

Transforming Daily

“. . . hear, my children, the instruction of a father . . .”
Proverbs 4:1

The book of Proverbs is a book of instruction traditionally held to have been authored by Solomon and others. The point is that the instruction found in its pages is for their sons and daughters as well as for us and ours. The instruction comes specifically from the perspective of a father to his children. The instruction comes specifically from life’s experience based on the lives of those who have gone on before them.

Not all instruction is good or sound instruction. The only instruction that is good and sound is the instruction that comes from God and based on His Word. Some instruction isn’t necessarily offered because of the father’s success, but also based on their failures as well. The goal, however, is for those who follow to miss as much trial, trouble and tribulation as possible if they are willing to obey the instruction of their fathers.

There are two inherent disciplines to be learned and applied here. One is for fathers as children to listen and learn from their fathers so that when they are fathers they will be able and willing to teach their children the same lessons they learned, which is the second inherent discipline. Nothing is foolproof with respect to the dynamic of instruction between fathers and children for two reasons. Earthly fathers are not perfect and neither are their earthly children, hence the sayings, “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree,” and “the brick doesn’t fall far from the house.” This is all the more reason for fathers to take their role more seriously as instructors and examples with an attitude of humility, justice and mercy.

It is mostly true that you can’t lead where you haven’t been. But at the end of the day, it isn’t so much that you’ve been to, or in, a specific place in life as much as it is that those who follow you trust you and respect you. Valued instruction carries the weight of authority given it by evident successes or from confessed and recovered failures. This is exemplified in the cycle of sports. The player becomes a coach then a commentator, and sometimes general manager, and then owner. In the natural order of life, we move from child to parent to grandparent. Each successive step we learn, practice and then instruct.

Are you willing to hear and listen to the instruction of your heavenly Father? Do you take the role as a father (or parent) seriously enough to take the time to instruct your children in life and to live out those instructions as an example to them? It’s never ending. The role of a dad (mom and grandparents) is indispensable in the lives of their children. Therefore, dad (mom, grandparents), always be ready and never shrink back from saying, “hear, my children, the instruction of a father.”