

“Raising Our Ebenezer”

1 Samuel 7:12

A Challenge to parents
and grandparents
to prepare our children
for the future



Old Testament Reading – 1 Samuel 7:1-17

New Testament Reading – 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

“Raising Our Ebenezer” 1 Samuel 7:12

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

According to the gospels, Jesus loved children. In the 10th chapter of the gospel of Mark, Jesus told His disciples, **“Let the little children come unto Me, and forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of God.”**

- Some of the harshest words that came from the lips of our loving Lord were to those that, in any way, hinder or distract a child from their desire to know, love, and trust God, and to believe in Him as their Savior and Lord.

According to biblical and secular history, Satan hates children.

- The earth is soaked with the shed blood of little children who were sacrificed unto false gods, killed in wars, or unwanted and abandoned on the roads and left to die.
- When society breaks down and families disintegrate, the children are always the ones who must suffer the most, and this is where we are in our nation today.

There is a war on children. The demonic powers hate babies because they hate Jesus who came to us as a baby.

- When they destroy “the least of these,” they destroy a part of themselves, and the image of the Lord Jesus.
- In effect, they are saying, **“We will not have this child to rule over us.”**
- The severity of this war means today’s parents must rethink their perspective on parenting, for in many ways, what worked even a generation ago will not work today.
- Satan, who is the “father of lies” (John 8:44) knows his time is short, and he is using deceptive methods to corrupt our children and destroy their souls.
- Parents cannot fight this battle physically or intellectually. They must seek that wisdom that comes only to those who have a deep, abiding, personal relationship with God, which will allow them to recognize the subtle schemes of the the enemy, and know what they should do.

The Apostle Paul’s primary purpose in writing to the Ephesians was to warn the elders about the false teachers leading the naïve away from the truth.

- In Ephesians 6, Paul admonished the children to obey their parents regarding spiritual things – they were to honor, or respect their father and mother and not to listen to others.
- Fathers were not to provoke their children to anger by being critical of them when they sinned. Instead, they were to teach their children the basic principles of God’s Word, and the model those principles before them in such a way that it would create their children’s trust in God, which included His protection and provision on this earth, and the promise of eternal life in heaven.
- Satan does not want your child to believe in God, or receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and he will do everything within his power to keep your children from being saved at an early age.
- Therefore, parents must understand this battle for their children’s soul cannot be fought in the flesh – it is a spiritual battle that must be fought with the whole armor of God.

According to a study conducted by several secular universities, despite parental guidance and participation:

- Children who are only involved in secular activities, including athletic programs, are more likely to veer away from the basic moral values and normal lifestyles.
- Children who are actively engaged in a faith-based community on a regular basis are less likely to get involved in risky behavior that will have life-long consequences.
- Children who regularly attend worship with their parents are more likely to have higher life-goals, live happier and healthier lives, and less interest in worldly things.

According to a study conducted by several evangelical entities:

- If the mother attends church, but the father doesn’t, only 2% of the children attend consistently.
- If the father attends church but the mother doesn’t, 44% of the children will continue to attend consistently.
- If the father and mother attend with their family, 33% of the children will continue to attend church when they leave home.
- When Dad comes to Christ first, 93% of the families will follow.
- When Mom comes to Christ first, 17% of the families will follow.
- When Children come to Christ first, only 3.5% of families will follow.

Conclusion: Parents who are seriously concerned about the future of America and what their children must learn to live in and with, will lead the way in getting their children involved in a Bible believing, God-focused, Christ-centered Church.

The Hymn, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” was written by Robert Robinson when he was just 23-years old. However, Robinson drifted from his first love for the Lord, but 30 years later, God used those very words to bring him to repentance.

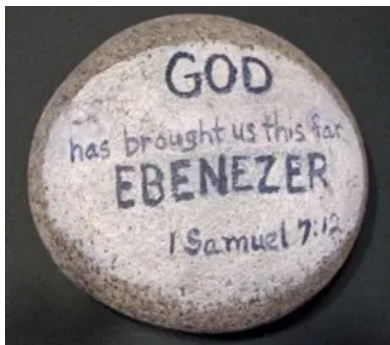
- The third verse of that song reads: **“Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither, by Thy help I come. And I hope by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.”**

“Ebenezer” comes from the Hebrew phrase “stone of help.”

- The background of that phrase comes from the 7th chapter of 1 Samuel, where the Hebrew prophet set up a stone at the very place where God had given the Israelites victory over the Philistines.
- For many years, the Israelites had turned away from God and they were worshipping false idols. God had allowed the Philistines to attack them, in the hope that they would repent of their sins and return to Him.
- Samuel called the Israelites to assemble at Mizpah, where he offered sacrifices unto God and lead the people in prayer.
- In a moment of deep humility, the people cried out unto God, repented for their sins, and recognized their need for God’s intervention in their war with the Philistines.
- Suddenly, God answered their prayers with thunder so loud the Philistine army became disoriented, and the Israelites defeated them.
- Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and he named it **“Ebenezer,”** saying, **“Thus far the Lord has helped us.”**(7:12)
- Every time an Israelite saw that stone, he was reminded of God’s power of protection and provision.
- The “stone of help” marked where the enemy had been defeated.

Today, we are asking every family to set up their “Ebenezer” stone in their homes, commemorating the many times they have seen God’s hand of protection, provision and promise.

- As we face an unknown and uncertain future, the whole family needs a daily reminder: **“Just as God has brought us this far, so will He guide us in the future.”**



Use your stone to:

- Document the times God has delivered you from the enemy.
- A passage of Scripture that assures you of God’s presence and power.