

In human relationships, some people habitually behave as if they are *entitled* to things with little regard to the burdens it places on others. Some are so self-sensitive and indulgent that their *least* important *desires* must be treated as *critical demands*, thereby disregarding and disrespecting those they *control* and take for granted.

This type of intemperate character usually develops at a very early age and is ingrained well before young adulthood. By that time, it has become so habitual that they are nearly incapable of considering anyone as being equally important as them. They may *appear* to be otherwise at times, but this is only a veneer, anticipating securing their own relational interests; being a benefactor only when it is convenient, gains them recognition or when to do otherwise would consequently inconvenience them further.

Yet eventually, those close to them will find them out. That is when the inevitable happens – the demise of their most cherished relationships. Their world crumbles because they never developed the sound foundation of an unselfish character.

As a perfect loving parent, God *insists* that we as his children learn to view the needs of other's as being as important as our own. Thus, we may avoid the inevitable sufferings that come from broken relationships that so often result from wrong attitudes. Like God, parents also desire to have enduring positive relationships with their children and thus, responsibly provide needed guidance early on that will help them to eventually develop healthy relationships.

As a father of a young-adult son, I can attest that lovingly holding him consistently to high standards (as opposed to over indulgence) is the opposite from parental oppression; the opposite of stifling his mind or character; and the opposite from damaging or distancing the relationship. It is what was critical in setting him free from the chains of unreasonable, selfish, foolish and unhealthy behaviors. The high quality relationships, healthy intimacy and mutual respect he continues to enjoy with me, as well as his friends and other family members, provide clear evidence of the benefits of passing on God's training (Gen. 18:19; Pr. 22:6; 23:24; 29:15).

What an ongoing joyful experience parenting can be (Ps. 127:3-5). Praise God for giving us children and for being our parent.