



## ***Raising Daughters of the King***

*Princesses that bring Honor to their Royal Father*

I hope you are finding fun moments with your families. As we begin to enter into summer, I am remembering fun vacation days with my little girls. I am so thankful for each memory we have. So many of our memories are because their daddy was a man who loved to treat his family with fun. Saturday morning tickle times, or bedtime tickle times with lots of giggles, and vacations with fun! Those shared moments with a family can be such a blessing.

Right now, one of my daughters is on a mission trip to Honduras. She left by herself and will speak or serve with three different groups during her 2 week trip. Several of those travel days are leaving one group to join a different group so will be done alone – or, I should say, just her and her Creator. I can't help but think that even our vacation travels, whether near or a little farther have helped prepare her for this larger trip. In fact, she has traveled with us on mission trips that involved much of our family. All of our children have been strengthened for whatever activity or challenge they face by the strong family bonds we have intentionally created. Even fun times have an eternal impact on our children. This may be common sense to you, but I wasn't raised in a family that laughed much or played much, so I had to learn the value of fun.

I also had to learn the value of music; I don't remember much singing as a child. I'm not sure why that was not part of my childhood since my mother loved to sing and had a beautiful solo voice. My dad had been in WWII in the infantry as a young nineteen year old. He was great as a leader and had common sense that saved lives. With two purple hearts and a love for his country, he was a fine man and very seriously committed to fulfilling any job he had with the utmost of integrity and competency. I think now, health professionals would diagnose my dad as having a form of PTSD or some kind of Trauma from surviving the Battle of the Bulge and liberation of Jewish death camps. But I was raised before those realizations were prevalent. Dad raised us with a seriousness like he did everything. It might surprise you to know that I am an excellent marksman and was an NRA rifle instructor by the time I was 18 and had received numerous marksmanship awards for individual and team competition. But, I don't remember much laughter. There were not many kind words or words of affection. And, with all due respect, I don't remember much relationship.

So what about you? Do you have a Trauma that is keeping you from expressing kindness or affection? Are you content to remain like that? My biggest suggestion to you is to seek wise counsel and get that dealt with so that you can raise your children the way you desire.

## Coach's Corner

I am blessed beyond words that I have a loving relationship with all four of my daughters. Honestly, I know that is a gift that only an amazing God has given me. If I had followed the patterns of how I was raised, the relationships would have been different, and I would have many regrets. But, instead of allowing me to accept regrets, God led me to South America as a missionary and, there, He worked on my life – probably more than on those around me that I went to help. During that time, I learned the value of forgiveness and disposed of many built up grudges that I had nurtured. I also got to observe parenting as done by missionaries. I'm so thankful for the opportunity of many observations. But best of all, I was given the gift to seek God – and in His faithfulness, He answered. And that, my dear friends, is why I feel I should share and not keep His tips on parenting to myself. So read them and apply the ones that you feel led to apply, but remember, there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus. You and I are different and our children are not the same, so we parent differently as well.

Over the years, I have heard many messages or commentaries on the scripture: Proverbs 22:6 “Raise up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” I've heard the break down on this verse in so many ways. But one that really struck me and seemed so great, yet difficult at the same time, was that it means we are to raise each child in his own special way that the individual child is supposed to be raised. Then, I'd look at my brand new tiny baby and think, “How can I have even the foggiest idea on how to raise this tiny little precious child?” “What specific individual ways did God have planned and designed for this precious infant that He created?”

Have you ever wondered that as you are trying to find ways to raise your child? Do you look at that wrinkly, tiny baby who is squawking at you because she is hungry or looking angelic all curled up with her tiny little curled bottom up in the air? I guess some parents know automatically that their athletic or musical genes have been passed down, so it is their second nature to raise them in those same patterns that they were raised. Thus we see Olympic athletes training and succeeding when they are very young. Size is passed down and physical strength and even determination. But what about my case? I don't think marksmanship genes are inherited, and I did not see “sniper” in their futures. Haha

One thing I was convinced of, was that God gave me each of my four daughters and that they belonged to Him and that I was to train them in the way He wanted. And...that He would hold me accountable if I mishandled them. I felt very strongly that as the Pharaoh's daughter told Moses' real mother to take the child and raise him, and she would give her a just reward, so had

God said the same to me. One thing I love about God is that He gives us a job, and then He provides us with everything we need to do that job successfully. And then, He is so generous that He rewards us for doing it.

Another thing I was convinced of and found comfort in, was that children learn slowly. That gave me time to correct my mistakes in parenting as I went. God is a God of forgiveness and redemption and much help with no condemnation. I should probably plaster this paragraph all over my website because I needed so much forgiveness and do-overs. Please be encouraged that if you are seeking Him in your parenting and other areas of your life, He is pleased. It is the seeking that causes Him delight and causes Him to answer. It is not in 'knowing' the right things to do, it's more in 'not knowing' and realizing that, which causes our Father to answer.

I love God's surprises and creativity. He sometimes does not take the obvious path nor want us to either. One of our daughters had eye troubles even as a baby. We did hours of vision therapy and surgery and more therapy. Eventually, she had to deal with dyslexia so who would think that she was the perfect candidate to be an artist – yet she is. And with the dyslexia that affected her speed in school and could have touched her self-esteem, who would guess that she would be called into a field that required a Master's degree and that she would touch many lives that needed to find self-esteem.

Also, it's in our repentance that we find forgiveness. We want to raise polite, well-behaved, successful children. But as adults, we've learned that we will never be free from sin – we will only reach perfection in Heaven. So maybe one of our goals in parenting should be to train our children to accept that they are not perfect and train them to know how to repent. What a gift that is! How many people, when approached with the opportunity to ask Jesus to be their Savior, have said things like: I'm not a bad person; or What have I done that makes you think I'm not a Christian? Wouldn't it be easier to know we are not perfect and thus have need of a Savior? Yes! But also, that is the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. He doesn't need our help, but I definitely want to raise His kids consistent with His Truth so that they don't have to struggle more than necessary to receive Him and His love.

Thankfully, when babies are tiny, our main job is to feed, change diapers, hold, and show our babies that their needs will be met with love. That gave me plenty of time to pray and also to notice natural traits and tendencies in each child. For example: one was entertained by toys and objects, another was very hard to distract and was cuddly and drawn to people, another sang everywhere she went, and one did all of the above. That helped me a little with determining what direction each child might go, but also, I just dove in and started with piano and swimming lessons for each of them. School was necessary so I didn't have to decide anything there except

for curriculum since I homeschooled for a while. Sports were a good hobby and great for physical development and stress-release. Over time, each one began to show what they were best geared towards and what they seemed to enjoy most. By the time they were in high school and college, they were then praying about their own choices with our advice and prayer support.

Now, they are each strong, independent women who know they have their parents in their corner and a God who is big enough for each and every challenge. All of this because of God's goodness and mercy. He caused me to seek Him for my many imperfections and needs so that He could answer and be pleased. In these newsletters and the book that is in progress, I hope you find encouragement and His tips on how to raise your children for the King.

## Game Plan

- ❖ Pray about the ways God wants you to raise His child.
- ❖ Start raising your child and observe as you go. God said of Abraham's faith journey: While he walked, God led him; not while he sat and waited. Trust God each step of the way.
- ❖ Make fun memories with your child. Find ways to create fun family memories that include lots of laughter. It doesn't have to be expensive. Of course, you know better than I do, resources like Pinterest and fun travel sites are out there like, SND Travels on Facebook, that can help you find inexpensive, great locations.
- ❖ Use many kind and affectionate words to build up your kids. (I've heard that sarcastic jokes can't really be understood until kids reach a certain age. I just never chose to use them at all. I love humor but just not the kind that can be misunderstood and hurt hearts. I will caution you to use wisdom in all things – especially words.)
- ❖ Know yourself – flaws and gifts. Get help for personal past traumas so you can avoid passing those on to your children. I realized that I was a reactor, and that my reactions could close down communication rather than build it. We developed a simple way for the girls to warn me that they were about to tell me something that might cause me to react. They'd say: "Mom, don't get mad but...[wait a few seconds, then proceed.]" Not exactly rocket science, but this helped our relationship to grow and to be able to share all things. Today, my adult daughters have told me to share that with you. They felt it was that much of a key to our past relationships and current friendship.
- ❖ Give your child opportunities to pray and allow them gradually to take responsibility for some of their choices. I'm sad to say that there are many church kids that over the years have asked my advice. My first question is usually: Have you prayed? Often they seem shocked and bewildered as to how to do that. It breaks my heart. Choose to make it key in your parenting. After all, eventually, they will one day stand before the Father and explain their choices. Train them how to seek God in their decision making.
- ❖ Help them know that you love them unconditionally, not just when they are 'good', and that you are proud of them. This will help them realize that they are imperfect and maybe that to repent from their sins is as natural as daily grooming.
- ❖ Seek out wisdom in parenting. You'll be so glad you did.