

- #10 Subjects: 1) Failure to Maintain Beautiful Penmanship
2) Maturity is first Spiritual



Dear Sharon,

On Page 5.3-183, it reads, "me pencil" instead of "my pencil". The boys and I had a good laugh about that one.

Also, a while back the boys started intentionally fooling around so they wouldn't have to take the time to color in their behavioral charts. So, Mike and I decided that they would only fill-in and color the chart if they were successful. Once they filled out a chart, they would get an ice cream treat.

Now we're considering applying the behavior charts to the rest of their homework since they go back to old writing habits after completing their Madsen lesson. Do you have any other suggestions for making that transition with older students? My oldest, who's fourteen, can write the numbers and phonograms beautifully, but as soon as we start writing words and sentences, his writing deteriorates.

Thanks,

Katie

Dear Mike and Katie,

Merry Christmas. Thanks for your e-mail. I pray this response will encourage you by increasing your trust in the Lord, thereby your confidence in yourselves.

Living up to what one has attained lies somewhere between "maturing" and "maturity" as a student considers the value of being well-pleased by **doing whatever he does as unto the Lord**, graduating from the "pleasing Mom and Dad" reason for his doing, understanding that **being godly** and **being manly** grow together in his heart. As he treasures his greater understanding, he "matures" in his reasons for the godly/manly choices he makes; **he** comes to recognize, "It's between God and me!" My Dad puts it this way, "**You come to understand your beef is with God!**"

I think this "coming into maturity" is part of a process while a boy becomes a man - as he realizes and believes and knows he is a man; it's the process of understanding that **being** defines him, and that **his doing flows from his being**.

Habits do not define a person. Habits show the current condition of a person's understanding but are not permanent indicators since understanding grows. We wish our

children to love knowledge but also to know that **knowledge tells them they should be ignorant of some things**. One thing knowledge tells them they should be ignorant of is giving themselves over to habits that do not serve God, themselves, or others; this area of knowledge is destructive, whereas being knowledgeable about things like honesty, and patience, and perseverance, and unpretentiousness are attributes they wish to embrace as they grow in knowledge about these attributes (like taking a wife is binding oneself to another).

We use the Behavioral Bar Graph to emphasize what the child presently understands about godliness/manliness, though he may think it's about "non-script talking" or "writing in a manner beneath his knowledge." Through the Bar Graph, we give explicit instruction about explicit behaviors, but the real design of them is to extend the child's understanding to the "why" of his being, therefore his doing. **Underpinning this instruction is God's instruction by His Spirit through the Living Word; He alone can and will lead our dear sons into godly manhood: of this we are assured; therefore we give praise.**

We parents are asked to obey the Word and call this "trusting God." Fine, we will do that! How God puts it all together and grows our children and us is what a God like ours does as "He puts things together!" Fine, He will do that!

My Dad uses the term, "**Honest-to-God-Honesty**." He taught us that this is where all growth begins and continues. Addressing deteriorating writing may not zero in on the problem, but from addressing this behavioral issue, God will not allow the child to remain ignorant of poignant, honest-to-God, underlying considerations, even down to separating out for each child the hairsplitting differences between his *motives* and *intentions*. How encouraging this is! It's what we need; it's what they need; it's what God does that meets our needs. As you lead your sons to consider the same things God leads you to consider as He brings you into understanding the difference between **what you are in your ignorance and weakness** and **what you are by His grace and strength**, they will walk the "growing in the knowledge and love of God" path too - the only path that leads to Life - just as you and Mike are walking it.

Here's a point of great rejoicing: We parents truly can bring up a child only inasmuch as we have learned of God's way. But God, Who *makes even the wrath of man to praise Him*, through us ... the *not wise, not mighty, not noble ... we who are weak and base ... God has chosen us ... with our infirmities, our weaknesses, our sins ... to redound to His glory ... that no flesh may glory in His presence*. He shines His Truth's light on our children's paths so the Way is made plain to them - no ifs, ands, or buts - by making our infirmities, weaknesses and sins redound to His glory, just as He shined His Truth's light on our paths, making our parents' infirmities, weaknesses and sins redound to His glory! Since no parent is without sin, God must do this so children learn of Him! He alone is the Savior!

Everything Is First a Spiritual Matter. This is a theme of Divine Revelation. "Man looks at the outward appearance; God looks at the heart."

I truly wish you peace from God and a consciousness of His Love and Approval as you follow Him into **being** what you understand is right in His eyes. I rejoice with you in the Faith, knowing certain wonderful and spiritual things are going on because the Word says so! By Faith we hang on to this certainty! We do not look around for evidence when the substance is known only by Faith! We remember that we walk by Faith from first to last, and by His grace, we **REJOICE!**

I repeat: "We parents are asked to obey the Word and call this "trusting God." Fine, we do that! How God puts it all together and grows us and our children is what a God like ours does! Fine, He does that! We trust Him! Thanks for your prayers for us. I always enjoy hearing from you.

Love and Prayers,

Sharon Madsen

P.S. Thanks to Sherry Frattini for editing ***Letters to Teachers***, thereby improving my understanding of the inseparable oral/ written English Grammar partnership.

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