

# Suffering For Your Children

By Martie du Plessis



Paul writes in Romans 8:12 that all children of God are led by the Spirit of God. He goes on to say that if suffer with Christ they will also be glorified with Him. I believe that a part of this suffering is extended to our personal lives as we erect boundaries around our families and also for the sake of our children.

It seems as if parents, in general, are more interested in staying within known comfort zones, rather than exploring avenues that could yield better results. The fact is that in “the last days” parents will have to be much clearer in vision, giving direction, setting an example and the discipling of their families.

Parents do need to realize that they might have to suffer for the sake of truth and the protection of their families, more than ever before. I want to give some real life examples of how

parents are prepared to suffer for their children, and through these give the assurance that the fruit is very much worthwhile.

I see how concerned, Godly mothers would start a prayer group at their child’s school for the sake of godliness at these schools. These mothers become like watchdogs in the school community where headmasters and teachers need to reckon with them. Overall the school environment is morally safer than schools where there are no parents praying or keeping decision makers accountable.

Many parents would take their children out of school and home educate them rather than entertaining suggestions to put their child in a ‘special class’ or putting them on medication, if in actual fact their child only needs a more individualised form of education. The fruit of

this change results in a child with a much better sense of belonging, worthiness and competence.

I see a father taking his sons out of boarding school to safeguard them from the pressure of watching pornography with friends. These families ‘suffer’ especially when the mom was not necessarily ready for the radical step of home-schooling the children. In many instances the dads also take on the role of educating the children; while at times this is uncharted territory, they do this because they believe it is the right thing to do. The result is a child rescued from perversion because a father was willing to pay the price and suffer the consequences of initial personal inconveniences. I witness how career women adjust their lives for the sake of a child in need.

They give up a secure careers and huge salaries in obedience to the voice of God to be a stay-at-home-mom to educate their children. In many instances it entails a move to a smaller house, having just one car and fewer holidays, yet more quality family time and spiritually whole children.

Many parents put down boundaries with regards to freedom in using technological devices such as cell phones, tablets and television. At times these families suffer and are labelled as 'old fashioned', yet most children and adults are negatively addicted to technology without even knowing it. According to Nir Eyal in his book *Hooked*, "79% of smartphone owners check their device within 15 minutes of waking up every morning.

Perhaps more startling, fully one-third of Americans say they would rather give up sex than lose their cell phones. A 2011 university study suggested people check their phones thirty-four times per day. However, industry insiders believe that number is closer to an astounding 150 daily sessions. We're hooked. The technologies we use have turned into compulsions, if not full-fledged addictions. It's the impulse to check a message notification.

It's the pull to visit You Tube, Facebook, or Twitter for just a few minutes, only to find yourself still tapping and scrolling an hour later."

Responsible parents see the dangers of these addictions in advance and put measures in place to address a discipline where a technology can be a tool and not an addiction. One such an example is to listen and follow the Word of God on your phone first thing in the morning before starting to interact with others. More and more families are opting not to watch television programmes that negatively impact their spirituality, and also add to a waste of time.

I want to inspire parents with children in public schools, to fight for the right of their children not to be sent away to other therapy centres, but rather for their own schools to have small centres where these special needs can be addressed. I challenge churches to start centres for the special needs of gifted children in their churches. Where it is possible for parents to home educate their children it is preferable to letting them suffer and be fearful of life. When a child feels he or she is no delight to others, they are traumatised and it affects their pursuit of the purposes of God in their lives.

Parents and grandparents need to live by example now more than ever before, and to model higher Biblical values. All parents need to have a clear vision of where they want to take their children and need to be prepared to suffer for it.

Oswald Chambers in *My Utmost for His Highest* writes, "God gives us the vision, then He takes us down to the valley to batter us into the shape of the vision, and it is in the valley that so many of us faint and give way. Every vision will be made real if we will have patience. Think of the enormous leisure of God! He is never in a hurry. We are always in such a frantic hurry. In the light of the glory of the vision we go forth to do things, but the vision is not real in us yet; and God has to take us into the valley, and put us through fires and floods to batter us into shape, until we get to the place where He can trust us with the veritable reality."

The road that we walk with our children and grandchildren is a journey not for the faint-hearted. It is a road of changing first, and then to be an example for those who follow. As time goes on I become increasingly aware of the price we have to pay to ensure close relationships with family members, and that they have an example to live life, not only for themselves but also for those who follow them.

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Martie du Plessis give guidance to families about alternative education, mostly home education. Martie explains to parents how to find the learning pathway for each child to enable the child to be a job creator rather than a job seeker. When parents have more time with their children, they can live a more value based life.



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*A New Generation of families*

**Martie du Plessis**  
*Educational Consultant and  
Remedial Therapist*

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**Cell: 082 57 4 14 33**  
**Fax: 086 642 7743**  
**[martcham@vodamail.co.za](mailto:martcham@vodamail.co.za)**  
**[www.dynamislearning.co.za](http://www.dynamislearning.co.za)**

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