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PRESENTS

## *Frankly Speaking Notes . . .*

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Ed Smithson, Editor

### **HOW WE HAVE FAILED NO. 1**

#### **We have failed to teach our children the fundamentals – continued.**

Fundamental teaching of the scriptures is important and necessary, and so many instances there has been a failure to press upon our children imperatives where scriptures are concerned.

We have also failed to teach them the fundamentals of conduct and decorum. One of the things Paul insisted that those who would be elders should be “one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;” (1Timothy 3:4) Since he did not go into detail he must have known that those who were so advanced in scriptural knowledge would have known what it meant.

There is more to being a Christian than having rote knowledge of the scriptures. Today there is a dearth of manners, civility and courtesy among young people, even some in the church today. The present age, and many of the generation before, have been brought up with little or no regard for the other fellow. “Me, my and mine are the watchwords. “Give me that which I desire,” is the standard today. It matters little about what you want.”

That is not the attitude of a Christian and parents should be careful not to bring up children with that attitude. I see this attitude in every faced of life these days. When you go to the grocery store people will plant themselves in such a way that they block the aisle and they don't care that they are hindering others. The King James version of the Bible in 1 Peter 3:8, tells us to “be courteous.” Later versions change it to “tenderhearted,” or “kind hearted.” I still like the word “courteous” but the other words do not change the meaning.

Courtesy means :

1. **a.** Polite behavior.  
**b.** A polite gesture or remark.
2. **a.** Consent or agreement in spite of fact; indulgence.  
**b.** Willingness or generosity in providing something needed.

Being courteous means being respectful of others and not doing anything that would hinder them, within reason. When I was growing up we were told, "Be good, and be polite." Did you know that at one time when a child was away from home visiting a friend, that the friend's parents were responsible for him. And he was told he should obey them as he would his own parents? When he was at school, he was under the guidance and authority of the teacher and children were to obey the teacher as their parents.

Being "polite" was being respectful and courteous to others. Children addressed their elders with respect. They did not call them by their first names unless it was preceded by "brother" or "uncle" or "mister." Customs vary in different parts of the country.

While the "children should be seen and not heard" idea might be somewhat harsh and restrictive to some, letting them have anything they want is letting the pendulum swing too far the other way. In far too many homes, life revolves around the children. They are seen as someone to please instead of "[an heritage of the Lord.](#)" (Psalm 127:3) They are given to us to nurture and cherish and bring up "[in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.](#)" (Ephesians 6:4) Most children that have a free hand really want boundaries set. All people need structure and children most of all. They have not the knowledge, experience and wisdom to make decisions that many parents force them to make.

I am going to try to address one other item under the heading of "courteous" without getting too far out of hand. Cell phones! Yes, I know, I own one. But I have never seen anything that is such a nuisance and makes people act so inconsiderate as using the cell phone. What on earth did we do before they came along? You cannot drive anywhere, shop for groceries or have a conversation without this silly little thing interrupting and the owners of them being discourteous. Brethren, p-l-e-a-s-e consider this. Do you REALLY have to take that call? I saw a woman the other day

come into a parking lot at a restaurant and she BACKED into the parking space all the while talking on the CELL PHONE. Nuff sed!!!

OK, so “children should be seen and not heard” has gone out the window. Some seem to believe that children have a right to interrupt adults anytime they choose. Personally, I think it is rude and unfriendly and discourteous.

Teaching our children courtesy and respect for others is an obligation on our part. I think we have failed somewhat on this subject. It is possible that we have failed to set the right example. Children mimic what they see and they mimic their parents more than they do any one else. If parents are kind, helpful and wise, their children more than likely will act the same way, as grow up and when they are grown.

More later...

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Smithson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Ed Smithson

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