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Balance

by Jeanne Sullivan

This article is addressed to the young mother, who is desirous of keeping the Lord as her priority, yet is having difficulty with the many commitments family life brings.

We are told in Deuteronomy 6:4-7 "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie

down and when you rise up.” This commandment and principle of living involves a mindset of 1) making God a priority in your life, and sharing that priority with your children 2) using the time wisely to share spiritual concepts with your child. God wanted His teachings to be always before us - even telling the Israelites to wear scripture and to post it on the doorposts. He warned the Israelites to watch themselves, lest they forget the Lord, who had brought them out of slavery and given them this wonderful land of promise, Deuteronomy 6:8-13. Sadly, it was only one generation later, after the death of Joshua and the elders, that these same Israelites became unfaithful by forgetting to teach their children these principles. These children grew up, forgot God, and sinned greatly with evil and idolatry.

These principles, reiterated in Ephesians 6:4 ...”bring them up in the discipline and training of the Lord” are keys to balancing family demands and raising godly children.



There are many worthwhile activities that you may want your child involved in or that he or she keenly desires to do. Most of his playmates are in sports, music, scouts... and the list goes on. One feels pressured to participate in these things, and soon the evenings and weekends are completely taken up. Most of us have been in that situation, at least occasionally. Where did quality family time go to? When is there time or opportunity to share scripture and spiritual concepts with our children? Perhaps in the car- yet how many times have you seen a busy mother talking on her cell phone, while the child sat glumly staring out the window, enroute to his next activity? I’ve seen it; perhaps done it myself. Precious time is lost fulfilling expectations that the world sets before us. Look back to your childhood.



The times that I best remember were one-on-one time with my dad playing ball, or enjoying a family picnic. I hope my sons remember the walk in the woods when we saw a massive tree on its side. The roots were small for the size of the tree, so it was easy to point out to them the importance of putting down deep roots in God’s word to fortify us for the storms of life. We would spend hours reading together in the evening, even as they became older. Books were chosen that a spiritual application could be made from. One of our favorites was Pilgrims Progress.

What is truly important is to keep God, the Main Focus in our lives and for our children. There are many “good” things to participate in our lives. Yet, as Jesus told Martha in Luke 10:38-42, Mary has chosen the better thing - the spiritual focus. There are so

many things in life to allow ourselves to become distracted by. Anything becomes sinful and a source of idolatry when it is put before serving God and growing in His truth. If our children do not see us practicing a lifestyle of glorifying God, they will not practice that lifestyle either as adults. The soccer trophy or the award for selling the most Girl Scout cookies turns into many forms of adult “trophies.” We all seek purpose and meaning in our lives. Far greater the eternal reward of teaching our children to reverence and obey God, rather than the vain pursuit of worldly achievements and possessions. How sad and tragic it would be for our beloved child to grow up and lose his soul. We do not introduce overt sin into his life -Lord forbid -No! Yet, by crowding God out of our life, the same effect occurs! The Israelites lost their children to Satan. Why? They didn’t follow God’s wisdom laid out in Deuteronomy 6. Beloved sisters, let us learn from their example.

Jeanne Sullivan
North Boulevard Church of Christ
Tampa, Florida

