

Aim the Arrows-Baby Dedication

- ❖ Parenting is interesting. Someone defined a baby as an angel whose wings grow shorter as his or her legs grow longer.
- ❖ After having their fifth child, a couple received a playpen from some friends. Several weeks later the friends who sent the gift received this note of thanks: "The playpen is wonderful. Just what we needed. I sit in it every afternoon and read-- and the kids can't get close to me!"

I. Children receive a number of positive expression in scripture. They are repeatedly spoken of as a blessing of the Lord.

- A. Jacob - Gene 33:5 *And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who [are] those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.*
- B. Psal 128:3 (KJV) *Thy wife [shall be] as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.*

II. One particular Biblical expression has captured my thoughts for some months:

- Psalms 127:3 *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. 4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. 5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*

III. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

- A. Many of you qualify as having children of the youth. Those new babies are as arrows in your hand. Arrows are weapons of accomplishment. But their success depended on the aim of the archer. So are your children. Louis Pasteur said, "When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments: tenderness for what he is, and a respect for what he may become." My challenge today: Where will you aim your child? What will be required of you as a parent to accomplish this?
- B. Yes, this is a challenging time to be a parent. A young pastor was visiting one of his church families. The father launched into a long lament about

parenting in our high-pressure, high-speed society. Finally the pastor said, "You are right, but there is only one thing harder than being a parent today, and that is being a child."

IV. Possible targets

V. Best target

VI. How parents can accomplish this:

- In the little boy see the final man. Over a century ago Horace Bushnell advised, "Let every mother and father realize that when their child is three years of age, they have done more than half they will ever do for its character."

A. **There are only three ways to teach a child;** the first is by example, the second is by example, the third is by example. Albert Schweitzer Let your example aim the arrow!

B. Time

1. A grade school teacher held a contest. She asked her students to describe what they liked best about their fathers. The winning entry read, "I have so much fun with my father that I wish I had known him sooner." A comment like that would brighten the day for any father who loves his family. Yet in many homes, the children never really get to know their dad because he doesn't take the time to be with them.
2. In a survey conducted several years ago, 1,500 schoolchildren were asked, "What do you think makes a happy family?" What's your answer?