

A hand with the index finger pointing towards a door. The door is slightly ajar and has several items on it, including a sign that says "PLEASE" and a red sign that says "NO". The background is a solid orange color.

When
GO TO YOUR ROOM - NOW!
doesn't work any more

= God's Dining Menu =

Feeding Not Fussing

Listening Not Lashing Out

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This resource is provided 'as is' and meant to show some alternative low-budget methods to be a part of the Bible's Great Commission to all Christians.

Its author, websites, and publishers shall be held blameless for any harm – physical or intellectual, real or imaginary by the reading or construction mentioned on these pages.

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Introduction

This humble resource in no way finds itself among the world of parenting resources that have been available for decades nor is its author the owner of child psychology degrees in any official capacity.

I am the father of a son and daughter and well experienced in grasping Heaven's handrail of trust when family skies grew stormy filled with icy hail. It is interesting to see the case histories of fathers like Moses who put his life on the line for those God made him responsible for.

Happily so, I find in that same parenting book full of case histories of good and bad parents, authored by the Father of us all, a simply understood guarantee for all parents.

The guarantee (among many) of God's inspired parenting book, the Bible, is found at the close of the Bible's stated structure and purpose.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

Take care to notice the two appearances of the word ALL.

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#1- Eating A Photograph

Just picture it, if you can. It shakes my senses to even try to get an image in my mind of a human being actually eating a photograph – of anything. Our stomach and whole digestive system is going to fight it in one way or another. We just aren't designed to eat paper in any form. This is clear to people in every country. Good sense says we don't eat ground up trees with four corners or any other shape.

My mind keeps showing me an image of a young person eating a photograph of a thick juicy steak with mushrooms, potatoes, salad, and all the trimmings. The person's stomach has been growling in hunger, and they expect to be nourished by eating that photograph of all that good food.

There are certainly better analogies that our 'eating a photograph' to make our point here. Just the same, our hopes to gain strength, peace, and purpose from scripture by only feeding on the '5 loaves and 2 fishes catering' miracle the Lord administered (and other 'Bible Stories' we were raised on), are just as foolish.

God recognizes with great compassion that each of our lives contain many moments when the cupboards are empty of anything to feed our bodies. The widow in I Kings 17 learned that God's greater purpose in our lives, beyond filling our bodies, is to fill our heart and mind with His truths and will for us. Because of her sacrificial giving (to God's man, Elijah), her cupboards were overflowing to be shared with neighbors. And then the best was yet to come, when her son was raised to life.

Our human eyes and mind just can't picture the reality of our gracious and loving God Who wants to build us into

His soldiers and messengers with more eternal grandeur than a thousand rainbows.

This resource ==When 'GO TO YOUR ROOM!' Doesn't Work Any More== Will simply show us that good nutrition of our mind and spirit is even more important than of the body. (1) We learn how to approach the pinnacle 'how-to' manual – God's Word, and how to feed on its truths. (2) We'll see the ugly evidence of neglecting the direction and warnings from those truths.

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#2 - Start Here – Bible Grace

Your mouth is watering big-time as you sit down to the dinner table. The smells of all your favorite foods give promise of really good things about to be enjoyed. Your mind can hardly squeeze in reminders of proper table manners and rules of the road. Way off in the distance your racing thoughts try to warn you what happens when you eat too much of this or not enough of that. Your eyes tell the hands to pick up the spoon over here and the fork over there and dive in.

But then... reality grabs control of you. You admonish yourself with, “Hey! Wait a minute. I need to thank God for all this tasty food, the work that went into preparing it, and a wonderfully designed body to enjoy it. Then I also must ask God to lead me in using its energy to glorify Him.”

Table grace has become an important prelude to our meals. It is a systematic reminder to us and the rest of our family of our gratitude for God’s provision. We practice table grace because Jesus Christ did. He taught His followers this crucial beginning to every meal. Take a moment and review the reasons why you practice table grace.

Now. For the very same reasons, and more, we MUST practice Bible Grace. We must first establish the meaning of what we are about to do – which is NOT to READ scripture. But we are to FEED on what our eyes drink in, from the Bible pages.

In my many years as a corporate computer programmer, I understand well, the power of technology in doing Bible research and creation of God-honoring resources of many kinds. But there is nothing like sitting in front of my Bible and slowly run my fingers over its cover and yellowing frayed pages that have carried me through many stormy days. As I leaf through its pages, I see my hand-written notes of joy and trials across the years. In my mind I can almost picture tears on those pages as I experience God's promises fulfilled.

All throughout my Bible's pages are hand-drawn stars, circles, large periods, and others symbols that I've used as bookmarks in my daily Bible readings (oops! - FEEDINGS .grin.)

Choose any Bible page and lightly hold it between your fingers. Now imagine a father or mother somewhere that is starving to have just that one page for their own – to devour its peace and promises in their chaotic life. Now imagine that individual with that page in their hand, but in a language they don't understand. But you and I have both the scriptures and that are in our own language. Does God provide, or what?

A simple but powerful promise is listed in Matthew 6:33 "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*"
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#3 - Scripture Snacks Quicksand

God's provisions for our parenting and mentoring experiences are: (1) Scripture (in its entirety) is our God-breathed handbook for parenting. (2) The Holy Spirit is our 'on-board' teacher of that handbook. (3) Jesus is the personification of that handbook. (4) The Heavenly Father is Christ's focus in His sacrificial obedience. (5) We are to teach others in preparation for our eternal full fellowship with God in Heaven.

We hear: ***“Today's youth can't be fixed!” “They're out of control!” “They're from another planet!”***

If God is a liar and scripture can't be trusted – back then and today – even in the simplest terms, it might be a little more plausible to throw up one's hands and tune out youth?

But the fact is, God has given us a handbook for guiding parenthood that has withstood time and Satan's toughest attacks. The 'start here' or 'sweet spot' of scripture and putting our trust in it, likely would be King David and his many points of scripture praise, in Psalms 119. I particularly like his description in Psalm 119:103. *“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”* Go ahead, try to imagine anything that tastes SWEETER than honey.

David sheds a little light, as it were, in defense of his sweet scripture statement, a couple verses later, as he says in verse 105: *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* Slowing down and taking a close look at this verse tells me a great deal about scripture and prepares us for those three letter words, in a moment.

In verse 105 Shining 'a lamp unto my feet', would tell me the condition of my shoes (my condition) and would tell me if I

was on the path (my staying on track). The 'light unto my path' shows me a little of the direction I'll be taking shortly (my direction). It also will give light to dangers along the path ahead (my protection). This wonderful little verse in the shadows of 'sweet scripture', promise to aid my condition, am I on track, my direction, and my protection. David, above all, can certainly tell us, his 'sweet scripture' has been time-tested in all types of warfare.

Now for the three-letter words...

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul teaches young Timothy those three-letter words. The word(s) are easy enough for even an eight-year old to understand. The word(s) are “all”. Simple, right? Well... don't be too quick. Most parents don't really understand the word “all”. Let's use the word in a couple sentences that even refer to this scripture we feed on, we call our Bible. Paul's lesson to Timothy in 2Tim 3:16, states, *“ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto ALL good works.”*

It's not hard to see that God-honoring parenting would certainly fit in that “ALL good works”. The previous verse states the four major areas of scripture's purpose: doctrine (rules), reproof (testing), correction (discipline), and instruction (teaching). It's not hard to see all of our life's challenges fall in one or more of these four areas.

To me, the ALL of “ALL scripture”) is very significant. I might think differently if it said “EVERY scripture”, but it doesn't. It's almost like that first “ALL” is akin to the word “perfect”, in the next verse. PERFECT here, means: complete – nothing left out. I believe that scripture is

not to be used in a 'pick and choose' fashion, what I call Scripture Snacking.

I believe it cripples the power of scripture to set a child down and just show him(or her) that an incorrigible child, in bible times was stoned to death, at the edge of town.

Scripture should be continually totally 'fed' to the eyes and minds of our youth, AS A PREVENTION. A healthy body requires a regular balanced serving of foods. Our spiritual health is just the same. The balance of scripture 'feeding' must include ALL of scripture – as often as we set down to bread.

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#4 - Diamonds I can Keep

Would you like to dig for diamonds you can keep?!
Diamonds come in many different sizes, shapes, colors etc. One thing for certain about them all – there is no substance tougher. They are the best at cutting and polishing all other materials.

We want here to see some diamonds that are the best at shaping and polishing people – their characters, that is.

The Old Testament of God's Word is a 39 book case history of how God treats those who love, trust, and obey Him... and those who don't; largely focusing on His chosen Jewish nation. We (Gentiles) are to honor, learn from, and pray for the Jewish Nation.

A WARNING!

BUT WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL that we don't make fun of, the chastisement God has and is putting on the Jews. The Ammonite Nation learned that lesson, in Ezekiel 25:1-4.

The OT is chuck full of guides on medicine, archeology, poetry, nutrition, parenting – and that just starts the list. Reading (actually feeding) through each (and every) chapter uncovers diamonds you get to keep and use.

But all those begats!! YUCH!

Just to show some fun you can have with a friend - did you know that Noah was a woman?! It's true – no tricks – no spoof. There are listed in scripture two people named Noah. One was a preacher boat builder. The other was Hoglah's sister as noted in Numbers 26: 33.

“ Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite,”

Why should I care about these names in 1Chronicles 11:44? I can't pronounce them, I don't know what they did, where they lived, or when. And furthermore, I won't remember their names five minutes from now. Why bother reading through these names, anyhow?

Well, my answer is...

What I do know is this text was inspired and protected by God with all the power and purpose as the genealogy contained in “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” - our beloved John 3:16. Struggling through these long-ago genealogies, without grumbling trains us to obey God – love His Word – All of it – and trust He has a great purpose in us doing so. We might call it the patience of the pen (in us).

All those 'endless' genealogies in scripture serve some very important purposes – for you and I. First they provide some of our 'extended' family roots.

IT'S IN THE NUMBERS

In the 4th book of the Old Testament, called Numbers is some very surprising scripture – though at first it look like some 'very boring' genealogies. In the first chapter, God gives Moses orders to number the nation of Israel's army. The special instructions were to number them in groups by each of the 12 families.

With Aaron's help, he does it. It will help to know that a 'score' is equal to 20. Now what's really neat is in verse 46. He gives the total. To me the diamond is that the total actually equals all the sums of the family groups. Have you ever made a little mistake in some boring job you've had to do? I sure have. But in God's precious word, we can trust every page and paragraph.

Now that's only half the story.

In chapter 2 the tribes are arranged around the tabernacle (their portable church) with 3 tribes on each of the 4 sides. So each of the 4 sides are added noted. Just like happened in chapter 1, the total is given in verse 32. The total is correct, right? Now if that wasn't enough to get you excited, look again. Compare the total in chapter 1 with the total in chapter 2.

The tribes were added up in two different ways and still came up with the same answer.

This is much like my grandpa use to check his 'summing'... he called it Cross-Foot math.”

What starts out looking like 'boring scripture' turns out to be diamonds that show us the hard truths of trusting in God's word – the Bible – all of it.

Old Testament is Computer Conscious!

This blockbuster principle is a thrill to share with others, as it comes from the Bible. What makes it even juicier is that it's a computing principle found in the OLD TESTAMENT. More than that, it involves what many believe to be boring rules for

the Jews.

To see one of my favorite diamonds, turn to the third book of the Bible, called Leviticus. Then open to chapter 11 verse 2. It's not tough to see these words are telling the Jewish people what God is allowing them to eat and what to stay away from. First God talks about the animals on the earth, then the fish in the water, and then the birds in the air. But there's something a bit strange about God's description of all these menu items. In the descriptions, the words 'and' and 'not' are used often.

Well, in the 1800's George Boole 'invented' written logic "so called Boolean Logic" – or so he thought. This written logic used the words 'and' and 'not' like we use plus (+) and (-) signs.

The following CHAPTERS teach grouping principles than technology will never approach.

In Leviticus chapter 13, we see that 'and' and 'not' logic used in diagnosing leprosy.

We use Boolean searches at the library and on Google and other search engines...

Is there a child or adult in your sight, missing a shoelace or shiny shoes? Maybe just below the surface is a heart begging God for someone like you to care... just as they are. With anyone with a caring heart, a missing shoelace can be a diamond for you to search out.

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#5 - Go To Your Room! NOW!

God expects our loving respect and obedience – as any parent would. The Parable might be something like: A father disciplines his 3 disobedient children, by confining them to their room until he gives permission to come out. His warning is also that if they go elsewhere than their room, the discipline will be much worse. And if they remain firm where they stand, the discipline will be far more severe.

The result in this parable is that one child obediently goes to his room, the second goes to the living room and plays with some computer toy. The third child is totally defiant to the father, continuing to do just what (s)he was doing, right where (s)he was. The father disciplined each, according to their actions.

The actual events in Bible history, are found mostly in the Old Testament book of Jeremiah. “their room” would be comparable to Babylon; “living room” to Egypt, and “right where they were” to Jerusalem. God sent His nation of Israel into captivity in Babylon because they had for many years continued to disobey observing the offerings and commands from God. So God gave them the “go to your room” opportunity to get back on the right track. The Jews that obeyed God and 'willingly' went into captivity would be allowed to have vineyards, cattle and growing families. And, best of all, they were promised they'd someday be able to return to their homeland. Jeremiah 23:3-4.

But many of the Jews showed they were staying on their downhill disobedient course of living. While in Egypt, the women burned incense to other gods, the men knew it, and allowed it. But also, they all should have been in Babylon, in “God's” captivity. [See chart at end of booklet.]

As we daily feed on God's word, we first see His JUSTICE, in the Garden of Eden and the forbidden tree. This begins a thread that continues through the Old Testament. God is just and He expects us to obey Him, because He knows what is best for us. He also knows obedience often takes time to grow. In this His LONGSUFFERING toward us is evident all along the way. Almost in a contradiction in terms, God adds to His JUSTICE and LONGSUFFERING, His LOVE and FORGIVENESS.

It takes a daily feeding of these attributes from His word that builds in us a strong spiritual backbone to mentor others and fight off Satan's fiery arrows. Scripture says we should forgive seven times seventy. And seven times a day if necessary. (Luke 17:4; Matthew 18:22) But God's justice eventually calls into account that sinful stiffnecked disobedient life. God's timing has run out. They all (but a small remnant) were destroyed. Jeremiah 44:26-29. True to His promise – most of those who went to Egypt were destroyed.

But what about those who were totally disobedient that never left Jerusalem at all? And do we see much of the same defiance in our own family members?

The next segment covers a topic that needs discretion in sharing with younger children.

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#6 - One Thing God Cannot Do

As a parent, the end of leadership and control seems to be the absolute ignoring of one's child to any commands, wishes, or even civil conversation. Any communication becomes largely shouts and threats. The parent or leader has no way to begin to repair any breakdown

in the division. Disobedience in any form or fashion becomes the miller's grindstone reducing parent and child to powder, carried away by the slightest wind of daily challenge. Haunting images begin to beat on the heart and mind of the parent further grinding away self esteem. On a human level it appears Satan has gotten the ultimate final victory.

Example (1) But when the disobedience is directed toward our all-powerful God, the final victory is always in His hands and wishes. He teaches us this lesson, and many others, in the lives of His nation of Israel.

We just saw God had carried out His promise (of death) to all those Jews that disobeyed His command to go to Babylon, and instead went to Egypt. God never fails on His promises – either in peace, provision, or punishment.

And now those totally defiant ones who chose to remain in Jerusalem were warned back in Jeremiah 21:5-9. The extent of the famine in the city (blockaded by the Babylonian enemy) was that parents would actually eat their own children. Jeremiah 19:8-9. In spite of the warning, they did it anyway. In Lamentations 4:1-10, the prophecy came terribly true.

Example (2) of the terrible result of parent-child disobedience begins in the well-known Ten Commandments of Exodus 20. A description of them opens the first 3 verses of Ephesians 6. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” I'm thinking the “mayest live long” refers to the Old Testament command regarding totally defiant children stated in Deuteronomy 21:18-21. They were to be stoned to death.

The key to see here is the two-step level of authority simply stated in the Ephesians 6 verse: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord...”. More specifically the phrase “in the

Lord”.

Children are to see their final responsibility is to “the Lord...” They are to obey their parents because it is the Lord's command, that carries terrible results for disobedience.

The parents must see their roles as parents can only be effective if they saturate their whole leadership “in the Lord”. When parents daily feed on all scripture WITH THEIR CHILDREN, the truth is daily reinforced that children are finally responsible, through their parents, to the Lord.

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#7 - Full of Joy – Real Joy

All God has created is obedient to His will except one. The heavens, earth, plants, and animals all obey His laws and wishes, like a robot, without knowing their Creator exists – only man knows.

Nature shows much of God's power, control, and design of the heavens, earth, plants, and animals. But nature doesn't teach us about His attributes of Agape Love, Forgiveness, and Real Joy; Full Joy. But God wants our complete full fellowship with Him. This requires the beginning understanding of these attributes which no other part of creation can – not even the angels.

Our first and foremost principles about joy, or anything, should always come from scripture, inspired by the Creator of each of us – Who knows more about our happiness and joy than we could begin to know in a hundred lifetimes. He wired us in His image, for joy and more.

John 17, verse 11 gives us powerful first glimpses about joy.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might

remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

Wow! Let's take it in pieces.

"*These things have I spoken unto you*", tells me this is where the roots of joy are. Our joy-roots are in the teachings of Jesus Christ. But more than that, these truths have a delivery address written on each and every one – it's the 'unto you'. Jesus Christ came to this Earth via a smelly stable to deliver joy-roots truths to me and to you, and to that teen that God has placed in your mission field. They're written down with countless examples of others that claim Heaven's joy .

These joy-roots truths become the tools; the rules, in our labors as we faithfully carry God's message, with tears, to the hurts of others. These truths with tears blossom into deep-rooted plants that endure storms in every life.

The 'remain in you' says this joy will REMAIN in me. It doesn't go away tomorrow, or when I'm faced with a challenge. Happiness and laughter are often shortlived and not always sincere. So what will that remaining joy accomplish? Hebrews 12:2 tells us God's own Son, Jesus, endured to completion, the suffering and sacrifice of the Cross, by the 'joy that was set before Him'. This tells me, joy is what gets tough jobs done.

But God's word has saved the best for last. It's the 'our joy might be full'.

Full Joy is that level of character and living that makes us most Christian; most 'Christ-like'. Jesus tells us, in John 17:11, that we're given the same joy that Jesus has and it comes through all of scripture, and its proper use. Excitedly, we see this joy will remain in us and ends the verse with the expected result. This stated result - 'joy might be FULL' adds an almost mysterious dimension to this joy. 1Peter 1:8 labels this full joy as 'joy unspeakable'. Jude 24 gives another aspect of this joy that could only come from God and His deep abiding 'parent-passion' for each of us – young and old.

Our Full Joy definition touches on just one of the many facets of 'unspeakable' Full Joy.

Full Joy is to savor our expanding joy as we consistently give sacrificially in service and substance within God's will.

Our meager definition tells us that Full Joy is best known through experiencing God's bountiful blessing as we give sacrificially.

- The boy must have experienced full joy as he gave his 5 loaves and 2 fish to Jesus to feed the hungry 5000+ multitude, and then see 12 baskets-full left over.
- The widow must have experienced full joy as she filled barrels with God's abundance from her having sacrificially given the remaining food to Elijah that she was preparing for she and her son before they starve.
- How about the Jews giving sacrificially to build the tabernacle and the city of Jerusalem?
- Though wracked with unspeakable pain, Our Lord must have felt full joy as He completed His mission, for His heavenly Father, in shedding His blood on Calvary.

As we feed daily on all of scripture, we'll begin to see our doors of opportunity to meet the needs of others – in service and substance. Stepping through those doors with tears, yield fruit to the Master and abiding full joy within us.

We have Heaven's guarantee on it:

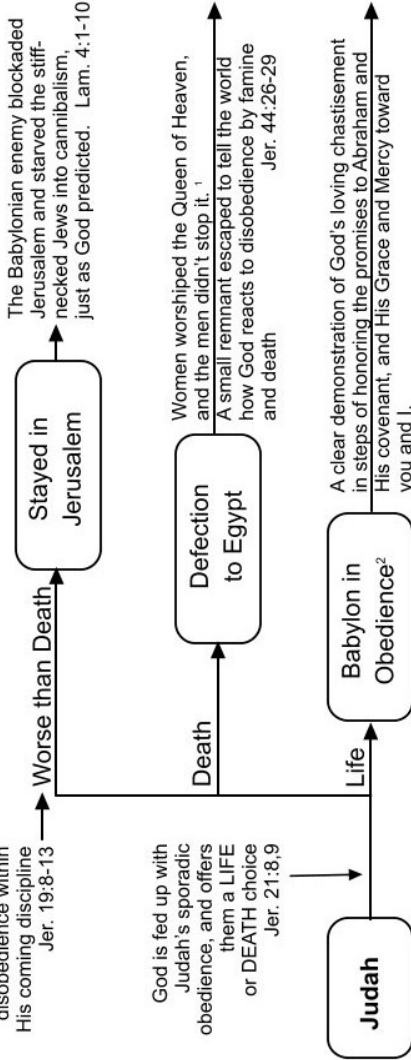
“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” Psalm 126:6

A helpful chart follows...

Judah's Babylonian Captivity ("Babylonian Judgment")

God forewarned clearly the depths of His wrath against disobedience within His coming discipline
Jer. 19:8-13

God is fed up with Judah's sporadic obedience, and offers them a LIFE or DEATH choice
Jer. 21:8,9



3 Levels of God's Discipline:
 = [Chastisement] -- Measured discipline, including God's Grace and Mercy, to draw a soul back to the path God wants.
 = [Cleansing] -- Quick removal, sometimes by stoning, often by supernatural means.
 = [Cannibalism] -- God lets sin turn against itself resulting in humans acting like animals.

¹When you're in the wrong place, quite probably you'll be doing the wrong things.
²About 70 years. Those that obeyed God and 'willingly' went into captivity would be allowed to have vineyards, cattle and growing families. And, best of all, they were promised they'd someday be able to return to their homeland. Jeremias 29:4-7.