How to Build Character in your Children

Day 10:

**Purity**
By Sabrina McDonald

Many of my friends are lamenting the ability to raise a child of purity in this culture. One mom moaned, “That’s just the way things are now. Kids move in together and they get married. That’s the norm.”

It may be the norm, but Jesus didn’t call us to be like the rest of the world. He called us to be different—light in darkness. We can teach our kids to live at a higher standard, even if everyone else doesn’t. Just because kids are expected to behave a certain way doesn’t mean we should stop encouraging them to live in purity.

Those who culturally accept premarital sex haven’t considered the risks—pregnancy, diseases, and intangible effects like heartbreak, depression, and insecurity. These can be life-altering, even life-threatening, situations.

Many of us were brought up in a time when talking about sex was taboo. Perhaps your parents made you feel ashamed of your sexuality or fearful of God’s wrath. Perhaps you lost your virginity and felt you were never forgiven.

Sex shouldn’t be treated like a terrible forbidden act. It’s a beautiful expression of the covenantal love between a man and a woman. Rather, encourage your children to protect their purity. Teach them that their sexuality is beautiful and special, and it should only be shared with the one who is willing to care for it in the way God intended.

FamilyLife has developed the resource Passport to Purity® to help you talk to your preadolescent children about sex in a way they can understand. And even if your teens and preteens already have a basic understanding, there may be more questions that you don’t want Google to answer for you.

Even young children can be prepared for their growing sexuality. I have taught my two elementary-aged children that private parts are special, and that’s why we keep them to ourselves. Like treasure, they should be kept hidden away from everyone. The kids also understand that no one can touch them in these special places, not even close family or friends.

I explained that married people can see each other naked, like when their dad and I are in the bathroom together, and how marriage is a sacred relationship. Adam and Eve were naked together in the garden, and the Bible says, “They were not ashamed.”

Purity is certainly a difficult characteristic to build into your children. Both their natural human tendencies and our culture are working against you. It will be a battle. But with a lot of prayer and clear brave communication, it *is* possible for your children to be pure the day they walk down the aisle to the one they love.

**Scripture:**

Psalm 119:9 How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word