# Editorial Growing Together As Family Dr Jason Hubbard

Editorial: ‘Growing Together as Family’ - Dr Jason Hubbard

My wife and I just returned from a week of vacation with my family, our 3 kids and 5 grandkids. It was such a special time to be together, to rest, to play games, to enjoy the sun and swim at the pool, to laugh, to have meals together and spend time with Jesus as a family. We are so grateful!

Family really is God’s idea! All of us want to be part of a healthy family. No matter our life stage — married, single, parent, grandparent, or empty nester — we all want to be surrounded by a tribe of people who support us, love us, and help us pursue a meaningful life in the grace of God!

In a world where parents are stressed and overloaded, and kids are often confused by the mixed messages they receive from culture, I wanted to share a few things with our IPC family that my wife and I have learned over the years about family, looking at the God-designed roles of fathers and mothers and how we grow together as Families that please the Lord!

Ultimately our families exist to display the Glory of God! Biblically the home is the primary place where faith is nurtured, and the church comes alongside to help parents bring up their children in the instruction and the love of the Lord. As believers we have the wonderful privilege of “Living out our faith at Home.” The parenting road map in Scripture is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 ,

““Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress 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”

This roadmap provides 3 foundational truths for us:

Allegiance and Loyalty to God,

Sharing our faith and love to our children in the home, and

Constantly remembering and acknowledging God and his ways.

Teaching our children to Love God above all else is the foundation of all parenting and we know that supreme love for God is more caught than it is taught! Jesus Christ must take first place in our lives and our homes. He must be front and center in all that we do. Parents are called to create an environment in the home where their children can grow up in the ‘presence of the Lord.’ Every Christian home becomes an altar of God’s presence. I want to recommend a great resource by a good friend Cheryl Sacks, called ‘ The Fire of Family Altar . ’ Countless families have been impacted by this practical book that helps families experience the power of the Holy Spirit in their homes!

I believe God has designed specific roles for Mothers and Fathers in the home!

The role of a mother - is to create a loving and nurturing environment where her children are deeply seen and deeply known! Mothers are to provide emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual nutrients to help their children grow into a healthy adult. Mothers are the first love in our lives, as little ones – where we recognize her face, her voice, the meaning of her moods and facial expressions - Mothers are meant to provide a welcoming home in her body for the life of a little child to grow. In that safe place, she received you, kept you, and nourished you for nine months.

After you left the womb, she was meant to provide another welcoming home, this time in her arms. As you felt her touch, which was tender, heard her voice, which was soothing, and experienced her gaze, which was steady and attentive, you were meant to receive the messages of life and wholeness. A mom says to you “It’s wonderful that you’re alive, that you are here, that you exist!” A mom says, “Your needs are normal and reasonable, and as a mom I am glad to help.”

Mothers help their children hear regularly, “You are loved unconditionally.” Children want a mom who sees them, pays attention to them and listens to them. They deeply desire for their mom’s presence and constant tender(touch) affection. A mom says to her children, ‘it’s ok to BE.’ A mother says your existence is delightful, that you are lovable, that you are wanted and that your needs are acceptable.

I have watched my wife, mama to our three kids and now to our five grandkids nurture our children and create a welcoming home over many years. She created a safe place in our home - day after day listening, encouraging, seeing and noticing! She has a tender touch – gentle hugs and has instilled in our kids deep trust and emotional wholeness!

The role of a Father - Fathers are given the responsibility of ‘calling out’ and ‘naming’ their children. A Father has the God-given authority and responsibility to BLESS their children. A Father is to speak words to you or about you that would be words of life, blessing your true self, and instilling in you the courage to develop the abilities and gifts that are part of your nature.

I was encouraged by this short teaching video from Craig Hill on Imparting the Father's Blessing on our families.

Fathers are meant to be the first reference point regarding your identity; your closest visual aid to demonstrate Father God’s intention of defining who you are meant to be and become!

A Father’s influence has the power to affect, for good or for bad, the way we feel about our abilities, our character, our appearance, and our gender.

Fathers are to call out the beauty of their daughters. Every year at Christmas, I would take my daughters on a date. We would get dressed up, and I would bless and affirm my daughters in who they are and who they are becoming, calling forth their beauty, and modelling for them how a true man should treat them!

Fathers are meant to call out their sons’ gifts and encourage them to risk and try new things!

“Son you have what it takes to do great things in the Lord”

– In other words, it’s ok to Do! If you fall, I’m here to pick you up and encourage you to try again in the grace of God!

Fathers are called to discipline their children, but not in a harsh or mean way – but a steady, controlled and consistent way that instils confidence and character over time!

When my son turned 13, I gave him a ‘Lord of the Rings sword.’ I blessed him and called forth his manhood! I charged him to be a man of God, a man of his word, a man who would work hard, and a man who respects women! And a few months later, we took a Father/Son trip together to Israel, and I baptized him in water in the Jordan! It was one of the greatest highlights of my life - I am so proud of him and who he is becoming!

When our kids were younger, we would always do our best to pray over them and bless them before they went to bed!

As parents, we have discovered that our kids needed time with us! One of the most practical things we can do is just be together - enjoying each other, playing together, eating together, praying together, working hard together and at times doing ministry together!

We intentionally did our best to have weekly dates with our kids individually and to always have family dinner together!

We certainly made many mistakes in parenting over the years. None of us as parents are perfect – often If we didn’t follow through or if we hurt our kids we would do our best to confess to them our sin, apologize and ask for their forgiveness– committing by God’s grace to do better in the future. This helped them to be authentic and not have to hide or have secrets in areas of weakness or sin in their lives.

And probably the most important lesson what we have learned over the years is that we only parent our kids to the degree that we receive the love of our Heavenly Father – the closer that we are connected with the Lord, his life and love flows through us and our kids see and experience the goodness of God in us and through us!

From our family to yours - God bless you in this incredible journey of Family! Love you all

Until He comes,

Dr. Jason Hubbard – Director International Prayer Connect DOWNLOAD PDF of Growing Together as Family