

PARENTING LESSON 3: PARENTS ARE WARRIORS

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth." Psalm 127:4 (ESV)

Unlike today's arrows, the shaft used by warriors in biblical times were made from any of these materials: softwood, bamboo, or reed. But it was almost impossible to find a perfectly straight shaft in nature, and each one has its own unique characteristics. So the warrior must spend time removing the imperfections and shaping each shaft, so that he may use it to hit his target when in battle.

In the same way, no two children are the same. Each one has his/her own unique qualities. As I said earlier, every child was born with the capacity to do good, but also with the tendency to do bad things. I believe it is the parent, the warrior, who decides what kind of arrow they will become. And his greatest tool is Time!

In the past, I thought that if I send my children to school, ask them to read their Bibles, and give them tools, they will automatically become the people I want them to be. This was one of my biggest mistakes. I learned that children look for examples to follow and they will follow the people they trust, and the people they trust are the ones who spend the most time with them. Children, like our wives, measure love by the amount of time you spend with them.

Our children do not become who they are by accident. They are the sum total of their training, education, experience, discipline, and choices. As parents, we have the power to influence all these by spending time with them. I have seen a very painful truth in parenting and it is this: the time you did not give while your children were young, they will take back from you when they are old—with interest. When children grow up to be bad, the parents have no choice but to spend more time trying to win them back and correcting their mistakes.

Because of this, I have decided to set my family as my priority after God. Work and ministry come after I have spent enough time with God, who is my Father, then my wife, who is my help-mate, and my children, who are my disciples. If you have not spent enough time with your children, do it now. It is never too late. Do not wait for the time when they collect—with interest.