

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, March 18, 2017

In recent years we've all witnessed families confronted by a distressing problem. Generally, kids seem to be having difficulty launching into the world on their own. I can still recall my personal experience as a young man graduating from college. I had taken a commission in the US Army through my commitment in ROTC. I did enjoy that last summer playing baseball and spending time with my family before reporting to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for Officers Basic Training that September. My commitment gave me a place to land upon leaving the comfortable nest in my small hometown in Texas. Frankly, I never looked back and haven't thought much about that transition until now. It was quite common for kids to be nudged out of the home as they graduated from school in years past. Yes, the expenses associated with living on your own were much less back then, but the money to be made was proportionately less as well.

These days, there are intangible factors that seem to have young people somewhat fearful of launching into this brave new world! I truly believe that we parents are a big part of the problem. We probably over-react to the way we were raised and want a better life for our kids. There has also been way too much emphasis on getting a college degree as if that sheepskin would somehow magically provide our kids with a fulfilling career right out of the blocks. In fact, that's exactly what many kids feel they deserve according my acquaintances in the recruiting profession. Then there's the American dream of owning a home early in our careers, which seems almost unobtainable these days. Many young people also fear marriage and its deep commitments with all the perceived uncertainties in life.

You may have seen a romantic comedy entitled *FAILURE TO LAUNCH* that became a box office hit a few years back. The film focused on a 35-year-old man who lives with his parents and shows no interest in leaving the comfortable lifestyle they've afforded him. In the film, Mom Kathy Bates often seems to enable her son Matthew McConaughey. Unfortunately these days, many adult children can't seem to find the wherewithal to launch and leave the nest and it's no laughing matter. Many appear to be quite comfortable living at home. Mother eagles have been known to remove all the feathers from the bottom of the nest when they know it's time for the eaglets to leave and fly away. A little tough love is probably in order for parents who have to deal with this growing phenomenon.

Let's search for some biblical answers to this challenging dilemma. Paul instructs us in Ephesians 6:1-4 – *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' – which is the first commandment with a promise – 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.' Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and the instruction of the Lord."* These words resonate the responsibility fathers must take to lead their family, instruct their children and prepare them for launching into this challenging world. Many men have abdicated their responsibility to lead their families! In Colossians 3:20-21 Paul continues *"Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged."*

These verses give us some insight into the roles parents must play in leading their children on the right path. The books of Deuteronomy and Proverbs are chucked full of advice on how we are to raise our children. Perhaps the best known is Proverbs 22:6 which tells us to *"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."* If you fit the category of that young person unable to launch, please consider 2 Timothy 1:7 which instructs *"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline."* (NASB) Certainly our desire is for our children to be able to make it on their own and to finish the race well. Let's get back to the basics of preparing our future generations in the principles God has so graciously given us.

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:6-7; 11:19-21; 30:19-20; 32:45-47; Psalm 78:1-6; Proverbs 31:27-31

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Passages to Ponder: Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:6-7; 11:19-21; 30:19-20; 32:45-47; Psalm 78:1-6; Proverbs 31:27-31

Deuteronomy 4:9-10 New International Version (NIV)

⁹Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

¹⁰Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 New International Version (NIV)

⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 11:19-21 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁹Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁹This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Deuteronomy 32:45-47 New International Version (NIV)

⁴⁵When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, ⁴⁶he said to them, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. ⁴⁷They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."

Psalm 78:1-6 New International Version (NIV)
A maskil of Asaph.

- ¹ My people, hear my teaching;
listen to the words of my mouth.
- ² I will open my mouth with a parable;
I will utter hidden things, things from of old—
- ³ things we have heard and known,
things our ancestors have told us.
- ⁴ We will not hide them from their descendants;
we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
- ⁵ He decreed statutes for Jacob
and established the law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach their children,
- ⁶ so the next generation would know them,
even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.

Proverbs 31:27-31 New International Version (NIV)

- ²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.
- ²⁸ Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
- ²⁹ "Many women do noble things,
but you surpass them all."
- ³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
- ³¹ Honor her for all that her hands have done,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.