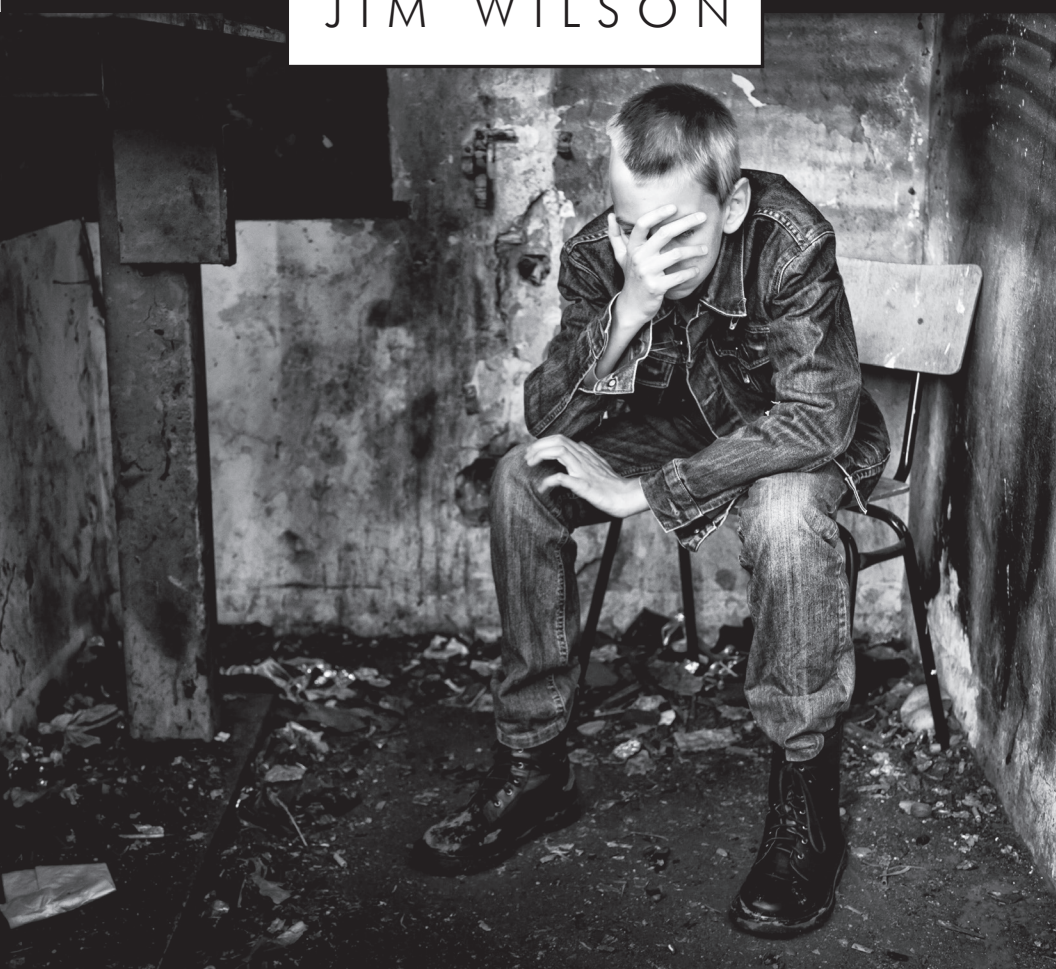


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CHILDREN
BACK TO THE LORD

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HOW TO LEAD YOUR WAYWARD CHILDREN BACK TO THE LORD

The subject of this booklet is how to bring your wayward children back to the Lord. I do not mean little children; I mean children who are already grown and away from home, from teenagers to old people. They may be into drugs, alcohol, sex, or homosexuality.

You may feel responsible for your children's rebellion. That might be true, but feeling like a failure the rest of your life will not fix the situation.

First, my qualifications. I am now 89 years old. I was married for 58½ years before Bessie went to be with the Lord six years ago. We have four children (three sons and a daughter), fifteen grandchildren, and 26 great-grandchildren. It looks to me like everyone is walking in the light.

The basis for my teaching is first from the Bible, then observing other families who seemed to do it right, then my own experience as a parent, and sixty years of giving both preventative and corrective teaching to families.

In homes where there is child abuse, divorced parents, alcohol or drugs in the family, the reasons for children rebelling are obvious. There is a common thread to all of these examples: the child is not loved or thinks he is not loved. He may not have a measuring stick to find out how short he is on love, but he knows he has been short-changed. He needs more love. His rebellion may start in junior high, or he may wait until he leaves home or is in college.

However, similar rebellion also happens when there are no drugs, abuse, or divorce in the home. It happens in evangelical families, when three out of four kids seem to be walking in the light.

There are many effective ministries to wild kids from dysfunctional non-Christian families: Youth for Christ, Young Life, and others (to their parents). There do not seem to be as many ministries to the wayward children of Christian parents. This essay is addressed to these families, to the parents and brothers and sisters of wayward children. In addition to this writing, I am personally available to parents and children for as long as I am alive. My contact information is at the end of the article.

Here are two portions of Scripture that have to do with the goodness and badness of children:

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Ex. 20:5-6 KJV)

Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with

them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations. (Deut. 7:9)

In non-Christian families, it is easy to find examples of three or four generations where the iniquity of the fathers has been visited upon them. For Christian families who love and obey God, there is a promise of showing lovingkindness to a thousand generations. However, we do not see the results of the promise to the same degree. We see children or grandchildren going out into the world away from Christian families. This would not have happened if their parents had loved God and obeyed His commands.

Some parents will say they do not understand their child's rebellion, because "We did everything right," or, "We think we did everything right. It is the fault of our son or daughter." That is a possibility, but it is not likely, because the promise of a thousand generations is given on the condition of *parents* loving and obeying God.

See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction. (Mal. 4:5-6)

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1:17)

The Angel Gabriel identified the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy to be John the Baptist when he told Zacharias that Zacharias' wife would be pregnant and have a son. "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children*, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). If the hearts of the children are not turned to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers are not turned to the children, the land might be smitten with a curse. John the Baptist was given the assignment to turn their hearts.

If we turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, we find that the results today are the same as they were in the New Testament times.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells three stories. The first story was a lost sheep, a dumb animal. "Then Jesus told them this parable: 'Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent'" (Luke 15:3-7).

The second story was a lost coin, an inanimate object. "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in

the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:8-10).

The third story was a prodigal son, a willful, rebellious child.

Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.’

“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.” (Luke 15:11-24)

When the son is found, his father throws a party. The point of all three stories is the *party*. There is a party in heaven when a sinner responds.

The moral of the third story is *not* for the father to wait for the son to come to the end of himself and return. This might happen if you are a godly father. If you are *not* a godly father and your son comes to the end of himself, he will not think of coming back to you, because you are the reason he left. He will think that there is nothing to come back to except more unlove.

In order to get yourself ready for this major ministry of reconciling your children to yourself and to God, you will need to admit and then confess your sin to God. Confessing your sins if you are a Christian or receiving Christ if you are not a Christian are the prerequisites to reaching your wayward children.

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. (Col. 3:21)

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4)

If you have ever provoked your children to anger, it was a sin that needs to be confessed. If you have ever exasperated your children to the point that they have gotten discouraged, that

sin must also be confessed. If you have not brought your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, instead of feeling guilty for not fulfilling your responsibilities as a father, confess these actions to God and be forgiven. If you have raised your voice to your wife and the children heard you, you made your children insecure. If your children have heard you and your spouse arguing, that should be confessed to God. These sins must be confessed.

After you are back in the joy and love of the Lord, ask God how you can express love to the children who are away from the Lord. Do not express it with the Gospel. That has to happen, but not right now, unless he asks for it. He needs to know that he is loved first.

It is also possible that you were not or are not a Christian. If that is so, then come to the Father by Jesus Christ. When you have come to the Father, you will experience these things:

- Twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years of sins are instantly forgiven.
- You will have the fruit of the Spirit in your life and have the power to live an obedient life.
- You have a certainty of heaven when you die.

What next? First, read *Saturation Love* (included as a separate essay at the end of this booklet) and put it into practice. If there is a possibility that you as parents, one or both, have not given saturation love to each of your children as they were growing up or even after they are adults, then consider it and recognize it if it is so.

There are reasons for not giving this saturation love: I was working two jobs; I was too tired; the kids demanded more

attention and love than I had time for. Whatever the reason, your child recognized it. Whether it was true or not, in his perception he was not loved enough. He thought it then, and he thinks it now. He needs love now, and you are the parents and the Christians to give it to him.

Second, read my essay on *How to Maintain Joy*.*

Third, do not argue or fight with your spouse. If you do, confess your part of it to the Lord. Never argue in front of your children. If they hear it, it makes them insecure and worried.

Fourth, recognize that your children were all created different from each other. Do not treat them the same. That does not mean you get to have favorites. It means recognizing that they have different needs.

From infancy, both boys and girls need much love and respect from both sexes of parents. If they get it, they turn out to be normal. If they do not get it, they make adjustments which show up in junior high. They are not good adjustments, but children are survivors; they do what they think is necessary to survive.

As they get older, the girls will need more love than respect, and the boys will need respect more than they need love. How can you tell? The girls begin to flirt, and the boys begin to brag. That is a dumb way of getting love and a dumb way of getting respect. Yes, but it shows that they are not getting enough.

Many years ago, I stayed for supper in a Christian home. The host and hostess had been a great help to me when I was a student nine years earlier. They had since adopted two children, a boy and a girl. While waiting for supper, I asked the little girl to sit on my lap. She came. There was a difficulty: I could not get her off of my lap. That told me that she did not get enough male

* Available free at ccmbooks.org/free-literature.

affection in the home. I knew she would be pregnant when she was sixteen. I was wrong—she was seventeen when she became pregnant. Then she moved into the home of a lesbian. The lesbian told her that she would love her better if she were pregnant, so she got pregnant again and had her second illegitimate child.

Forty years later, I found her in Baltimore and called her on the phone. I asked if she remembered me. She said, “Yes,” and then said, “I always wished that you were my father.” In the years in between, I had talked to her father. I told him that I had seen this coming when she was a little girl, and that I should have told him then. He responded that I had told him at the time, and that he had not listened to what I said.

She died unbelieving. There was a solution to her problem. I cannot guarantee that she would have repented if the solution had been applied by her parents, but I could guarantee that if the solution was not applied, she would not repent.

The following solution is only for parents who know the Father and the Son. It is true for other parents, but they will not be able to put it into effect.

Of your children, the ones who have gone out into the world have one thing in common. From their perception, they were not loved by one or both of their parents. The parents may not see it that way. *What counts is how the child perceives it.*

Of course, there are other contributors. One of them is peer pressure. For several years, I taught an elective class on practical Christianity at a Christian school. It normally had about 20 students. We covered everything from parents to “boys and girls” and other interesting subjects. There were no tests and no grades. In each of the ten semesters I taught the class, I asked the students a series of questions.

1. Do you know who the godliest student in the school is? I got an overwhelming nodding of heads. I did not ask his/her name.
2. Do you know who the next to the godliest student is? They knew!
3. Do you know who the above average students are? Again, I got nodding of heads.
4. Do you know who the normal students are? Yes, they knew.
5. How about the below average? Again the same.
6. How about the “cool kids,” the ones who manage to stay in school without getting expelled? Of course they knew.

Then I asked them this question: Who does everyone imitate? The answer was overwhelming: “The cool kids.” The answers never changed in my years of teaching. They knew who the good kids were but imitated the bad kids. Imitation is always down, not up.

During the winter of '71-'72, my family ran a hangout for high school kids. It was in our garage in the backyard adjacent to the high school. We had about eighty different kids a day, most of whom had been in trouble since third grade. The place had two names. One was God's Garage, and the other was Doper's Ditch. I had many conversations with these kids.

We had rules for the garage; violations got them exiled for one day. If they were exiled, they stood on the high school grounds and threw rocks at the garage. The rocks broke the windows several times. I finally boarded them up. They would often throw rocks at me.

One day I was talking with one of the boys at one of the tables inside the garage. I asked him, “Which is the real Henry, the one I am talking with now or the one who throws rocks at me?”

He replied, “You know, Roost (my nickname was Rooster), this is the real Henry. I know that you will understand if I throw rocks at you. The other guys will not understand if I don’t throw them.”

The garage was set on fire twice, and several twenty-two caliber rifle shells were dropped in the oil stove. I found them exploded when I cleaned the stove.

These two accounts plus sixty years of ministering to 17- to 22-year-olds in the Navy, at the Naval Academy and at many college and universities and all parts of society made me qualified to minister to these kids. I have had drunks and druggies living in my home. I know how to prevent the waywardness of kids from Christian homes, and I know how to get them back.

As I mentioned before, of the many things that cause children of Christian homes to go into the world system, there is one that is common to every case. The child does not think that he was loved and respected at home. A common secondary cause is that the parents were diligent Christians at church but fought at home. The child sees the hypocrisy at home and thinks, “If this is Christianity, I do not want any part of it.” He goes somewhere that does not practice any kind of Christianity and where he thinks he will be loved and respected. It does not turn out that way. He gets deeper into sin.

The cure starts with the parents getting forgiveness from God and then becoming godly parents. They should admit to God that they did not love their children as much as they needed it, nor did they respect them.

After you are forgiven, let your children know of your repentance. The children may not be ready to give forgiveness. Wherever the children are, and regardless how old they are, they still need their parents. They may be drunk, strung out, in jail, living with a girlfriend, or in a homosexual life. They still miss their parents and need them more than ever.

How do I know that these “kids” want their parents? I have seen them almost every week for many years. There is a weekly event here in town called Dinner with Jesus. It is attended by 40 or 50 men who are homeless, druggies, drunks, and/or jobless. They get fed a good meal, listen to a Bible teacher, and talk with Christian men at their table. They come for the free food, yes. But more importantly, they come because they are loved and respected. From their viewpoint, they have not been respected or loved in their lives.

At one of these meetings, I was sitting next to a man in his fifties. He told me that his mother lived in another town 30 miles away. He had not spoken to her for over two years. I told him to write her a letter. I gave him an outline of what to say. We repeated this conversation for several weeks. He finally wrote and sent the letter. The next day she was on the phone with him. A few months later she died.

I met with another man who lived a wild immoral life for most of forty years, several of which were spent in prison. A few months ago, he received Christ. He was needing to see his mother and his siblings. He saw them recently.

Another mother and father I have known since the '70s are struggling with wayward children. Two of their children are atheists, and their daughter is married to another woman. She needs her parents very much. She wants their approval but

needs them even without their approval. They are reaching out to her.

To express love and respect to and for them does not mean you approve of their conduct. They already know what you think. You have written them off, and to them that is further evidence that you do not love them. It is a common view that approval means love and disapproval means no love. That thinking is not Christian. You must love even if you do not approve, and the children must be aware of this love.

We are to love as Christ loved. He did not love us because we were lovely. He loved us when we were ungodly. Love has to do with the lover, not the one loved. Respect has to do with the respecter, not the one to be respected. A person does not have to be respectable in order to be respected. Your wayward son needs the love and respect very much. He needs and wants his parents. You must go after him and reach out to him.

You may not know how to extend love to your children. You can let them know that you have repented of your lack of expression of love and respect. When you go to see them, they may not be responsive. They may hold you at arm's length. It is not that they do not need the love; it is because they do not trust it. They want to be sure your love is real. Do not be put off by the lack of response. Prove to them it is real. You will love them back to yourself, and afterwards you will love them into the kingdom.

The prodigal son knew that he had a loving father to come back to. Your son may not think he has a loving father to come back to. He wants to have a loving father; he does not think he has one.

The cause of your child's separation from you was not being loved. The cure is to love and keep on loving him. Do not stop

loving him regardless how much he resists it. When he resists the love, it does not mean that he does not need it or want it. It means that he wants to know if this expression of love is real. Do not give up.

What are some expressions of love? First, go find him and pursue him. Take him to dinner. Bring him home for dinner. Write a handwritten letter, telephone, text and email him. The handwritten letter is the most important. It tells him that you love him because you took the time to write. If he is married, welcome her into your family. If he is being disciplined by the church, do not participate in the discipline. For example, if a husband is being disciplined by the church with the injunction that a member should not eat with him, that does not require his wife to not eat with him. That would require his wife to separate from her husband.

If you need help because you do not know how to go about it, call me or write to me. I can help.

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SATURATION LOVE

God gives commands to love. These commands are to be applied to wives, brothers, neighbors, aliens, and enemies. This love is the love that God had for us when Jesus Christ died for us. It is sacrificial; its primary expression is giving. It is designed to be effective. It worked for our salvation.

Love requires an object, and love requires expression. “For God so loved the world that he gave . . .” (John 3:16). The world was love’s object, and giving was love’s expression. This love was not half-hearted or reluctant or “almost enough.” It was complete and more than adequate for all of the sins and sinners in this world. “But where sin increased, grace increased all the more . . .” (Rom. 5:20).

In obeying the commands to love, we are to love as God loved. That is unconditional and without reserve or reluctance. We should have and give more love to the person who needs love so that his need is satisfied. You may think that that is impossible. This person is so starved for love that loving him is like pouring water down a rat hole. You are convinced that you will

run out of love before this love-starved person is satiated with it. That might be true if you are counting on his returning love to meet your needs. But if you get refilled by the Holy Spirit, you are never going to run out.

Now let us apply this principle to raising children. There are many different problems in raising children that require understanding and applying biblical principles. Here are a few of the problems:

- Lack of obedience
- Lack of effective discipline for disobedience
- Lack of effective training and teaching
- Sibling rivalry and jealousy
- Attention-getting devices such as whining, crying, and tantrums
- Signs of insecurity such as speaking loudly, warts, overweight, scratching, hitting, biting, picking at the body, and hand mannerisms

Each of these subjects requires a book; in fact, books have been written on each of them. You have probably read some of them and implemented what you learned, and, with some of you, what you applied did not work. It is easy to draw the conclusion that the book was wrong. The book may have been right, and your application may have been right. What went wrong?

Here is where the principle I mentioned earlier comes in. I will call it saturation love. Saturation love is different from adequate love, quality time, and quantity time. It includes the last two plus undivided attention. Saturation means that the maximum has been reached. A saturated solution means that the solvent cannot dissolve anymore solute. For example, if you continue to add and

stir sugar into a glass of water, the water will eventually become saturated with sugar, meaning no more sugar will dissolve in it. After the saturation point, any additional sugar will fall to the bottom of the glass—the water cannot dissolve anymore.

It is the same with love. It is possible to saturate someone with love so that any additional love is not received. It is not rejected; it is just not needed.

Over the years I have asked audiences for a show of hands if they thought their parents loved them. Over 95 percent of the hands went up. It was never 100 percent, but it was always a high percentage. Then I asked this question of those who had raised their hands—“Do you think that your parents expressed this love to you adequately?” Only half of the hands remained up. The third question was: “Of those of you who think your parents expressed their love for you adequately, could you have used an even greater expression of love?” All of the hands remained up.

1. No love
2. Some love
3. Adequate love
4. Even more love is wanted

No one ever thought he received enough love from his parents. If asked, their children will say the same thing about them.

What are the results of not getting enough love? Disobedience is directly proportional to the shortfall in love.* Discipline for the disobedience, even if administered correctly, is not effective if

* We know that the child is born with, and later practices, a sinful nature. This sinful nature is the primary reason for his disobedience. This changes at his conversion. Both before and after conversion his disobedience is affected by lack of love.

the child is not loved enough. He thinks, “The last time I got any attention around here was when I got spanked.” Disobedience becomes his means for getting attention. Therefore your training and teaching is ineffective if you are not giving your child enough love.

Sibling rivalry, competition, selfishness, and jealousy are inversely proportional to love toward your children. So when all of the kids are saturated with love, there is little or no rivalry, squabbles, or fights. The more love, the less whining, disobedience, and jealousy, and the less crying and tantrums. Also, the more love, the sooner the child will become a Christian.

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?” (Rom. 2:14). God’s means for leading us to repentance is to pour on the kindness and show us tolerance and patience even when we were sinners. How much more should we do this for our children.

What are our problems? We do not want to give hugs and attention to a whiner. We do not want to endorse bad behavior. That is true, but we are not endorsing bad behavior when we love our kids. We are curing it. Giving love is not giving in to the child’s dictations, but to his real need. His perception is more true than your perception. The “whiner” is asking for attention—loving attention. We will give a small baby attention when it cries. There may be nothing wrong: he is not hungry, wet, dirty, or sick—he just wants some loving. When the child is two or three or nine or ten and asks for attention, we do not want to give it. We do not think the child needs it. Believe me, if he asks for it, he needs it. When he is saturated, he will quit asking. (On the other hand, there are some children who need

the attention but will not demand it. They need and receive even less than the demander. Because they are not demanding, you may think they are satisfied when they are not.)

Our problem is we run out of “give” before the child runs out of demand. We think he will never quit demanding our attention, so we quit giving it before we should. If we kept on giving the attention, our child would get satisfied. He will get full and be very secure and ask for very little in the years to come. This security is of major importance in your child’s obedience to you.

Many years ago, there was a little boy who had warts on his left hand and arm. I think there were eighteen of them. He had had them for many months. One day his father asked him, “Johnny, would you like me to pray to God to take away your warts?” Johnny replied, “No, they are my friends; I play with them.” His father knew that these warts were evidence of the boy’s insecurity and that this insecurity was the result of the father not giving his son enough loving attention. The father made a decision and followed through with much loving attention. The warts disappeared in a very short time.

Many years ago I was close to a young family who had four preschool boys ages one, two, three, and four. One day the parents came to see me about their oldest son. He had two major problems that they did not seem able to correct:

- He was hitting each of his little brothers all day long. He was corrected on each occurrence—either shouted at or spanked or both.
- He had picked the skin off of his face in many places so that he had small red scabs all over his face. He looked like he had the measles.

Spankings did not seem to work. The parents' question was obvious: "What do we do?" Although I took longer to say it than it takes for you to read this, the answer was as follows:

"The next time he hits a little brother, pick him up and hug him."

Her answer: "I don't want to reinforce that kind of conduct."

"Don't worry, he already has gotten the message. Not only should you hug him the next time he hits his brother, I want you to hug him all day long. He hasn't gotten enough love since the second son was born, and now there are numbers three and four. The only time he gets attention is when he is bad. So he hits little brother to get attention. He picks his face because he is insecure. I will guarantee that if you pour loving attention on him with overkill, his face will clear up, and he will quit hitting his little brothers within two weeks."

She said, "I don't think I can do that."

"Why not?"

"I don't even like him anymore."

The parents confessed their sin and put this into effect. The predicted results came true.

A father with a very active 12-year-old son came to me for help. The son had had extensive discipline for misbehaving on small things and did not seem to have learned from it. He also had a difficult time getting along with his peers.

The parents were giving a fair amount of love, attention, and time to the boy, but he still would not receive correction or be repentant when spanked repeatedly. I told the father that he could not pour on too much love. In desperation to see improvement, the father poured on the physical affection and reduced the constant verbal correction of minor things. Then he took the boy to a men's retreat where he held him in his arms for the

two-hour van ride there and back, plus holding him during the speaking sessions. Upon their return home, the mother immediately recognized a change in the boy's attitude and his willingness to receive correction without pouting, as well as his desire to get along better with other children.

In years of asking questions and listening to answers, there is one answer that stands out. "I never heard my father admit that he was wrong about anything. Mom knew he was wrong; we kids knew he was wrong; God knew he was wrong, and he himself knew it, but he would not admit it." This same statement may be true of some of you fathers whose children are grown and gone. You may be reading this and realize that you did not practice saturation love when they were growing up. In the meantime, they have had all kinds of problems. Others of you have children who are teenagers, not away from home, but not little "lovable" kids.

What can you do about it now? You can first confess to God all of your wrong actions such as over discipline, put-downs, ridicule, ignoring, yelling, anger, favoritism, lack of expressed love, etc. After this, write to each of your children expressing to them what you have confessed to God. You can tell them you have confessed your actions and attitudes to God. You can also admit specific things that you remember. You can ask your children to bring things to your attention that they are still hurting about, just as you may still be hurting about how your father treated you. When they tell you, do not be defensive; just be sorry with a godly sorrow. "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death" (2 Cor. 7:10). Then express love to them in many ways.

If your children are still living with you, do the same, except it should be in person in addition to the letter. The letter is important because 1) you can get it all said without interruptions, 2) the letter will get read many times, and 3) the letter will be kept.

Remember, both sexes of children need much love from both sexes of parents. If you are divorced, saturation love is more difficult, but still necessary. If you are competing for the love and loyalty of your children by putting down your former spouse or by buying your children's love, this is counterproductive. Not only is it less than saturation love, it is not love at all.

One of the best means of expressing love to your children is by not fighting with your spouse. That is a major cause of insecurity. If you do disagree, the children should never hear it. Suppose you already have a history of fighting or disagreeing with your spouse in front of the children. Confess your history to God, then to your spouse and your children, and then forsake the fighting.

WHY DON'T MY KIDS LOVE GOD?

You love God. You love your kids. So why don't they love Him? God promises lovingkindness to a thousand generations for families who love and obey Him (Deut. 7:9). Why are children who grew up in Christian homes leaving the faith, and how do we get them to come back?

No matter how old your children are, there is a solution. With decades of pastoral wisdom, Jim Wilson identifies the common causes of rebellion and helps parents apply the eternal truths of Scripture to “turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17).

PHOTO: MARK LAMOREAUX



Jim Wilson has been a pastor and the director of Community Christian Ministries in Moscow, Idaho, for over forty years. Before that, he served as a naval officer for nine years and worked with Officers Christian Fellowship for another twelve. He is a father of four, grandfather of fifteen, and great-grandfather of twenty-six and counting.



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