

# Scriptures and Encouragements for Parents of Little Ones

## By Pastor Phil Layton

### 1. Little ones are a blessing from the Lord

Psalm 127:3 *Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. <sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. <sup>5</sup> Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!* (ESV unless otherwise noted)

Dan Doriani, *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 12/1: '[T]he chief blessings of parenthood seem to lie in giving. If we first forfeit the hope of gain and give without hope of return, then we can enjoy the blessings of parenthood. So parents give; they give the Lord the godly children He desires (Malachi 2:15). They give their children the gift of life. They give society the salt and light it so desperately needs. Once we are committed to giving first, the blessings can flow.

Martin Luther, recalling that he never awoke with pigtailed in his face and his blanket gone in the monastery, observed that family life is a school of character. That is, parenting blesses us by teaching us to love sacrificially, to bend our will to another's. Parents learn to subordinate their plans, their goals, their happiness and fulfillment, to spend themselves for little ones who can give very little in return ... Babies cry more than they smile. Little children are a bundle of need, and teenagers bring more worries than celebrations. They teach us to expand the circle of passionate concern beyond ourselves to our children, our community, and even the good of distant generations.'

Herman Bavinck: 'Children check selfishness in parents...They uphold to their parents, as if in a mirror, their own virtues and defects, force them to reconsider their lives, soften their criticisms, and teach them how difficult it is to rule a human being. Out of the family life there proceeds a reforming power toward the parents... Family life turns the selfish into servants, misers into heroes, coarse men into considerate fathers, and tender maidens into courageous mothers.'

### 2. Little ones are sinners who need godly direction and gospel grace

Psalm 51:5 *Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.* (NIV)

Psalm 58:3–4 *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies. They have venom ...*

Psalm 53:2–3 *God looks down from heaven on the children of man ... there is none who does good, not even one.*

Deuteronomy 31:12 *Assemble the people, men, women, **and little ones**, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law,*

Proverbs 22:15, 29:15 *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him. ... The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.* (NKJV)

Eph 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15 *"genuine faith that is in you ... dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also ... from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"* (NKJV)

### 3. Little ones are important to the Lord and His kingdom

Isaiah 40:11 *... like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them in the fold of His garment. He gently leads those that are nursing.* (HCSB)

Mark 9:36–37, 10:13–16 *Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me." ... Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them* (NKJV)