



SABBATH 8—FEBURARY 24, 2024

## Protecting the Hearts of Our Children

**Matthew 6:21—“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”**

**A**nthony was a father who suffered the same grief as thousands of other Christian parents: His three adult children had left the church. They were already living with their own families and showed no desire to attend the services.

Anthony constantly invited them to church and, at family gatherings, he always talked about the danger of being far from God. This was causing discomfort for the children, so they asked their father to stop inviting them to church.

Anthony decided to intensify his prayers for his children. One morning while praying for them, the text of Matthew 6:21 crossed his mind: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” The more he prayed, the more that verse came back to his mind.

He decided to meet with his children and say that he had chosen to grant their request, so he would no longer insist that they come back to church—on the condition that they would return their tithes and offerings. They thought it would be a good agreement, as their father would no longer bother them with that matter. Sometime later, Anthony had the privilege of seeing his three children return to church.

Ellen G. White says:

There has been a great neglect on the part of parents in not seeking to interest their children in the workings of the cause of God. In many families the children seem to be left out of the question, as if they were irresponsible beings. Some parents even rob God of His just claims in tithes and offerings that they may save wealth for their children, not thinking that in so doing they are opening to their loved ones a door of temptation which will generally prove their ruin.—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 140.

**Appeal:** Ask the Lord to help your children put God and His cause first.

