

Being a Parent – Job, Responsibility or Calling?

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March 21, 2019



A visitor to New York City was walking around the streets, enjoying the hustle and bustle. He noticed a new construction site and saw some workers near the sidewalk. Curious about what new building was going up, he approached the first construction worker and asked him what he was doing. Without looking up, he answered, "I'm laying bricks, isn't it obvious?"

The man walked a little further and asked a second man the same question. The worker grunted, obviously in a foul mood and said, "I am just earning a day's pay". Since this wasn't the answer the visitor was looking for, he persisted and approached the third man. He said, "Excuse me, I am really curious what you are building here." The third man stopped working, wiped the sweat from his forehead and smiled. Then he looked skyward, and with a gleam in his eye, he responded, "I'm building a cathedral!"

All three men were doing basically the same work. However, it was their perspectives that were different. The first man had a job. The second man had a career. The third man was able to see the big picture and how his personal effort was part of something bigger than himself.

If we look at these three perspectives in the context of family life, it can help us examine the kind of culture that we are creating. We all have days when we can only see what is right in front of us. But as parents, we can help our children move beyond their own personal tasks to see the big picture. In fact, it is essential in creating synergy and unity in our families.

Part of the key in building such a family culture stems from being able to communicate a clear vision of the big picture and how each family member contributes something valuable. We may get caught up in the daily bricklaying, but if we can envision the cathedral and move through our days with intention and passion, we move towards being a healthier, happier family. Stay tuned for an important tool that can support your family as you develop this kind of culture.