



Prepare Your Kids, No Heartaches, Please!

By Alvin Erickson
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I was speaking at a church in Turner, Montana. One of the things I said at the beginning was that one of my daughters was the victim of a human trafficker. Then I went on to talk about what we must say and do to prepare our beloved youth so that bad and wrenching things do not happen to them. At the end of our time together, a motherly woman put her hand up. She said, “I don’t know if I dare ask this, but I wonder how is your daughter now?” This question set me back. I was not ready for it. So, I had to explain that my daughter was in a building she would never have been in had she not been trafficked. She was caught in a fire there and though she was brought to an excellent burn unit, the doctors told us they would not be able save her from all her burns. We had to decide to let her go. Sadly, we did.

The response from the crowd was immediate. A man stood up and gave me a big hug and he called the group to gather around me and then said a comforting prayer. Love and compassion flowed. In this website we are talking about potential heartaches. This is what none of us want. But guess what, more families are experiencing such anguish and misery than we can ever imagine. What does a child live with who has been molested? And their families? Or one who becomes addicted to drugs or to Internet pornography? There is so much hurt going on in young people’s lives and yes, in their families. We could go on and on bringing out the agonies caused by suicides, teenage pregnancies, abusive marriages, bullying and cyberbullying., etc. Kids, parents, grandparents living with many more heartaches than ever gets noticed or talked about publicly.

So what can be done? The big word is this: “Preparation”. What does this mean for us who don’t want our kids and yes, ourselves, to live with heartaches? It means looking at stories where nasty things happen to kids and then asking, “How could my child be better prepared to handle such a situation and avoid the trap, the pain that will be coming next? What can I do to prepare those young people I care about that will actually make a difference? Can someone help me find the tools, the wise skills I need to share with my offspring?” How then can I get such wise skills into the

actual thinking of my loved one? How can I prepare them to the point they can draw on these wise skills when they need them?

Brothers and sisters, family leaders, here is the good news. We have done the work to discover wise skills you will need to pass on to the youth you care about. Many good authors, many good stories, much wisdom from the Bible all have been located so you will have good tools, sharp weapons, effective responses to work with. It will take real work on your part to involve yourself in a course with other family leaders present. But is not this a war worth winning? Not only do your young people need to know these skills but they need to practice them. That will take concerted effort. If a person picks up a basketball for the first time, will they be able to make a basket right away? Probably not! But if they practice, they will get better at making baskets. The same is true when we think about responding to risky situations. One needs to practice wise skills, how to use effective tools, if one is going to avoid the traps other people set. Also our beloved youth must themselves decide they do not want to be fooled.

All of us would say we love our kids. We are concerned for their safety and their futures. But have we considered what it will take to bring them through the minefields they face? Is our love deep enough, effective enough to actually get them prepared for all they will face? Give yourself the right to make a good decision about this. The time you take, the effort you spend can save your child and you from long lasting heartaches. God is on your side. Make the most of the opportunities this website and the course offered affords.

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