. We depend upon him for righteousness rather than ourselves, v. 9
4. We admit our own limitations and set goals for the future that are centered on Christ, vv. 12-14.
5. We imitate the Christ-like qualities we see in others, vv. 16-19.
6. We live in anticipation of Christ’s coming and think on heavenly things, vv. 20-21.

--via RSVP Newsletter

I Didn’t Mean To Do It

“If anyone shall sin unwittingly, in any of the things which the Lord commands not to be done...” (Leviticus 4:2).

“I didn’t mean to do it.” How many times have we said it? From the time we were three years old and broke something (by accident), we say it. You would think by the time we become adults, we would know not to sin. But we don’t. Satan has a way of creeping up on us, tricking us, beguiling us. He can make us reason ourselves into thinking that what we’re doing isn’t wrong.

Like the Prodigal Son, when we come to our senses, we find ourselves wallowing in the mire. We see how far we have fallen. We hate ourselves. We just know God can’t love us anymore. We don’t want to look our friends and relatives in the eye.

God knows we are prone to stumble and sin. Sometimes, we truly don’t know that what we are doing is wrong. Other times, it seems Satan blinds us to what is going on in our hearts. That is why God provided a way for the Israelites to redeem themselves by offering a sacrifice. When we are in Christ, our Father gives us a way to come home. John tells us, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9).

Despite our best efforts to follow God, we will sin. But God has provided the perfect sacrifice for us: Jesus Christ, who is our high priest who offered himself once for all (Hebrews 7:27). Our Sacrifice is not One who *“cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but One who has been in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin”* (Hebrews 4:15).

We do sin. But if we repent, our God will surely forgive us because of Him Who had no sin.

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