

Raising
Sons
While
In
Ministry



The Ministry Wife's Home

- Raising sons while in Ministry

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I want us to know that according to the book of Rev 12:12-17, particularly verse 13 which says *“When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.”*

The devil is always after the woman and her seeds, especially the male child.

We are both physical and spiritual beings hence in this session we will approach the topic: physically and spiritually.

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit (sons and daughters) of the womb is the reward.
Psalms 127:3 (paraphrased)

We must always remember that we are caretakers of these children, that they are gifts from GOD and that it is a privilege for us all to be chosen by God for such a talk. We should never take it for granted.

Sons need nurture and guidance.

Sons need a solid structure to keep their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual growth on track. This means we are to be present physically, psychologically and spiritually in their lives, supporting their growth and development, and leading by our godly example. Ephesians 6: 1-4 says *“Bring them up in the nurture of the Lord.”*

A typical example is Daniel and the other Hebrew boys who refused to defile themselves with the King's meat. It was not recorded that their parents were there.

Let's remember that charity begins at home. Parents are the Bible that every child in a home reads, and sons are the extension of their family.

As parents, let's live out what we preach. As to our sons, we are the mirror in which they view other women and the yardstick they use to measure other women including their wives or future wives.

So as women, wives and mothers in ministry, we hold crucial roles in the life of our sons. Eli was referred to as the Chief Priest, a judge in Israel and also a godly man. Eli's sons were the only children in the Bible referred to as ‘worthless’. They were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord.

They slept with women that came to serve God. The sons; Hophni and Phinehas ended up dying a shameful death on the same day.

Yes, Eli was a great man of God who can be said neglected his sons. There were even no recordings of their mother. Was she dead, divorced, separated or alive? There is the possibility that the absence of their mother could be the reason for their misbehaviour.

As the scripture teaches, 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' (Prov. 22:6).

How do you teach them and what do you teach them?

- Knowing and loving God and His ways.
- Accepting themselves and self-discipline.

How?

Charity begins at home. Let's live by example.

A typical example is the 3 Hebrew boys who even though their parents were not around refused to pollute themselves with the King's meat. They took a stand for God. They knew their God.

Our sons are the future husbands and fathers.

- Learn to teach them how to love God and love themselves as God's image bearers as what you don't have you cannot give. If you don't love yourself you can't love others.
- If you love yourself you won't sleep around, and you won't use drugs. As the mother, show, teach and emphasise in their heart that their body is the temple of the Most High God.
- It is important to open the line of communication with our sons. Speak with them, speak to them and also challenge them with the Word of God.
- Learn to speak to the King inside of them but don't overindulge them.

During all my job roles, I have met young boys from the age of 11 years actively involved in sexual activities under the influence of alcohol and drugs and their parents are not aware.

Let's not be overly busy or channel our energies to keeping our girls safe and trained as wives to the extent of over-pampering while we neglect or toughen up our sons to the extent that they have no empathy or respect and become uncaring.

During my work in UK prisons with young adult males, I met a lot of young boys of African origin, Nigeria to be precise but are British-born. Most of them are victims of circumstances

and they are all Christians, some of them are pastors' children who found themselves in prison due to peer pressure or joint enterprise.

As a mother, be interested in what your sons are doing. Let's not criticise them but speak with understanding and positivity, and at the same time express your dissatisfaction with any unacceptable behaviour.

Boys as Victims of Joint Enterprise

The joint enterprise is a common law where an individual can be jointly convicted of the crime of another. If there is a group of friends and one committed an offence, the law permits the whole group of friends to be convicted, as it is believed that the friends might have discussed it before committing the crime, therefore, many young boys are locked up for years and some will be in prison forever (this to me is still the devil fighting against male children).

I once met a 17-year-old boy in the prison Chapel, he was a straight A* student, he said. He wanted to study medicine. He said "Aunty, at 24 years, I should be a graduate but I am not coming out of here until age 35 years, will it not be too late then to enrol for medicine?"

I met another boy age 15 that is on life sentence as a murderer. Once he leaves the juvenile prison he is moving into the adult prison (the devil has succeeded in destroying his destiny). This boy has uncontrollable anger; his dad always beat his mother in his presence and he could not defend his mother so this made him develop pent-up anger towards people in authority.

Also, there are many big brothers on the streets that are looking out for innocent young boys to groom into crime because they say that they will get lighter sentences. I kid you not, prison is not a place to be even for an hour, many things can be picked up.

Why did I share the above examples? I have met so many parents that said to me "God gave the children to us, He would take care of them." And my answer to this is that if He does not need human helpers to nurture our sons he would just throw them into the earth (my belief).

Be involved

As women in ministry, it is important we create quality time with our sons and we should ensure we are physically and psychologically present. Let's try and drop what we are doing when our sons are trying to communicate with us. There is nothing wrong with playing games and cooking with our sons.

I particularly don't see anything wrong when a male toddler plays with dolls, it doesn't make them a girl, it helps them develop how to care. I don't see anything wrong when sons cook and

the girls do other things. Let's teach our sons to be wholesome. Also, let's stop saying to our sons "Be a man, stop crying" Even Jesus Christ our Lord wept. John 11:35

Other people's contribution

Thank you so much sister Kemi for this wonderful insight, especially for people from my culture that concentrate more on the female child. We believe we don't need to do much for the male child as they will be the ones to marry a woman. But we forget that these male children will eventually be the heads of their homes.

Kemi continues

And if you look into troubled homes, this seems to be the issue. Most of the men look unto their wives to be their mothers and wives and as well be in charge. The wives will then go into masculinity and buried their femininity. Then the husbands start saying their wives are not submissive, while they have abjugated their God-given responsibilities as heads of their wives.

Hence why we need to give our sons all the tools, interpret the Bible to them, and let them know who they are in Christ in order for them not to be jealous of their wives in the future. They need the continuous blessings of their parents and wives.

Teach them the Bible's stance on marriage by letting them know that there is love in the Bible which is the responsibility of the man, and not just the woman's responsibility which is submission.

As mothers and wives in ministry, we need to seek wisdom and strength from God in order to support our husbands to bring up our sons in the right way. Let's break the cycle and build up great sons in every area of their lives.

As a counsellor, I have been opportune to counsel couples and I have seen without pointing fingers that the reasons for divorce is 80% caused by men (who were sons or male children) due to lack of communication skills, lack of empathy or they just don't have the skills/knowledge and understanding of who they are in Christ, in their families and in their homes. There is a saying that says without knowing the purpose of a thing; abuse is inevitable.

Help your sons find their purpose by searching the Word of God. This means that as women in Ministry, we ourselves must meditate on God's Word 24/7 as the book of Joshua 1:8 says

that *“this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”*

The most worrying is that most of the boys I met in prisons have been damaged but many will come out of prison and marry a decent girl. The male child that comes out of prison grew up in a toxic environment. Prison is survival of the fittest, someone needs to be strong to come out alive. They are devoid of godly emotion. They can kill. This reminds me of the scripture that says the devil has come to steal, kill and destroy.

But we will take a stand today that not on our watch, the devil will not steal, kill and destroy the destinies of our sons.

Sons need to take their place. Get them involved in decision-making, housework, and Biblical debates. Get them to reflect on the course they choose, their views on life, and the opposite sex. Let the Word of God inform their teaching.

As mothers and wives in ministry, a lot is entrusted into our hands and I pray that we will not fail in Jesus' mighty name.

All I am talking about here is not only for our Biological sons, it also relates to other sons placed in our life.

What can we do to support our sons to be that which God want them to be as the 'head not just in word but in deeds?

To answer the above question, let's look at some women that we can emulate in the Bible. Hannah mother of Samuel, Lois, Timothy's grandmother and Eunice, Timothy's mother are a few examples we will touch on.

Hannah

Hannah gave Samuel back to the Lord. She looked for a discipler that will guide, guard and direct her son towards the things of God. Hannah had a husband but she took the bold step with the agreement of her husband to wean her son and then yield him into God's hands. Samuel grew up to be a man that saved God right from his childhood years. God can do it for our sons too.

I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. 28 So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there. 1 Samuel 1: 27-28

Lois and Eunice

Lois was Timothy's grandmother, while Eunice was Timothy's mother. So sincere was the faith of these two women in Christ, they are made mentioned in the Bible, not just for who they were, but for the impact they had by the way they chose to live their everyday lives and invested in the boy Timothy! Under the care of his mother and grandmother, Timothy became a Christ follower.

Eunice and Lois taught Timothy God's Word from infancy. There is power in investing spiritual truths unto infants and above. The sooner we encourage them by reading, memorizing, and singing Scripture, the longer they will have to hear the gospel.

Let's also remind ourselves of the mothers we do not want to be in the bible.

Rebecca

As parents, we must learn to keep united fronts. Rebecca and Isaac had no confidence to communicate openly and honestly with one another. They were not unified. Isaac did not share information with Rebecca, hence she enrolled herself in the school of eavesdropping which had an adverse impact on their children leading to one son stealing the blessing that belong to another. This was orchestrated by their mother. The family lived in deceit with one another. We must ensure we adopt honest and open relationships in our homes.

As mothers, we need to make sure our sons do not exchange their lives for a bowl of porridge. Porridge could mean money, the lust of the eyes and flesh, positions, and vanity upon vanity as it happened in the life of Esau.

Esau “despised his birthright” (Genesis 25:34). He had not learned to cherish the blessing of being one of God's chosen. Let us encourage unity and brotherly affection between our sons and their siblings. Rebecca failed to do this amongst her twins.

Rebekah as a mother and wife did a poor job of modelling or teaching support, unity and affection to her sons. Let's teach our sons that in all they do they must put God first.

Naomi

The names Naomi named her two sons indicate that they won't be sticking around for long. Mahlon means "weakness" or "sickness" and Chilion means "annihilation" or "consumption. As mothers in ministry, what names do you call your sons? Lazy, glutton, trouble, stupid, foolish, bitter like Jabesh. He could have had a name that means Prince, King, your excellence, the

anointed. This does not mean that we are camouflaging the behaviour as we must learn to separate their behaviours from who they are. They are not their behaviour.

Out there is mean, let's not be mean inside and drive our sons into the wolves' den.

The power of life and death is in our tongues.

It is not too late as **"We overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of your testimony, and you love not your life until death in Jesus' name! life until death in Jesus' name! (Revelation 12:11)**

One thing we must remember is that the devil is not a time waster. He does not attack nonentities. He attacks those that carry God's glory. He attacks what is inside of them and their future. He is afraid of what is inside. He is after what belongs to them. He even tempted Jesus.

A quick recap of what has been said

1. We should meditate on the book of the Lord and live by example as charity begins from home.
2. We should teach our sons about God, facilitate their relationship with God, and know their purpose in life, and that it is God first.
3. We should pray with them and pray for them.
4. We should create a time and an environment that is honest and an open line of communication with our sons.
5. Be sensitive to their needs, respect their views and positively challenge unacceptable views and behaviours.
6. Let them be in touch with their feelings, teach them to identify their feelings and teach them to manage feelings.
7. Teach them to love themselves, God, siblings and others.
8. Choose your friends wisely and have no secrets.
9. Discipline with love.
10. Re-dedicate them back to God.
11. It is our responsibility to protect our children.
12. Teach your sons to respect you, their father, siblings, especially sisters and others.
13. Give them godly counsel always.

Remember the devil is always after them, do not pray in fear but pray with confidence and always without ceasing.

Remember when you are raising a son you are raising a father and husband. When you raise sons well their future is secure.

Many young black boys of Nigerian descent but born British are being killed in prison. Many came from outside London and they are only permitted less than an hour visit. Parents feel it's not worth the visit hence these young boys have not seen their parents in months.

One thing I noticed that forever stays with me is that these young boys respect and miss their mothers or anyone that kind of plays motherly roles in their lives. They warm up to me because I am next to the mother figure in there BUT they fight men in authority.

Discipline

Discipline is crucial but let's discipline them appropriately not like an animal. I noticed many of the young boys in prison have anger issues, especially towards their dads either due to them being absent or too strict or just not having a relationship with them.

Always remember that there are physical and spiritual prisons which can lead to depression, mental health issues or suicide.

Faith without works is dead. As wives/ mothers in ministry, please let's not just pray, but let's stand up and take action.

The scripture says "*I wish we prosper in health even as our souls prospereth.*" God wants us to prosper in everything He has placed in our hands including raising godly sons.

This story I want to share relates to a very close friend of mine. My friend's sister was a very decent girl, a virgin at 27 years and all she wanted to do was to serve God. She was on fire for God. Her pastor so loved her and they wanted her to marry their son who was residing in the UK. Unbeknown to her, the pastor's son has been in prison for many years and was about to be released. Anyway, he went to Nigeria and married the girl. After marriage, she got to know that he is an alcoholic and uses drugs. A year after their marriage she tested positive for AIDS. With all the advice and support we gave her she could not bear it, and she died.

May our sons not be like this pastor's son and may our daughters not encounter such a pastor, his family and his son. Let's be transparent in all of our dealings as God sees all.

Other people's input

Our sister mentioned the need to help our children love themselves, this is very important, she is not talking about loving the self-life, rather, I believe she was saying to us we must help our children to believe in whom God has made them be, appreciate and accept who they are as God's creation. They must not allow anything or anyone to make them become impaired in their view of Christ.

One of the key problems for boys and even girls is the matter of identity. Boys seek to prove superiority, hence the reason for involvement in drugs, gangs etc, and we parents must help our children understand what it means to be superior as Christian guys.

I also want to add that we should introduce practical life discussions with our sons. Topics like relationships, career, outlook, drugs, friendship etc should be talked about. Bathsheba did this with Solomon.

Let us befriend them as sister Kemi said, and sometimes, we need to distinguish between rebellious and temporary behaviours that are part of childishness.

We also need to let go sometimes and see beyond a behaviour, we need to look deeper, and that is why we as mothers need discernment.

Also, let us get our husbands involved. Let us gently push them into their responsibilities as fathers to our sons.

I was touched by the story our sister shared about the girl that married wrongly. Please as some of our daughters or sons are getting to marriageable season, let us not pressurise them or arrange a marriage for them against God's plan for them.

We must teach our sons and daughters how to hear God and teach them about marriage in God's view. I highly recommend the book "Finding the Bone of your bones" by Gbile Akanni.

Let us not be satisfied that our children are serving in church, service does not equate to maturity in Christ nor genuine born-again experience.

And please let us not push our children to marry someone abroad or someone closer all because of status or the desire to make it in life. I pray the Lord help us. And our sons shall be well nurtured in their youths indeed. May they become sturdy oaks. Amen

Questions on raising sons

1. Why is the enemy focused on the male in particular as opposed to both genders? Why does he attack male children(sons)?

Answer: He attacks their future because he knows that they are heads. Sons carry the family lineage and bring continuity. The cutting off of a male child, that then means that there will be no enlargement of families.

Greater is He in our sons, therefore, waging spiritual warfare on behalf of our sons should constitute a valuable aspect of daily prayer.

Another person's response to the question: The same devil that is seeking our sons is also seeking our girls. He pursues the one that is more accessible to him. He is in pursuit of the woman's seed right from Genesis 3:15, and sister Kemi also referred us to Revelation 12 where we see that the devil pursued the children of the Christian woman, particularly those who are truly following.

In Exodus 2, Pharaoh asked that sons be thrown into the river, and at another time they should be killed at birth stool. But he said the girls should be left alone. I can only speculate that he knew that the Hebrew girls in Egypt are likely to marry the Egyptians. And the story our sister shared confirmed that to me.

Therefore, we must take the Biblical upbringing of our children very seriously. I have seen many cases of the female ruined a lot. And I have also seen that of the males too.

2. Are fathers not supposed to play their roles in the lives of sons too?

Answer: Yes, fathers are supposed to play their roles too. Mothers nurture and fathers discipline in love. It is a blessing if both father and mother work together in unity.

3. What could make husbands, particularly the ones that are pastors not be involved with their sons and how can we resolve that?

Answer: Over-business and lack of understanding that family comes before ministry are the most important reasons why fathers in ministry are not involved in their sons' lives. Another reason is the father's upbringing which includes the belief that sons have to be tough hence they have to navigate their way in life.

We need to keep reminding the fathers and also pray for them. If as a mother you need to step back, you can if you think that will make your husband step up.

4. How do we help sons that have gone wayward in any way?

Answers: We can help sons that have gone wayward by the following:

- a. Going on our knees in prayer.
- b. Never stop loving such a son.
- c. Giving great counsel and guidance to him

- d. Speak to the King, that is the greatness in him.
- e. Speak with him
- f. Don't be afraid to discipline him and remember discipline doesn't have to be physical
- g. Ask him his views about his behaviour.

When I worked with the young boys in prison they don't see anything wrong in walking into shops and take sandwiches or anything and then walk out of the shop without paying. They don't see it as stealing. Therefore, teach them what things like these are as Christian boys and allow them to tell their views on what behaviours as these.

h. patient patient patient; Be patient!

- 5. How do we handle sons with the wrong outlook like pierced ears, bad hairstyles, wrong clothes etc.?

Answer: Communication is key as most of these children just want to try things for a season. Shouting is not the solution. Also, pray against the spirit of this age that can make them rebellious. Also, note that outside adornment is not as important as what they have inside of them.

There is no amount of discouragement we did not give to my sister's son about piercing his ears, he went ahead wearing earrings in both ears but a couple of years later, he is fed up with it and stopped using them.

Pray, communicate and be patient. Bring up your children in the way of the Lord.