

## PSALM 127:1-5

### GOD'S BEST FOR GODLY FAMILIES

“Unless the LORD builds the house,  
those who build it labor in vain.  
Unless the LORD watches over the city,  
the watchman stays awake in vain.  
It is in vain that you rise up early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.

“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
are the children of one's youth.  
Blessed is the man  
who fills his quiver with them!  
He shall not be put to shame  
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”<sup>1</sup>

**B**efore engaging our minds with the text, permit me to state the genesis behind this particular message. The third Sunday of January is the day set aside as Right to Life Sunday. It was January 22, 1973 when seven justices of the United States Supreme Court discovered a “right to privacy” situated within penumbra and emanations of the Constitution of that great nation. Specifically, Harry Blackman wrote of said “right to privacy” as emanations of Penumbra of the Constitution, of the Fourth Amendment, of the First Amendment and of the Ninth Amendment.

In concert with thousands of churches and with tens of thousands of worshippers of God who gives life, on the third Sunday of January each year, remembering the multiplied deaths that have occurred as result of this creation of a novel and disastrous right, I have endeavoured to bring a message addressing the biblical position of esteeming life. Though I do not expect through preaching of God's estimate of life, or through reminding you that God is the giver of life, that the world will come to repentance and turn from its continuing plunge into moral chaos, I do expect that I will equip you with knowledge of the will of the Holy One. I am intent on equipping you to make wise choices to the praise and glory of the True and Living God.

The concept for a “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday” has focused in particular on the need to seek protection for the unborn. In those nations which share in the British legal heritage, to say nothing of nations that have benefitted from the enlightenment, it was virtually unimaginable that it would ever become necessary to seek protection for the unborn prior to the advent of the feminist movement of the late twentieth century. Before that misanthropy movement had become entrenched in the lives of bitter, self-centred members of the distaff gender, the unborn were virtually universally assured protection by force of law as well as social custom.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version** © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved

When the movement of misery identified as the feminist movement arose, there was the unceasing assertion that a woman had the right to do with her body what she would. As with all lies which are ultimately incorporated into the social fabric, and the dames of desolation would employ the methods of Goebbels to insure that their lie became part of the social fabric of western culture, there is superficially an element of truth to the claim. So that none misunderstand, I assert that a woman does have control over her own body. She can say “No!” before consenting to intercourse. She can say “No!” when approached by a man asking her to engage in immorality. She can control her life, and control her body; but she has no “right” to kill her child when once life has been created in her womb. Only if the child she carries is hers may she make such a determination. Before assuming that the unborn belong to that woman carrying a child, we need to ask what God has to say on the subject.

Life, whether in the earliest stages of development, as in the womb, or whether nearing the final days of this present state, is to be valued and honoured. No Christian, knowledgeable of the Word and the will of God, can ever approve of devaluing life. Life in the womb is to be protected; yet, we have killed millions of unborn people under the guise of personal freedom. Life in the closing days of our being is to be honoured and protected; yet, we debate whether to encourage and advance the concept of euthanasia. Life, though held tenuously by those who are ill and debilitated, is to be preserved; though an increasing number of advocates argue for the right to take life when they decide to do so. Nevertheless, life is precious.

Thus it is that on this day we turn our thoughts to children—God’s gift to those in whom He delights. Children are a heritage from the LORD; the fruit of the womb a divine reward. Such sentiments seem strange in this present day. The idea that a family should include many children seems, not merely quaint, but positively reactionary. Many progressive thinkers applaud Chinese planners that penalise couples that have more than one child. Yet, the world is increasingly impoverished because there are no new families to provide governments with the moneys required to continue providing the benefits expected in this brave new world.

**INITIAL THOUGHTS** — It is immediately apparent that this Psalm is in two parts. The first part is composed of the initial two verses. They speak of the futility of a family’s labours and planning, of the efforts of a community or of the efforts of an individual when the will of God is not consulted. The second part of the Psalm seems almost to be a separate Psalm, focusing as it does on God’s richest blessings to those whom He loves. They are not separate poems; they have one theme—that only under God’s reign can any endeavour be fruitful and any community be strong.

Note that this Psalm is one of only two Psalms attributed to Solomon.<sup>2</sup> Though some modern scholars are uncomfortable in this ancient attribution, it is likely correct that Solomon did write this particular Psalm. The style is reminiscent of the manner in which the book of Ecclesiastes begins. “Vanity of vanities... vanity of vanities! All is vanity” [ECCLESIASTES 1:2]. Perhaps it is more meaningful to modern minds to update the translation to read, “Meaningless! Meaningless! Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” As the 127<sup>th</sup> Psalm opens, three times we read that labours from which God is excluded are “in vain.”

Moreover, the second verse would appear to include a cryptic reference to Solomon. Speaking of Solomon’s birth, the Word of God pointedly informs us that “the LORD loved him”; and this knowledge was conveyed to David by Nathan the prophet. Therefore, David called the child’s name Jedidiah, which means “Beloved of the LORD” [2 SAMUEL 12:25]. Take note of the final word of the second verse of our text:

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<sup>2</sup> The 72<sup>nd</sup> Psalm is the other Psalm that is attributed to Solomon.

“It is in vain that you rise up early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.”

Focus on the final strophe of the verse: “He gives to His beloved sleep.” The word translated “beloved” is a construct of the name by which Solomon was called.

Meaningless! Useless! In vain! When God is neglected in any endeavour, the results will prove ultimately to be useless. Is that true of all activities? Yes—if God is excluded, our efforts will be worthless. Our efforts to raise a family are useless, if God is treated as a junior partner. Worse still are the people who fail to consider the will of God when they plan their lives. Whether advancement in one’s chosen profession or in performing the work of the hands, or when considering training for our children, or directing the education of our children, all is futile when we pursue a course of action without considering the will of the Lord.

If one is to assign a theme to this Psalm, it would have to be the futility of any endeavour that fails to consider the will of God. Solomon gives four examples, each of which must be considered. First, he speaks of building a house. It seems to be a given that he is likely not speaking of a physical house, but rather he speaks of building the family—the house that memorialises your name. Then, expanding the horizon of those reading the Psalm, he writes of watching over a city. Again, he writes of the toil of the individual endeavouring to be productive for whatever reason. Toil, long hours of labour, anxiety—all alike lead only to exhaustion when God is forgotten. Finally, Solomon writes of the children which God gives.

Before I consider the details of the verses, let me make some broad general observations. These observations must be stated in part because they are almost universally ignored in this day.<sup>3</sup> The first truth to note is that **God works**. Jesus said, “My Father is working until now, and I am working” [JOHN 5:17]. God worked on each of the six days of creation. He brought light out of darkness, separated dry land from water, caused the land to produce an unimaginable array of trees, shrubs and plants, created animals, birds and fish, and eventually created man, giving him responsibility to perform meaningful work. Adam was charged to tend the Garden of Eden, name the animals, and together with Eve he was responsible to “have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” [GENESIS 1:28].

In the opening verses of this Psalm we are reminded that if we are willing, “the LORD builds the house” and “the LORD watches over the city.” Therefore, it should be apparent that God’s work did not cease with the seventh day when He rested “from all the work that He had done” [GENESIS 2:2]. Let me say for the benefit of each Christian: we read the Word of God in order to discover how He works in us and in the world, so that we will be equipped to work in the Name of Jesus the Son of God.

A second truth of note is that **God makes our work meaningful**. The story is told of men working on a great cathedral in England. One worker was asked, “What are you doing?” He replied, “I’m laying bricks.” A second worker was asked, “What are you doing?” He replied, “I’m building a wall.” When he asked the third workman what he was doing, he was told, “I’m building a cathedral.” It was all a matter of perspective.

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<sup>3</sup> Suggested by James Montgomery Boice, **Psalm 107-150: An Expositional Commentary** (Baker, Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 1118-19

Whether masons, or roofers, or carpenters, or architects—if we labour without thought of God and endeavour to work apart from Him, the buildings erected will be meaningless. God gives purpose to our work; He gives us labour for our hands and ensures purpose to what we do. Likewise, those who watch over the city, or over the nation, or over the congregation, must consider the will of God. Otherwise, their watching has little meaning. Protective oversight that fails to seek the mind of God is destined for dust. If, however, the watchmen stand their watch with God in mind and for His glory, then God Himself will protect the city, the nation or the congregation. Whatever we may do, the principle holds: without the Lord, frustration; with the Lord, satisfaction. Look to God and we will enjoy His blessing.

The third truth to note is that *God rewards our work for Him*. The first stanza reminds us that work without knowledge of God's will is useless. The second stanza speaks of blessings for those who work for and with God. In particular, God "gives to His beloved sleep." The promise suggests quite strongly that the one who works for God and at God's direction rightly lies down and sleeps. Moreover, he sleeps well because he is able to leave the results of the work performed in God's hand. It is a practical application of yet another Psalm.

"He will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, he who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep."

[PSALM 121:3, 4]

God was building the house. Though the labourer toiled to lay out the foundation, to erect the walls and to roof the building, God built the house. Likewise, though the father and mother experience sleepless nights and exhausting days to instruct the children in righteousness, yet God is building the family. God was watching over the city, over the nation, over the congregation. Though the elders laboured diligently, though the civic leaders sought to promote righteousness and to act honourably, it was nevertheless God who kept the people in safety.

Paul instructed the Colossians, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ" [COLOSSIANS 3:23, 24].

**GOD'S HERITAGE** — Whenever we read the third verse of this Psalm, I rather imagine we are prone to read it as teaching that God gives children to us. Thus, because God is said to give children, we think that the passage is teaching that children are His heritage to us, although we often deny this concept in speech and attitude. Nevertheless, this is the common way of considering the matter; and undoubtedly our children are a gift from God. Therefore, we have every reason to glorify God for our children.

However, the Hebrew for this passage provides a different perspective. The original language appears to imply that children are a heritage belonging to the Lord and not a heritage given by the Lord. In other words, the language leads me to conclude that God views children as His own—God sees children as belonging to Him. What a different light this sheds on the verse, destroying as it must the cherished concepts some of us have held!

"Behold, Yahweh's inheritance (or in a broader sense, possession) [is] sons,  
a reward is the fruit of the womb" [my translation]."

To the childless couple, this understanding can serve as a soothing balm for a wounded heart. It forever removes any thought that they are in some manner under censure from the Lord, or that the absence of children is in some way a statement of God's displeasure toward them.

To those with children in the home, the statement imposes responsibilities previously unimagined, for we are obligated to see our children in a new light, realizing that we have imposed upon us divine duties and religious responsibilities which we dare not shirk. Our children are to be seen as a stewardship entrusted to us by God. Let that concept sink in—your children are a stewardship entrusted to you by God. Each father and each mother are accountable for how their children are trained. Parents are responsible to give an account for whether their children are equipped to know the Lord, whether they have been trained and whether they are encouraged to seek the Saviour from earliest days.

We are very careful to send our children to the best schools, to ensure that they are enrolled in extra-curricular activities so that they will gain skills in order to be prepared for life—we want them to have every opportunity to succeed. However, if we do not teach them to know the Lord, we have failed them and dishonoured the Lord who entrusted His heritage to our care.

This second portion of the Psalm provides an integrated view of life. We lead frenetic, frantic, frenzied lives that make us to a disconcerting degree self-absorbed, consumed by our own self-interests. We compartmentalise life into separate areas of work and family, and frequently add a compartment for assorted self-interests. However, the Jew who was reading this in Solomon's day, and likely our own grandparents as well, would have asked, "Why are you building a house, if not for a family to live there? Why are watchmen protecting the city if not for families that live there?"

Through compartmentalising our lives we deny that the family is the basic social unit and consequently the most important element of society. Why else would the society in which we live assail the family as it does unless people intuitively realised that the family is foundational to all stability? Why else would social arbiters attempt to redefine the family except to ensure that it no longer has legitimacy? The ancient Jew, and even our forefathers, knew this to be true. Unfortunately, our contemporaries are generally ignorant of this truth.

To a dismaying extent, the family is under assault today. Politicians and learned jurists imagine themselves appointed to serve as munificent benefactors redefining the concept of family in order to present a gift to perverted and wicked people who despise God's grace and mercy. So, the family becomes in the modern parlance a transient entity—an amorphous community of sorts—into which individuals drift and from which individuals depart according to their immediate desires. Before she is an adult, Heather may not have only two mommies—she may have six or seven mommies and several daddies as well. The thrust of modern life is to gratify every immediate desire, ignoring the responsibility to children in the home.

Progressive thinkers assume that the wisdom of millennia past is incompatible with the modern desire for personal fulfilment. Thus, radical social engineers appear determined to abolish the very institutions that have ensured a strong social fabric that has allowed creation of the comforts and the strengths enjoyed by modern society. Tragically, children are increasingly seen as an impediment to pursuing the ephemeral phantasm, the gossamer will-'o-the-wisp commonly identified as happiness. Infants are farmed out to day cares to allow moms to have time for themselves or so that they can seek self-fulfilment in a career. Dads are an adjunct to modern family life—mere sperm donors that are uninvolved in training the children whom they have fathered. Government has become the primary care giver.

Modern medicine and scientific methodology notwithstanding, children are given by God. In order to demonstrate the veracity of this statement, I invite you to traverse the Word with me in an expository excursus, witnessing the truth that God gives children. From the very beginning of Scripture, God is seen as the author of life, including conception and birth. The birth of Cain, so named because his mother imagined that he was the fulfilment of the divine promise of a deliver [see **GENESIS 3:15**], occasioned Eve's notable statement: "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD" [**GENESIS 4:1b**]. God was understood to be integral in granting new life. Eve and Adam supposed this also to be true when Seth was born [**GENESIS 4:25**]. The Bible is quite clear that Isaac was given to Sarah and Abraham as promised by the hand of God [**GENESIS 18:13, 14; 21:1, 2**]. The same held true for Jacob and Esau [**GENESIS 25:21**].

Prior to the birth of Isaac, Sarah opined that God had kept her from having children [**GENESIS 16:2**], though we cannot condone her efforts to perform God's work in her own power. Perhaps Sarai was unfamiliar with embryology or the science behind implantation of the ovum; however, the conscientious Christian is compelled to acknowledge that the language used is that which was superintended by the Spirit of God. Though they were not worshippers of the true and living God, the wife and the slave girls of Abimelech were dependent upon God for children [**GENESIS 20:17, 18**]. In the account of how Jacob became the father of many children, it is instructive to note the inclusion of multiple and repeated references to God as the giver of children [**GENESIS 29:31, 33; 30:2, 17, 19, 22**].

As a reward for obedience, God gave children to Shiphrah and Puah, the Hebrew midwives [**EXODUS 1:21**], just as He enabled Ruth to conceive and give birth to a son [**RUTH 4:13**]. Who can forget that Samuel was given in response to his mother's prayer [**1 SAMUEL 1:19, 20**]; and that later God was the One who gave to her other sons and daughters [**1 SAMUEL 2:21a**]. I confess that there is mystery here, for none of us can understand how God visited Hannah; however, the Word is quite precise in attributing to God the power to create life, giving children as He wills.

I understand that some individuals may dismiss the evidence arising out of this scriptural trek; they are tempted to dismiss this evidence with the observation that these are, after all, attitudes displayed by an unsophisticated and uneducated people from an era unacquainted with modern understanding of anatomy and physiology. Nevertheless, I remind you that those who were named lived closer in time and closer in terms of sensitivity to the presence of the LORD God than is true for us. I remind you that while they may appear unsophisticated in the view of our contemporaries, they were not ignorant of truth; and the truths which have been written down in the Book are truths that have never changed. But even if these were untutored individuals, does that lessen the teaching provided if indeed the Bible is God's truth?

I suppose that some people will postulate that in this 127<sup>th</sup> Psalm Solomon is endeavouring to iterate truth that was previously incorporated into the Law. For instance, in **EXODUS 13:2**, we read God's command concerning children that were given to the Hebrew people. "Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine." It is possible that someone will suppose that Solomon's statement is but a restatement of this specific teaching concerning the Hebrew people. There is no question but that the specific is included in the broader aspect of the statement, but it is an error to exclude the broader, more general statement from our understanding. For just as all that was read from Genesis and Exodus preceded the Law, so the understanding that God is the author of life is not dependent upon the Law. Therefore, Solomon's statement is not an iteration of the Law, but rather the Law provides a dramatic example of the more general truth of God functioning as the Author of Life.

Is it not significant that our Lord so often demonstrated such tenderness toward children? It must be that His ownership of the children prompted His tenderness toward those who were His heritage. One of the tenderest scenes in all of Scripture must assuredly be that describing how our Lord received the little children. When He determined to make a point concerning greatness in the Kingdom, He gathered a little child into His arms as an illustration of who was great in the sight of God [MARK 9:36, 37]. Praising the Father for His wisdom, the Master would note that it was the little children who were sensitive to the Father [MATTHEW 11:25]. He did not shrink from investing His life into the lives of little children; but rather placing His hands on them, He prayed for them [MATTHEW 19:13, 14]. It should not be in the least surprising, therefore, that when He entered Jerusalem, children shouted glad praises to God. Neither should we be surprised at the willingness of our Lord to defend these children to the religious leaders [MATTHEW 21:15, 16]. What could we learn from little children, if we were but willing to do so?

**GOD’S GIFT** — Moving beyond the concept that children belong to the Lord, it will be helpful if we discover how God views children. In our text, three views of children are presented from God's vantage point. Children are described as the divine heritage—God’s possession, as a reward from Him and as the future of those to whom they are born. Each picture is important to insure a complete understanding of the importance of the child to our God.

We have already seen that when we read “children are a heritage,” the emphasis conveyed to those first readers would be that children are a heritage belonging to the Lord. Though time constraints permitted only brief consideration of means by which that teaching has been minimised in this day, we are nevertheless driven to the conclusion that children are important in the eyes of God. There should be rejoicing at the birth of a child into a Christian family, especially since such an event is a means by which God's heritage is assured recognition.

You will perhaps recall this startling passage found in Malachi’s prophecy? “Did [God] not make [husband and wife] one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth” [MALACHI 2:15]. I do not say that this is a form of instruction for godly homes to be transformed into nurseries, but it is certain that children in the homes of believers are a source of honour and glory to the Name of God.

Since children are God’s possession (His heritage), it follows that parents are responsible to receive children as the responsibility they truly are. Because children are a divine heritage, parents are responsible to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord, preparing them to be a benediction to the godly teaching they have received. Since children are a divine heritage, then are parents responsible to teach them to pray, to love the Word of God and to love the Lord their God. Underscore in your minds that parents are to accept responsibility for the children God entrusts to them. Parents are to sacrifice themselves for their children, realising that they must answer to God for the service they render to the children. Raising godly children is not merely a benediction to our lives; they are glory and honour to the Lord who gave them.

But the text says that children are also a reward. There is a tendency in our day to view children as a burden. Too often parents speak of children as though they were good solely for stealing happiness. Such a view only betrays fallen nature of anyone making such a statement; such views demonstrate that we value things more than we value those whom God has sent. The adage is true, “Wherever God sends mouths, he sends meat.” Dear people, it is true that if God gives children, He will also feed them.

I am getting ahead of myself somewhat, but it is important that I should remind you that there was a day when large families were esteemed; and large families were valued not merely to ensure that the elderly would be cared for in their old age. In a simpler age, the teaching of the Word permeated society and we were convinced that children were a godly reward. I understand that the concept of large families is disparaged today. Earth dwellers present the argument that in an agrarian society large families were necessary to ensure survival of the family. Social scientists contend that because infant mortality was so high, multiple births were necessary in order to ensure that some would survive to adulthood; and perhaps one can make a case for such thoughts. However, God speaks of large families as a reward; and I am hard-pressed to accept that the wisdom of this present age has somehow superseded the wisdom of the Word. If God says that children are a reward, then we are impoverished when we reject what He offers.

Even among the professed church of God is an apparent disdain for large families. We are captivated by the slogans and maxims of the world which disparage large families. We convince ourselves that we cannot afford too many children, or that our children will somehow be cheated if they have several siblings. Were our parents cheated by the size of their families in another era? Were it not for our fallen desire to possess things, we would never question that children are a reward, and we would rejoice in larger families. However, modern Christians appear quite prepared to exchange God's reward for the acquisition of more things—material goods we know to be destined for dust.

We think that somehow women will lose their beautiful figures if they have children, demonstrating that an illusion is to be preferred to the reward God gives. Modern Christians esteem the values of this present, dying world while despising the values of the world to come. In this, we demonstrate that we are yet far from walking as one with the Lord. It is amazing to witness western governments increasing immigration from third-world countries because of shrinking birthrates. Then, as the influx of immigrants from non-Christian nations swells, national culture is transformed into a strange, new unrecognizable entity. However, the nations need more people to produce moneys to supply the goods demanded by aging populations. What a blessing it would be if Canada was again to have growing and godly families.

I would also urge you to see that children are the assurance of a future. Children are our hopes and our dreams in bodily form. We desire the best for our children, trusting that they may avoid some of our sorrow while attaining some of our missed blessings and joy. To Solomon, writing this Psalm, it was evident that children were the prospect of a future for parents. Thus, he speaks of our children as being arrows and of sons born in one's youth, and pronounces a blessing on the man whose quiver is full of children.

Our children are compared to arrows in the hands of a warrior. They are compared to arrows because with prudence, they may be directed to the mark, to that which brings God glory through service to their own generation. But they are considered as arrows only while the sons of our youth, for with age comes brittleness, and the ability to mold and shape their lives to insure that their flight is true is gone. Arrows in the hands, mishandled, become arrows in the heart, a constant grief to godly parents, thus bringing their gray heads down to the grave in sorrow.

There is yet another intriguing matter arising from within the text. The blessing seems to be pronounced on those whose children are born in their youth, encouraging in a sense youthful marriages. In light of the tendency in this present day to delay marriage almost until it is too late for women to beat the biological clock, I find this teaching interesting, and the more so in light of something which was written in the mid-nineteenth century, almost two hundred years ago.



“If the right interpretation is commonly given to this phrase, this Psalm greatly encourages early marriages. It is a growing evil of modern times that marriages are so often deferred till it is highly improbable that in the course of nature the father can live to mould his offspring to habits of honour and virtue.”<sup>4</sup>

**THE DIVINE VISION FOR FAMILIES** — There is further instruction that I wish to point out from the Psalm. God is the Author of Life; He gives children to families. The Psalmist has testified:

“He gives the barren woman a home,  
making her the joyous mother of children.”

[PSALM 113:9]

When God gives us children, we should rejoice, knowing that He has entrusted to us His heritage. I must say to those who have not been granted the oversight of that heritage that you are not less loved by God. Those who are asked for the reason such sorrow has come need not imagine that they can provide an adequate answer this side of heaven. However, where children are given into the care of godly families, we need to see that such bairns are to be viewed as belonging to God and that they are entrusted to us only for a short while. When our home is blessed by the presence of children, we are to see those children as a divine reward. The absence of children does not imply that God gives us no reward. In that instance we may be assured that God Himself is our reward; let us draw comfort from that knowledge.

I have been blessed to have three children, each one the source of deep joy. Now, I have been blessed with six grandchildren—three boys and three girls. Though I don’t see these grandchildren near often enough, I am nevertheless learning the truth encapsulated by one of the Proverbs.

“Grandchildren are the crown of the aged,  
and the glory of children is their fathers.”

[PROVERBS 17:6]

My eldest daughter recently posted a moving testimony on Facebook. Let me share it with you. “Nine years ago, I was advised to abort my unborn child, because prenatal tests showed that he had Down syndrome. I said I didn’t believe in killing children just because they were somehow deemed less than perfect according to somebody’s arbitrary grading system. In fact, I don’t believe in killing children, period.

“After he was born, we learned that he had Mosaic Down Syndrome, and only 7% of his cells carry the extra chromosome. I didn’t care. Big deal. So what? He’s my boy, and he’s just right.

“Today his counselor, after months of psychological testing and observation, told me that his intelligence and comprehension levels are off the charts for his age group, and for several age groups above his.

“The child they told me I should throw away because he would never be as smart as the other kids? Yeah, that one. Turns out he’s brilliant. They used the term ‘gifted.’ And I have it in writing.”

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<sup>4</sup> William Swan Plumer (1802-1880), in **Studies in the Book of Psalms**, cited in C. H. Spurgeon, **The Treasury of David, Volume 6: Psalms 120-150** (Logos Bible Software, Bellingham, WA 2009) 94

When children are present in the home, we are responsible to shape their lives, employing them as arrows that they might be directed in courses of godly employ. It must be our hope and our aspiration that our children honour God and prove a benediction to our lives.

There is yet one further word: we must see that large families are a blessing. I urge the people of God to guard our tongues against disparaging large families, for the Scriptures are nevertheless true when God says of sons born in one's youth:

“Blessed is the man  
whose quiver is full of them.”

Amen.