

My Parents Were Complete Failures!



Jesus taught us to honor our parents. Perhaps it goes against His teachings to complain about our parents, but I don't think other children should have to go through what I went through. I want to expose my parents' mistakes so others can benefit.

When Jesus was 12 years old, He astounded the teachers at the temple. When I was 12 years old, I had a paper route. The \$8 per week from this paper route was to pay for my school lunches, clothing, and other needs. You must understand that my family was not wealthy. Don't you think my parents were very selfish having me do this hard job and learning the values that came with it? Sometimes the weather was brutal- wouldn't it have been better for me to sit in the warm and study?

With such emphasis on money, why didn't my parents go deep into debt and furnish a bigger house and shinier car? Sometimes our old car and older house embarrassed me. I remember telling my mother that if she were not so lazy she'd get a job. Obviously she preferred to lounge about and do whatever the mother of three does. I suppose she needed a little time to prepare to teach her Sunday school and junior church lessons, but someone else could take her place doing that.

MY DAD

Some fathers are not very attentive to their children and leave the family matters to the mother. Apparently my father didn't care about us too much. Do you remember, "Spare the rod and spoil the child?" One day I decided not to go to kindergarten, so I ran off. Dad was all over looking for me. I remember watching him as I lay silently behind a fence. When I was finally caught, Dad took me into the house to spank me. He whispered, "You pretend to cry." He hit the bed with his belt, and I pretended to cry. (I don't think Mom was fooled.) Now what kind of lesson was that for me?

When Fred, the youngest of us was born, Dad had to make supper. Can you imagine what we had to eat? He took a packet of dry Lipton's Noodle Soup, added water and a little can of chicken pieces, and boiled it to death. What kind of meal was that? I suppose we had to eat butter bread with it. To show you the effect this had on me, I vowed not to do this to my family, and in fact became adept at preparing real food- frozen pizza.

Dad used to run out on us. I remember many Sundays that Dad was not home in the afternoon. Instead he was out with his gospel quartet singing and witnessing in prisons and churches.

I guess to combine cheating on the food bill and to teach me some kind of life lesson, Dad took me hunting when I reached the age. It used to get so cold just sitting and waiting. I remember one time my feet got so cold I could hardly stand it. Dad had me remove my boots and put my feet inside his coat to warm them. (In fact on this trip I was only eleven, we were hunting squirrels, and I was not old enough to shoot yet.) During these hunting trips we'd talk and he would teach me things that he could just as well have taught me in the warm. So why did he make me go out in the cold? Regardless, he made me stick it out in the cold, 100%.

Dad taught me other life lessons. It seems, looking back, that he couldn't just come out and tell me something. The lessons were shrouded- like parables. Dad had a wooden statuette of a child. The child's dog was running along side, racing toward something or someone. The child was looking a bit upward, as if at an adult. I figured that one out right away. It was my sister and her dog Bee Bee welcoming Dad home. I complimented Dad on the statue, hoping he would confirm what I had supposed. Dad just said, "It means something to me." So now I don't know if it was about my sister Jane or Dad and his dog when he was a boy.

When I got my first girlfriend, Dad decided he better tell me about the facts of life. I had a pretty good idea from what I heard from other kids. Here is what my father told me, "There are three tests to decide if it's the right girl: 1. would you share her toothbrush; 2. would you want her to be the mother of your children, and; 3. some day she'll look like her mother." I don't know what kind of facts of life those were. I married that same girl 32 years ago. We have a son, daughter, and five grandchildren. Think how well I would have done if Dad told me everything.

MY MOM

In nature we find that a mother protects her offspring at all costs. Rather than nurture, my mother salted my wounds. She was squeamish about cuts, blood, and so on, so she wasn't good about cleaning our wounds. It was Mom's salty tears that cleaned my wounds rather than peroxide. Why would she do that? Didn't she care?

Mom had an aunt that suffered from polio when she was young. Aunt Dorothy was not capable of taking care of herself totally. As if our house was not small enough, as if our resources were not already meager, Mom took her in. I don't know how that helped us. Why would Mom be so unconcerned about us?

I already told you that it was all about money concerning my paper route and me. Listen to this- Mom bought a set of clippers and cut our hair. How embarrassing. I don't know what she did with the money she saved, but I never saw any of it.

My paper route already cut into my free time. I guess the old school taught Mom that kids shouldn't have fun, and of course there is the proverb that idle time is the Devil's workshop. With that in mind, during prime time, Mom led evening devotions. Then she'd ask questions. Then we'd pray- and it would drag on. Then we'd recite our memory verses. No- kids weren't meant to have fun.

Mom has told Jane, Fred, and I many times that she was a failure. I don't know why. None of us have ever been in prison. None of us are on drugs or are alcoholics. Most importantly, all three of us know Jesus as our Savior and will spend eternity with our "misfit" parents and our LORD.

It was Mom who bowed her head with me when I asked Jesus to be my Savior. Mom has been my most effective and most accurate critic in editing my writings. I have learned by observing my mother that a good Mother has only one critic- herself!

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Will you spend eternity with your mother and father? With our Holy Father? When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they committed First Sin. God had told them that for this sin they would surely die. The only forgiveness for this sin is the shedding of blood. Our Father in Heaven sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins. If we confess that we are sinners, repent of our sins, and accept Jesus as our Savior, we will have eternal life.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:1-3.

To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: “Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear LORD Jesus, please come into my heart.”

Excerpted from Lerch, Harold, Sr., *Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right, but Three Lefts Do*, Fairfax VA 22030, Xulon Press 2003

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