

to

"My Son"

By J.F. Rowlands

"Chis is

My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased"

Mark 3:17

Foreword

This booklet was written by <u>a man who loved God and loved God's children</u>. When I read these letters he wrote to his spiritual "sons," it is to me as if I can hear God as my Heavenly Father speaking to me—as His son. It is my prayer that it may be your experience too!

We live in a day and age when most young men are washed away by <u>the spiritual</u> <u>Tsunamis of this world</u>... They are overtaken and swept along by the music of this world, the styles of this world, the fashions of this world, the pleasures of this world, the praise and promises of this world, the possessions of this world, the prestige and power of this world, the fame and fortunes of this world, the women of this world, and the wicked spirits of this world...

But, we read in Isaiah 59:19 that "<u>when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the</u> <u>Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him</u>..." One such standard is what we find in the letters recorded in this booklet, written by <u>pastor J.F. Rowlands</u> to some of his spiritual sons.

It is our prayer that the Lord will not just raise up <u>a written standard</u> (like this one) against the flood of filth in this world, but that He will raise up <u>a living standard</u>—through the lives of the boys and the young men who will read the following letters, ...through YOUR life!

God says: "Therefore come out from them and be separate... Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. <u>I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons</u>..." (2 Corinthians 6:17-18). "Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Remember, you are loved of God! He gave His Son to demonstrate that holy love. We read that "God shows and clearly proves His [own] love for us by the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) died for us" (Romans 5:8)!! To those of you who repented, received Him and believed in Him, He gave "the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name" (John 1:12). What an amazing privilege! We can say with wonder and thankfulness: "<u>Behold, what</u> <u>manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the</u> <u>sons of God</u>..." (1 John 3:1).

May the Lord Jesus Christ help us, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to <u>be true sons</u>—in whom God our Father may also be "well pleased" (Mark 3:17), to His glory!

Your brother in Christ Frikkie Kellerman

PRINCIPAL Jivannadi Christian School Letters to " "<u>MY SON</u>"

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""Thou therefore, MY SON, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 2:1

THE STRENGTH OF CHRIST'S GRACE

My dear Son

You have indeed been born to see momentous days and I feel deeply burdened to write and enlighten you concerning a very great need which you have in your young life.

Saint Paul wrote to his son, Timothy, many years ago and warned him of perilous days ahead. You, my son, are now living in those perilous days! The Greek word translated "perilous" in 2 Tim. 3:1 implies hard, difficult and fierce. The days in which we live are hard days, difficult days and fierce days! In fact, the days are getting harder, more difficult days and fiercer every passing week. We are heading fast for Armageddon — that great show-down in Palestine which will herald the return of Christ to earth!

There is only one hope for you to stand secure in these fierce days, my son! "Thou therefore, MY SON, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1). Your own weakness must be confessed and the strength of Christ's Grace must possess your life!

We all need very much more of Christ's Grace than we now have. Far too many Christians have a thin veneer of Grace over their lives. A veneer, alas, too often and too easily penetrated. The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a "Duco" for external application, but the inward influence of God's Spirit in the hear t of a believer that enriches and makes beautiful the whole life.

Unless you are strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus you will get easily offended over trivialities. "Pet corns" are the symptoms of a lack of Grace! When the lightest little thing upsets your "apple cart" it is evident that you need the strength of Christ's Grace to overcome the inevitable pin-pricks of everyday life. Beware of those who profess to be spiritual one minute and, through a lack of Grace, are the very opposite the next minute. The Grace of Christ Jesus ensures stability in Christian living! Without Christ's Grace there is no knowing where we shall end up at nightfall! We shall need much of Christ's Grace if we are to live through the coming days victoriously. The strength of Christ's Grace is the only antidote I know for the exceeding fierce times in which we live.

We need that Grace which manifests itself in self-sacrifice (2 Cor. 8:9). Many Christians are paupers in the connection!. We need that Grace which manifests itself in meekness (Isa. 53:7; 1 Pet. 2:23). There is a strength in meekness that the world overlooks! We need, oh how badly we need that Grace which manifests itself in forbearance and forgiveness (Col 3:13). How dare we call ourselves Christians when our lives are largely void of that Grace that is in Christ Jesus? Pray for that "exceeding abundant" Grace to fill your heart, my son! (1 Tim. 1:14).

You will have to face many problems in life, but in every problem you will be able to prove that Christ' Grace is sufficient for you (2 Cor. 12:9). Where sin abounds you will find that Christ's Grace will much more abound (Rom. 5:20).

There is no excuse for you whatsoever! Christ's indwelling Grace will enable you to share His Victory all along the Road of Life. Sin shall not have dominion over you if you have the Grace of the Lord in your heart. You will need this Grace at home, at school and at play! You will need it all through boyhood, youth and manhood! You will need it in private and in public! You will need it morning, afternoon and evening!

Therefore, my son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus! I close my letter to you with the very last words in the Bible... "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

Much love and many prayers from J F Rowlands.

"<u>MY SON</u>, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Proverbs 1:10

THE REFUSAL OF SINFUL ENTICEMENT

My dear Son

It is my joy once again to write and exhort you to walk uprightly in the ways of the Lord. It hath been said, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11). I should love to think that all the good things of life are to be showered upon you, my son! **It all depends upon how you walk!** If you walk upright they will be given to you; but if you walk crooked they will be withheld!

The UPRIGHT LIFE is gloriously possible through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; but it is not easy by any means! Some boys think that it is only sissies who can become Christians! What a terrible mistake they are making by thinking like that. It takes every ounce of grit and courage to stand for Christ! You will need much more than ordinary backbone if you are going to stand true to Principle when the morals of others are crumbling in ruins around you!

You will be sorely tempted and tried on every side. Satan will use many agents to lure you away into sin. **His methods are legion but his aim is singular!** Satan wants you to lose your uprightness, your purity, and, finally, your soul!

Every sinner has a sinful influence! Every sinner is, perhaps unknowingly, as agent of Satan! You must resist the temptations which sinners bring to you. Resist them in the Name of Jesus! "MY SON, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). Sinners will entice you to sin—CONSENT THOU NOT! Enticements will come for you to desecrate the Lord's Day; and in a thousand other ways you will be enticed by sinners (per Satan) to grieve the Heart of God by sinning. My son, CONSENT THOU NOT!

As a Child of God, sinners cannot successfully entice you to sin without your consent! Resist all temptation in the Name of the Lord and withhold your consent to sin! "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. 4:14,15).

Be careful, dear son, lest any man beguile you with enticing words! (Col. 2:4). The tragedy of Eden has been repeated millions of times! Adam and Eve fell in the very beginning because they were beguiled by the serpent's subtlety (2 Cor. 11:3). They were enticed to do what God had told them not to do; they gave their consent to it and did it! Hence sin!

Every day of your life you will be enticed to do wrong! but every day of your life you will have the Saviour with you to help you and to uphold you. Ask Him to give you His Strength each day to withhold your consent from sinful enticements.

Goodbye and God bless you.

Lovingly yours, J F Rowlands.

THE MINISTRY OF DIVINE CHASTISEMENT

My dear Son

Many parents have spoilt their children by sparing the rod of correction! In consequence these juniors are growing up without a knowledge of that discipline which helps us to understand why God so often chooses to chastise His children.

No boy likes to get a hiding! In fact, it is often very, very unpleasant! Boys wouldn't be boys if they didn't do all they could to avoid being the target for father's slipper! But after all, I suppose every father has a reason for spanking his son! Perhaps the little chap visited the pantry once too often and was caught sticking his finger into the jam! The father must impress upon his that it is wrong to do this and the whacking to be a criminal and so he uses the rod of correction in the hand of love Believe it or not. . . There is a real ministry in paternal admonishment!

"MY SON, despise not the chastening of the Lord" (Heb. 12:5-11); Prov. 3:11, 12). Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth! God is our Heavenly Father and He desires us to be His good children. It is as natural for us to despise the chastenings of God as it is for us to try to avoid father's slipper! We would rather be left alone without His chastisement! But God knows what is best for us. He wants us to befit His Kingdom! It is for our profit that He correcteth us, that we might be partakers of His Glory!

We are being prepared for Heaven and all God's children are being spiritually refined by the process of chastisement. Many are fainting at God's rebuke! Be strong, my son, and faint not when thou are rebuked of Him! It is because God loves you that He is scourging you.. He wants to make you perfect!

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous" (Heb. 12:1). How true! Who enjoys a hiding? Who rejoices in rebuke? The chastening of the Lord often seems to be grievous-but it is not! **There is a great ministry in Divine Chastisement!** God wants to exercise us thereby; but we are often too impatient to be exercised! We query the love and justice of God! But there comes a blessed "afterward" to all chastenings, and it is in that glorious season that we reap the precious fruit of righteousness. It is then that we begin to understand!

God has a wonderful plan for your life, my son! He can see in you what the sculptor can see in the block of marble. But to make you what He wants you to be will necessitate much chipping and chastening.

"MY SON, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." The chastening and the rebuking are for your profit! They are God's hammer and chisel to make you according to His Pattern.

With much love and many prayers, J F Rowlands.

Give unto MY SON, a perfect heart." 1 Chron. 29:19

THE GIFT OF HEART PERFECTION

My dear Son

I was reading the twenty-ninth chapter of 1 Chronicles this morning and when I came to the nineteenth verse, I paused and joined in with David's beautiful prayer for his son. "Give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart," he prayed, to keep Thy commandments, Thy testimonies, and Thy statutes." David was praying for Solomon and I was praying for you!

The success of your life depends upon the spiritual condition of heart. **The heart of the unregenerate man is rotten to the core!** The Bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). If you wish to make your way prosperous and have good success in this life you must get your heart right with God.

The heart of man is a unclean as a stinking sepulchre; it is idolatrous and worships at the shrine of vain pleasure and applause; it is stony and insensible. It is everything it shouldn't be! Is there any wonder that I pray for you, my son?

You cannot make your heart perfect by doing good works or even by trying your best in every way to live an exemplary life. The only thing that you can do is to respond to God's loving invitation when He says to you, "My son, give me thine heart" (Prov. 23:26). Surrender your sinful heart to the Lord and He will make it perfect!

A perfect heart is God's Gift to all who come to Him repentantly in the Name of Jesus Christ!" A new heart will I give you," saith the Lord (Ezek. 36:26).

It was to cleanse the deceitful and desperately wicked heart of man that Jesus Christ came into the world. With Divine strategy, Jesus deliberately maneuvered Himself into the place of death at Calvary, that He might shed His precious blood to be the propitiation for our sins; that not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). Oh, what a wonderful Saviour He is!

Your life's greatest ambition should be to possess a perfect heart! Such a treasure is mort to be prized than anything else. Some young men seek riches, some honour and others fame; I pray that you will covet most of all a heart washed white and made perfect by the cleansing of Jesus' blood.

I am not asking God to give you anything less than a perfect heart! A good heart is not good enough! There is a great scarcity of young men with perfect hearts. I trust that you will reduce the deficiency by one!

Morning, noon and night I shall remember you in my every prayer. I shall pray without ceasing until you can truthfully say with David, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (Psalm 101:2).

When God gives you the Grace to walk within your house with a perfect heart, you will be able to walk anywhere in the world with a perfect heart. A Christian experience that starts at home goes a very long way!

And so I close with an earnest prayer . . . "Give unto my son a perfect heart" . . . Amen!

Very lovingly yours, J F Rowlands

THE ASSURANCE OF GOD' PROVISION

My dear Son

There is something in your nature that reminds me very much of Isaac, the son of Abraham! Perhaps it is your knack of asking questions!

Isaac was probably still in his teens when he set out early one morning with his father for the Mount of Moriah. The Bible says: "And they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:;6). There is something very beautiful in that expression!

It is a great pity that all fathers and sons do not go on together. They start together, and then estrangement comes with the years and the two drift so far apart that they are hardly recognizable as father and son. May we, like Abraham and Isaac, always go on together!

Like Isaac: you must often add up the present and try to divide it into the future (Gen. 22:7). You try and try, but it just doesn't seem to work out! It didn't work out for Isaac either until he had added FAITH to the present and then it immediately slipped perfectly into the future!

Said Isaac: "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" To which Abraham replied: "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:;7,8).

If you are walking in God's way, my son, there is no need for you to worry about the future! GOD WILL PROVIDE! He did it miraculously for Abraham and Isaac and He will do it again for you. It is for you to seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and all the needful things of life will be added unto you. (Matt. 6:33).

So often in life there seems to be something missing-something essential missing! Something quite as essential as Isaac's lamb! Things seem to be all odd and we wonder how they are ever going to come right. THEN is the time to trust in the sure knowledge that God will provide! This knowledge would calm all our fears and dispel all our worries.

You, my son, will have many Moriahs to climb as you journey through life. And as you climb you will be conscious, like Isaac, of a very real need. A need so vital perhaps, that it may mean your very life to you! Don't doubt God's promise. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not God's promise! Don't falter in your step/ Keep right on in the narrow way and "My God shall supply ALL YOUR NEED according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

With such a Guarantee let us step bravely forward together. God will provide for all our needs as we meet them on the road. Let us prove by an intrepid faith that the God of Abraham and Isaac is just as wonderful today to any father and son who will put their trust in Him.

Very lovingly yours, J F Rowlands.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MATRIMONIAL COMPATIBILITY

My dear Son

Sooner or later I suppose you will be telling me that you are wanting to get married, so I think it is appropriate that I should write a few words to you on this very important subject.

You must remember that marriage is a life-long contract and therefore it is something which must be approached very carefully and prayerfully. It is not like choosing a suit which today is and tomorrow is cast into the rubbish box! Less hurry today, my son, will mean less worry tomorrow!

It will be better if you can remain and **HONEST BACHELOR** for a reasonable time and not rush into an early marriage. Many boys have allowed marriage to dim their vision for God! You must never do that! St. Paul had some very striking words to say about this (1 Cor. 7:32, 33).

When Abraham sought a bride for his son, Isaac, he said to his servant: "Thou shalt go into my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son, Isaac" (Gen. 24:4). Abraham took a keen interest in his son's future welfare. He made it his business to see that there was no mistake made about his marriage. There must be no mixed marriage for Isaac! It is a pity that more fathers do not follow Abraham's example.

An incompatible marriage will only lead to unhappiness and distress. Far too many couples are being unequally yoked together in wedlock today. This is in direct opposition to the injunctions of Scripture (2 Cor. 6:14-16). "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" asks God. (Amos 3:3). The answer is "NO!" "If a house be divided against itself, that house CANNOT STAND' (Mark 3:25), When the time comes for you to get married, my son, it must be "that which God hath joined together" (Mark 10:9). What a difference between being joined together by God and being unequally yoked together with an unbeliever! There is no alternative for YOU!

God's Word stresses the importance of matrimonial compatibility and it is my duty to point this out to you. There must be a large measure of agreement between both contracting parties. God says so Himself! (Amos 3:3). It is necessary that there shall be a general congeniality of natures, tastes and peculiarities; and it must also be seen that the ages of both parties are properly suited. It is absurd for the aged to marry the childish! They cannot agree!

God's Word is emphatic that there must be religious agreement between both the husband and the wife. A marriage with an unbeliever is forbidden! (Deut. 7-3; Neh. 13:25; 2 Cor. 6:14-16). A Christian's marriage must be "**only in the Lord**" (1 Cor. 7:39).

And not only must there be religious agreement; there must also be Christian agreement! It is unwise for persons with widely diverse views of Christianity to get married. There is almost certain to be trouble in the end. Do not surrender a single Christian Principle to win a girl! Let it be your manliness and your character which attracts and not any loose sentimentality. If it is God's Will for you to get married, let Him lead the right young lady into your life. **His choice will be the best choice** because His choice will eliminate all possibility of incompatibility.

Very lovingly yours, J F Rowlands

THE WISDOM OF ABUNDANT PREPARATION

My dear Son

Every father should have Vision for his son! I'm very glad that God has given me a big one for you. Yes, and a very big one too! **A Vision with a capital "V"!**

I want you to live for God! I want you to be God's Own dear child, and I'm going to do all I can to prepare you for the great adventure which lies down the road of years ahead of you.

Today, your life is young and tender and it may easily be moulded into channels of Godliness. Together, we must prayerfully seek **God's Pattern for your life** and, when we have found it, **you must our your life forth as a living sacrifice into the mould of His Perfect Will!**

As David had a vision for Solomon, so I have a vision for you! David knew that God had a great work for his son to do, and I am very conscious that God has a great purpose to fulfill in your life, my boy. "Solomon my son is young and tender," said David, "and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death" (1 Chron. 22:5).

You have "a house to build," a work to do, a life to live for the Lord the MUST be "exceeding magnifical"! David was emphatic that it **MUST** be **EXCEEDING MAGNIFICAL!** That embodies my vision for you, son! Your life must not be mediocre; it **MUST** be **EXCEEDING MAGNIFICAL!** Far too many young lives are being lived below this standard today.

Your life can only be "exceeding magnifical" when it is Christ-like, for only Jesus has lived without sin! It is SIN that mars and blights the magnificence of a young man's life!

David realized that many young men fall to reach the mark for the prize of their high calling because of insufficient paternal preparations, and he determined that Solomon would not have him to blame if he failed to accomplish God's purposes in his life.

God has an exclusive work for every young life to perform. In God's great plan He has a special job for you to do. Let it be "exceeding magnifical" in its every stage of execution. Be thorough, be genuine, be honest!

By prayer and in many practical ways I propose to make abundant preparation for your future in God's service. I want you to be able to say with the Lord Jesus at the end of life's pilgrimage, "I have finished the work which my Heavenly Father gave me to do" (John 17:4). Very few are able to say this when death's angel draws near.

I pray that your heart will be cleansed from all sin in the precious blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7), and that your life will so be lived in close conjunction with God's Will that your testimony and character will be "exceeding magnifical".

David put a "must" into his son's service for God, and I am going to put a big "must" into yours. Every prayer of mine for you will underline that "must". I pray that every word, every deed and every action of your life will be an answer to prayer.

Affectionately yours, for "exceeding magnifical" living. J F Rowlands.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF ALMIGHTY GOD

My dear Son

There is one very important matter about which I should like to write to you today. It is concerning the vital necessity of **KNOWING GOD**.

Most boys have heard about God and perhaps some of them are "slightly acquainted" with Him; **but very few boys** really **KNOW GOD!** I want you to be one of those who **KNOW GOD.**

This sad lack of knowledge is the prime reason of failure in so many lives, homes, churches and nations. People will talk glibly about God and may tell you a lot about Him, but it is God HIM-SELF that you must know! God has promised to give us hearts to know Him! Isn't that wonderful? This is what you need, my son. A heart to know God (Jer. 24:7). "Ask and it shall be given you." (Matt. 7:7)

You cannot **KNOW GOD** at a distance! You must come to Him! Jesus Christ is the Way to God and He said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). Jesus, the Saviour, is the only One who can lead you to God, the Father! If you follow Jesus it will be your glorious privilege to KNOW GOD!

"My son, know thou the God of thy father," said David to Solomon, "and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind" (1 Chron. 28:9). And that is my desire for you, son; that you, too, may **KNOW GOD!**

There is a wonderful latter-day promise in Dan. 11:32, "The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." You would like to do exploits for the Lord, wouldn't you? I know you would. Every young man surely covets brilliant achievements and heroic deeds! How much more wonderful all exploits are when they are done for the Lord! But you cannot do exploits, unless you are strong; and you cannot be strong unless you **KNOW GOD!** Everything depends upon your knowing God!

What a joy filled the hearts of the two disciples at Emmaus on Resurrection Day when "their eyes were opened and they knew Jesus" (Luke 23:31). It is not enough to know His teachings, promises, healings and miracles. **The joy of joys is to KNOW JESUS personally!** This supreme delight awaits all who come to Him for salvation.

Every boy has to fight hard against the pollutions of the world. **They are the inevitable prison stronghold of every unwary son!** Thousands are testifying to the power of the grip of sin **But there is a way of escape! A GLORIOUS WAY OF ESCAPE** through the **KNOWLEDGE** of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Read 2 Peter 2:20.

I count it the greatest privilege of my life to have a knowledge of God. He has been my Heavenly Father and has lovingly taken care of me ever since I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour many years ago. He has supplied every need of mine and has been a very present help in trouble.

In your search of knowledge always remember that the knowledge of Almighty God transcends all other knowledge! Without THAT knowledge a man will be a fool in the end!

Lovingly yours, J F Rowlands. "MY SON, attend to my words. (Prov. 4:20)

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH

My dear Son

Like most boys, I know that you are keen on "Health and Strength". You want big muscles like Samson, ek? Hence your breathing exercises, physical jerks and early-morning stunts. It is a grand thing to take care of your body and to keep it in perfect trim, but **it is even more important** to take care of your soul and keep it in sound spiritual health. The body is temporal, but the soul is eternal!

There are as many – probably more – sicknesses that attack the soul as there are bodily diseases, and we must be careful not to have a sick soul in a strong body. Many books have been written about the welfare of the body, and these have found their way to the bookshelves of young men throughout the land. THERE IS ONLY ONE BOOK which has been written for our instruction in Righteousness concerning the care of the soul. That Book is the Holy Bible and it has been edited by God Himself! It will be for our eternal advantage to attend to the Words written therein, for "they are life unto all those that find them, and health to all their flesh" (Prov. 4:22). Much of our material well-being depends upon our spiritual health!

The health of our bodies depends upon our obedience to the laws of nature. Similarly, the health of our souls depends upon our obedience to the commandments of God. Disobedience is the key which opens the door to debility in both the physical and spiritual realm of life.

Fresh air, sunshine and open-air life are essential to the well-being of the body. The person who resembles a "hot-house plant" and remains coddled at home will never grow to sturdiness and manliness. The spiritual life, likewise, needs exercise and opportunities of development in Christian service; otherwise the soul will become "flabby" with inertia.

Secret discipleship is not conducive to spiritual health! Nothing "Christian" should ever be done in a corner. St. Paul told Festus, "This thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26:26). Christ did not die in a corner! The apostles did not preach in a corner! The martyrs did not hide in a corner! Then why should we be timid and conceal our testimony in a corner? If Christ did not die in a corner for us, why should we live in a corner for Him? My son, attend to my words! Nothing "Christian" should ever be done in a corner! "Corner living" is foreign to the Gospel of Jesus Christ! We must be open and above-board in all we say and do. Our spiritual health depends upon our honesty and straight-forwardness.

Earnestness in prayer and zeal in testimony are both vital factors in the maintenance of robust spiritual health. Slothfulness leads to the way to dry-rot in the soul!

The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ should be the perpetual lode-star to keep our souls in perfect spiritual health. We must purify ourselves even as He is pure! (1 John 3:3) Fellowship with other believers is so necessary, it is almost indispensable (Heb. 10:25).

A sick soul in a strong body is a tragedy! May God give you, my son, a healthy soul in a healthy body! Surely this should be every young man's ideal!

Lovingly yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE CONCERN OF FILIAL SAFETY

My dear Son

One of the deepest notes of pathos in the Bible was struck when David wept over the death of his rebellious son, Absalom (2 Sam. 18:33). He had been greatly concerned over the safety of his boy and had twice asked his servants, "Is the young man safe?" (2 Sam. 18:29, 32).

"Is the young man safe?" This was David's chief concern, and I suppose it is the foremost thought of all fathers who love their sons as I love you.

There are so many temptations and so many pitfalls in the world today that it ill behoves any father to adopt a spirit of unconcern over his child! It is every father's duty to guide his son in the ways of righteous manliness!

Is the young man safe from sin? Are YOU safe from sin, my boy? When you have fully trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and have placed your young life unreservedly into His care, you will be perfectly safe from sin! It is your Saviour's responsibility to keep you when once you have committed your life unto Him! He will not fail you! (2 Tim. 1:12).

Are you safe from bad companions? There will be no fear of your being led astray when you have made friends with the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24). He is a Friend that is well-known throughout the world! He, Jesus, was once a young man like you and was in all points tempted like you are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). Here is that transforming Friendship that will make your life secure!

Bad habits are forever trying to get a hold upon youth and they will try to get you into their vicelike grip. Their first appearance is seemingly innocent and harmless; their "spider-web" strength not worth worrying about! But BEWARE! **What was yesterday a "spider-web" will tomorrow be a chain!** Only the Lord Jesus can break the power of sin and keep you safe from the clutch of bad habits.

If you are safe in Christ, my son, you are safe from all earth's perils. **Nothing can harm you** when you belong to Christ. To be safe in Christ is to be safe for both TIME and ETERNITY !

When you are safe in Christ you will be able to say with St. Paul: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famin, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... Nay, in all these things we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS through Him that loved us" (Romans 8:35,37).

Despite Absalom's rebellion, David had great paternal love for him (2 Sam. 18:5). A father's love should be such that it cannot die even though the son is in the world's "pig-sty" (Luke 15:11-24).

May I know, dear son, that your life is safe in Christ's care and keeping? If I may know that, I shall also know that there will be no heart-breaking lament over you as there was over Absalom, when David cried, "O my son Absalom, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son, my son" (2 Sam.18:33).

God bless you!

Very lovingly yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE RAVISHING OF STRANGE WOMEN

My dear Son

The Bible tells us about a certain young man, void of understanding, who was caught and kissed by a strange woman who loitered on the street corner to catch the unwary. She led him to her house and via her house to Hell! (Prove. 7:7-27).

I feel very sorry for this young man whose life was blighted and ruined by the ravishings of a strange woman because SOMEBODY did not enlighten him to the truth of Life! Who was to blame for the fact that he grew up to be void of understanding? Somebody was very negligent in his early training. Didn't his father warn him about the dangers of illicit intimacy with women? Apparently not! And so the lad found his way down to the chambers of death!

As you journey through life, my son, you will find that it is no easy business to be manly! But you must be manly! You will need every ounce of determination to resist temptation and to overcome the enemy's subtle invitations to acts of immorality.

Sexual passion must be controlled! There are many creative channels into which sex energy may be diverted and it will be your joy, whilst a bachelor, to discover these avenues of production. Don't believe the lie that the control of sex feelings is contrary to nature! It is no more against nature than to refrain from breaking open a shop window to steal bread when you are hungry!

You must abstain from all illicit sex intercourse! You must abstain because God forbids it and has decreed it an offence worthy of eternal punishment (1 Cor. 6:9, 10). Indulgence in this vile sin involves serious risk of disease and is the essence of degradation for both men and women.

Joseph was very nearly ravished by a strange woman (Gen. 39: 7 - 12). He bravely resisted temptation and refused the oft-repeated enticements of his master's wife. Good for Joseph! God gave him victory in the hour of great temptation. It is a pity that Samson was not as careful in his dealings with Delilah (Judges 16:4 – 21). Be careful of these outlandish women, my son! They are subtle of heart and with much fair speech they cause young men to yield. With the flattering of their lips they force young men to sin (Prov. 7:21).

Strange women carry on their filthy business of prostitution in all our big towns and cities today. Their eternal punishment will be unimaginably terrible! They tout in the streets and solicit patronage from those who are void of understanding! Anyone who has a grain of decency will avoid these women as "smallpox" carriers!

You have been warned, my son! I pray that your brave and noble heart will never decline to the ways of strange women. May you never go astray in their wicked paths. The Scriptures sound a solemn warning when they say, "She hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her" (Prov. 7:26). Many ... but not you, my son!

Affectionately yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE PREVALENCE OF PATERNAL ESTRANGEMENT

My dear Son

It is a very sad thing that so many fathers live aloof from their children! The invaluable lessons learnt in childhood, and the experiences of life cannot be shared with the younger generation because of the all too obvious estrangement which exists between the father and the son. Perhaps the father is thirty-five years old and the child is only a tender ten! A gap of "twenty-five years" separates the two! It is quite wrong for parents to allow this "gap" to exist. A father should "grow up" with his sons; similarly, a mother should "grow up" with her daughters!

A boy's best pal should be his dad! This true friendship between father and son should commence at the dawn of the child's life. Ever remembering his own boyish experiences (and pranks!), the father should impart to his son at regular intervals along life's journey the first-hand knowledge which is so precious to the growing child. As St. Paul said, "I am made all things to all men," (1 Cor. 9:22), so every father should be made "all ages" to his growing child. There is no other way in which a father can earn for himself the honour of being a true parent.

As the father "grows" with his child, he is in the position to be able to be able to guide him safely through those periods of anxiety and perplexity which are common to all the sons of men. Many a boy's downfall may be dated from the time when the father was absent as the son entered the period of adolescence alone and unenlightened. The parent who leaves his child to find out things for himself is guilty of serious negligence and imposes a most unfair handicap upon the child's future. No other person can possibly explain the truth with the same tenderness and love as the child's parent. And the serious possibility is that, unless the parent confides in the child at the appropriate time, the facts of life will be learned in the all too prevalent language of the gutter! This must be avoided at all costs!

If a father is to be of any real assistance to his son, and if he is to help him to win the obstacle race of life, he must live in close proximity to the boy. There must be no "gap"; there must be no estrangement! Confidences of the highest order must exist and everything that goes to make up **true love and friendship must be in abundant supply.** As Isaac said to his son, "Come near now, my son," so it should be every father's desire to draw his children into a place of closer communion and affection.

It is a wonderful thing to see the big business magnate "rolling back the years" after five o'clock! He who sat behind his desk so sternly is speeded home by his chauffeur to play "This little pig went to market" with the toes of his little son and heir. The typist would find it hard to believe that this is the same man from whom she receives her dictation.

As for you, my son, it has been my great joy to share your teen-age years with you. I am so happy that I can say to you, what Paul said to Timothy, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me," (2 Tim. 1:13). It has been my joy and privilege to give you a form of sound words MYSELF! I pray that you will hold it fast!

In closing, let me say what Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near now, and kiss me, my son," (Genesis 27:26) and may I add the sincere hope that we shall ever continue to be the great pals we are today!

Lovingly yours J.F. Rowlands

THE ANSWERING OF HEAVEN'S CALL

My dear Son

The story of Samuel's early days in the Temple of the Lord will always remain one of the choicest gems of Scripture reading.

Although Samuel dwelt in the Temple, he did not know the Lord, neither was the Word of the Lord revealed to him (1 Samuel 3:7). There are many "religious" people in the world today who do not know the Lord ! Great masses are hungering and thirsting for that satisfying Truth which a revelation of God's Word supplies.

It was eventide and Samuel was laid down to sleep. Out of the stillness of the night came the Call of God. The little lad thought that the Priest was calling him and he hurried to his room in obedience to the call. Again and yet again God called, until at last Samuel understood that it was the Voice of God. Without hesitation he answered Heaven's Call and became one of the greatest of God's great men.

God loved Samuel and wanted him to know Him ! God loves you too, my son, and He wants you to know Him also ! As God called Samuel, so He calls you. His voice comes so clearly to your heart saying, "Parvi, parvi! Mannum tirrimbe var !" ... Sinner, sinner! Turn your heart and come !: This is the Call from Heaven that you must answer, my son ! This Call comes not from my heart, but from the Heart of God ! He loves you and He wants to save you from all your sins !

Will you, like Samuel, answer Heaven's Call? There is Peace and Happiness awaiting you if you will surrender your life to the Lord.

The happiest boys in the world are those who have answered Heaven's Call ! Their sins have been forgiven and they have become the children of God by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12).

If you do not answer the Call of God you will have all eternity in which to regret your mistake (Prov. 1:24-28). The Lord will not always be found of sinners. The Day of Grace is fast ebbing to its close. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55:6). He may be found today ... There isno such guarantee for you tomorrow ! "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart" (Psalm 95:7, 8). "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). My son, don't put off until tomorrow the great decision you should make today!

Procrastination is the thief of souls ! By the street of By-and-by one arrives at the house of Never ! The enemy of your soul may be persuading you to leave off your decision until a more convenient time. Don't listen to him, dear son ! He is only doing that because he is the enemy of your soul and he does not want you to be saved from your sins.

Heaven's Call comes to your heart today! You dare not turn away from the Saviour as he pleads with your soul. He loves you ! He died for you upon the Cross of Calvary ! And now, with power to save you from every sin, He calls you ! YOU MUST ANSWER !

As my son you will only live for a few fleeting years ! As God's son you will live forever !!

Affectionately yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE COMPANIONSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

My dear Son

Life is a journey – a very perilous journey – and you need a Friend Who will stick closer than a brother; a Companion Who will walk beside you to the end of the road and bemore to you than ever I can possibly be. That Friend, that Companion is Jesus ! (Prov. 18:24; Heb. 13:5).

Both you and I are traveling to "the other side" of the grave ! This life is only a "dressing-room in which we must get ready for eternity. The Lord Jesus invites us to pass over with Him to the other side; He invites us to Heaven ! He knows the Way because He is the Way ! (John 14:6). He is the only One Who can guarantee Heaven because He is the only One Who can guarantee salvation from sin (Acts 4:12).

Let us, like the disciples of old, take the Lord Jesus into the ship of our lives (Mark 4:36); and let us remember, when the storms of life beat upon us, that Christ's invitation is to safety on the other side and not to some drowning tragedy in the middle of the sea ! In spite of life's storms and waves, through Christ we shall safely reach Heaven. All will be well if Christ is the helm of your life, my son.

David's prayer for Solomon was, "My son, the Lord be with thee" (1 Chron. 22:11). David knew that all would be well with Solomon if the Lord was his Companion. The Lord's abiding Presence is the Guarantee of prosperity and blessing in the believer's life. It was in the assurance of the Lord's Companionship that Jacob went forth from Bethel (Gen. 28:15). Similarly the inspiration which led Moses down into Egypt to deliver God's people from bondage was the certain promise of the Lord's Presence accompanying him (Exo. 3:12).

The obstacle race of life will have many problems and difficulties for you, my son. But the Lord will give you victory in all these things if you look faithfully to Him for deliverance. He will make you "waterproof" as you pass through the rivers and "fireproof" as you walk through the fires (Isa. 43:2).

There will be nothing for you to fear in life if the Lord Jesus is your Friend and Companion. He will supply every need of yours and give you pleasures for evermore (Phil. 4:9; Psa. 16:11). Unlike mine, His arms are everlasting ! and if I know that they are undergirding your life ... then I, too, have nothing to fear (Deut 33:27).

My son, as you journey through life, may the Lord be with you ! May your life be so firmly clasped in His love that no man shall ever be able to pluck you from His nail-pierced Hands (John 10:28).

Don't try to hold the Lord's hand. You may let go ! Let Him hold your hand. He will never let you go ! There are far too many dangerous bends in the road of life for you to rely upon your own strength; far too many frightening experiences when you will need His strong hand to encourage you. Nothing can intimidate the Lord ! He will hold you fast until the end if you trust Him fully.

With the Lord Jesus as your Guide, be sure to make good use of your Guide book, the holy Bible. It will tell you about the wonderful country towards which we are traveling and in which, by the Grace of God, we shall both spend eternity.

Very lovingly yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF COMPLETE FORGIVENESS

My dear Son

I want to write to you to-day about the joy of sins forgiven ! The Bible says, "All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God" (Rom. 3:23) And "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). But the glorious truth is that "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

It does not matter how bad a boy you may have been or how many sins you may have committed, God will forgive every sin if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as your personal Saviour. God's forgiveness is complete and the past will be blotted out. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

A sinner saved by Grace may be trusted because he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. His past record of sin and dishonesty is forgiven and God now gives him the strength to live an upright and honourable life. You cannot judge a man's present by his past when he has found the Lord Jesus as Saviour at Calvary! Every word of 2 Cor. 5:17 is true when a sinner truly finds Christ as Saviour !

St. Paul hade great faith in the efficacy of the Cross ! He doubted not but that there was both power to save and keep in the precious Blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). The badness of a man's past has nothing to do with the goodness of his present and future ! It was because of this unique Christian Truth that Paul could recommend a runaway thief back to his master !

Onesimus had apparently stolen from Philemon and made his getaway to Rome. There he met Paul who pointed him to Jesus Christ Who forgives sin and makes unprofitable boys profitable. Onesimus was sorry for his sin and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. He carried back to his master what we now know as "The Epistle of Paul to Philemon." You must read it, my son, and you will see how great was Paul's faith in complete forgiveness. It is one of the loveliest gems of Pauline literature !

I want you to grasp the kernel of Paul's letter to Philemon, dear son. Bad boys may become good boys by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ! Worthless lives may be made worthwhile by the Touch of the Master's Hand! Thieves, robbers and rogues may be made trustworthy citizens by the power of the Christian Gospel! This is the gist of the belief that lay behind Paul's intercession to Philemon which commenced with the words, "I beseech thee for my son, One-simus" (Philemon 10).

It was to forgive sin and shew mercy to sinners that Christ Jesus died upon the Cross. No sinner is too bad to come to Jesus. No case is beyond remedy. Belief in the Lord Jesus opens the way to forgiveness from sin and a happiness which knows no end in time of eternity.

When God forgives He forgets! "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). A complete forgiveness indeed !

Spread this good news amongst all your friends, won't you son?

Ever lovingly yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE ESTIMATION OF GREATER RICHES

My dear Son

God has called you to a life of Holiness and Sanctification! From the Egypt of this world's sinful pleasure, He has called you to the Beulah Land of a separated life! Whilst you are in this world you must remember that you are not of this world. You dare not love the world! "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him" (1 John 2:15).

You are traveling through this world to your eternal Home in the Heavens and, in passing through, you must keep yourself unspotted from sin.

It is sad to see so many living as if there was no God, no judgment, no punishment for sin and no eternity! Unfortunately for such, there is a God, there is a judgment, and there is a place called Hell where sinners will spend eternity! It is unreasonable to think that sane men and women will choose sin and the wages of sin in preference to Salvation and an eternity in the beautiful City of God! But such is the case in millions of instances ... but not so with Moses and not so with you!

Moses was brought up by Pharaoh's daughter with his foot on the Throne and his hand on the Treasury of Egypt! But he was God's child and as such he dare not be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Coming to the age of discretion, he took his stand for God despite great opposition and many temptations. He did what many do not take the time to do today! He weighed up the consequences and decided for God! Every wise man who stops to consider facts and figures must decide for God! He is a fool who decides otherwise ... GOD SAYS SO ! (Luke 12:20).

Moses quietly weighed the pros and cons of life in the balances of his conscience. What did he find ? On the one side he piled the pleasures of sin upon the treasures of Egypt until the scale could hold no more; and on the other side he placed the reproach of Christ, his saved soul and the assurance of an eternal Home with God! The scale sank heavily on the latter side and Moses had no hesitation whatsoever in "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:24-26). He chose wisely because he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

To possess Christ is to possess Heaven's Priceless Pearl! "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). The millionaire without Christ is a pauper in comparison with the man who possesses the greater riches of God! You don't have to look into a man's back account to estimate his worth; you have to look into his heart!

The heart is the treasure chest of man ! The purse may be empty; but rich is the man whose heart is full of faith and love ! Jesus Christ came into this world to make us rich with the greater riches of God (2 Cor. 8:9). It may appear to others that we are poor! In one way, perhaps; yet making many rich (2 Cor. 6:10). Making many rich with greater riches than gold and silver.

Neither you nor I have much in the bank! But because I know what you have in your heart, I greet you, son, as one of God's rich men!

Most affectionately yours J.F. Rowlands.

THE NECESSITY OF HONEST CONFESSION

My dear Son

I wonder whether you have read about Achan's trespass. It was a terrible thing! But all sin is terrible!! **God loves sinners but He hates their sins!** All sin is loathsome in the sight of the Lord. The size of the sin does not necessarily add to its loathsomeness! Big sins, small sins, "respectable" sins and otherwise are all an abomination unto the Lord.

Achan had sinned and Joshua had asked him to make an honest confession. A straightforward acknowledgement of sin shames the author of sin and glorifies the Lord! Would Achan do it? Yes, he did! Will you, my son?

My heart was greatly stirred once when a young murderer made an honest confession of his guilt to me. His confession was so genuine, that I felt his life was worth saving at all costs. If we, being evil, know how to forgive when our children make an honest confession to us, how much more shall our Heavenly Father forgive those who make an honest confession of their guilt to Him?

God asks for a confession of sin... to Him! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," (1 John1:9). We cannot hide our sins from God for He is Omniscient! He knows all things; He knows the truth! "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy," (Proverbs 28:13). Note **that the confession of sin must be followed by the forsaking of sin!** This is very important. "Go, and sin no more," says Jesus in forgiving the sinner who confesses his wrong-doings.

David's confession of sin and his prayer for forgiveness is perhaps a model confession (Psalm 51). May God make us brave to confess the whole truth to Him in humble repentance.

The confession of wrong is one of the vital necessities of the Christian life. "If we sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous," (1 John 2:1). And if we sin and make mistakes we have an admission of guilt to make, too! The majority of disputes could be settled in a trice if Mr. Wrong stepped forward and said "Sorry"! Only a little two-syllabled! How much it means, but how hard it is to say it!

When the prodigal son decided to return home, he made up his mind that he would face facts and admit his wrong. He had no excuses to make. He had acted against the advice of his father and had ended up in the pig-sty! He was a sinner. He could not hide the fact and there was nothing to be gained if he did. Home he came to make an honest confession of his waywardness and to receive full and free pardon from an honest father. An honest confession is always followed by the forgiveness of sin!

Don't try to hide any sin from God, my son! If there is any secret sin in your life which from man's eyes is hidden. Remember that God can see it very clearly. **Be honest and confess it!** As you confess it to God, He will forgive it!

Very lovingly yours J.F. Rowlands

"<u>MY SON</u>, keep my words." Proverbs 7:1

THE RETENTION OF SOUND WORDS

My dear Son

For several years it has been my joy to give you a form of sound words. I pray that God has used them in the moulding of your life and character. It is for me now to exhort you as Paul exhorted Timothy to "hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13).

To hear and not to hold fast is to hear in vain! In the sincere hope that you would hold my words fast, I have always endeavoured to make them sound words. Furthermore, I have striven to keep my words of advice in determinate shape. The form of sound words which you have heard of me is none other than the counsel of a father who desires his son to walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I would lovingly ask you to take time to consider what I say; and may the Lord give you understanding in all things (2 Tim. 2:7).

Many boys have wept when it is too late ! God's Words were to them as signposts and notices of warning. They heard them; they read them; but the did not keep them in their hearts ! And the result ? The sad result is that their bright young lives are now ruined and their lovely characters are now besmirched by sin. All this need not have happened if only they had kept the words of advice which they were given.

How often, in the gutters of life, we hear the regretful moanings of the fallen ..."if only I had listened to my father ... if only I had been obedient to my mother ..." The gaols and reformatories echo with the same lamentations. Disobedience to the words of our Heavenly Father caused Adam and Eve's downfall in the Garden of Eden. God's words were sound; God's words were good ! But Satan reasoned otherwise and beguiled Adam and Eve through his subtlety (2 Cor. 11:3).

I don't want Satan to beguile you, dear son ! The words which I have given you are the words of God, the words of Life ! Believe them and act upon them ! Hold them fast for they are sound and true. If you keep the words of God which I give you, they will keep you when the tempter would prevail ! The words of the Lord are the words of Eternal Life (John 6:68).

"My son, hear the instructions of thy father" (Prov. 1:8). It shall be a spiritual adornment unto your life ! "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee" (Prov. 7:1).

I can ask you to keep "my words" because the exhortations I have given you are none other than "God's Words". Every word of admonition has been reinforced by the chapter and verse of a "Thus said the Lord".

There is absolute authority in every Scriptural quotation ! The Words of God ring true and are absolutely reliable. There is nothing to fear in accepting them at their face value. God means what He says and what he says is sounder than Heaven ! (Matt. 24:35). You will never go wrong if you follow the Signposts of Scripture !

Keep God's words in the Treasury of your Heart ! They are valuable; they are precious ! Far more precious than gold and silver that perisheth!

With many prayers, Lovingly yours, J.F. Rowlands.

THE MANUFACTURE OF GLAD HEARTS

My dear Son

There are more broken-hearted father and mothers in the world to-day than ever before! It is a sign of the times in which we live that children are so disobedient to their parents (2 Tim. 3:2). Disobedient and foolish, too! There is a glaring lack of wisdom in the modern child. By wisdom, I do not mean educational knowledge, but that judiciousness which finds its beginning in the fear of the Lord (Psalm 111.10).

A wise son manufactures gladness in the hearts of his mother and father! "But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother". (Prov. 10:1).

Could there be a son so hard that he would knowingly bring sorrow and heaviness to his parents' hearts? Surprisingly so, yes! And millions of them!! All heaviness of heart is born out of foolishness and sin.

"Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way" (Prov. 23:19). "My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine" (Prov. 23:15) Can you see the deduction, my son? **Wisdom in your heart makes rejoicings in mine!** Wisdom I n the heart of the child constitutes gladness I n the hearts of the parents. "Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father" (Prov.29:3).

Righteousness is more to be coveted than great riches. It should take priority in every life. "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness and honour" (Prov.21:21). What more than this do you want, my son? **Life, righteousness and honour?** "The father of the righteous shall rejoice greatly: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him" (Prov. 23:24). Do you see the connection again? A righteous child makes a happy father; a wise child makes a joyful father!

It is unrighteousness, foolishness and sin in the lives of young people to-day that is breaking the hearts of so many parents. Many a father and many a mother have been laid prematurely in their graves by the sinfulness of their children. The real cause of death was not what the Doctor certified it to be! The real cause of death was "Broken-hearted."

It is the privilege of all sons and daughters to manufacture gladness in the hearts of their parents. This is not a flippant, transient "gladness", but a deep delight of soul born out of the righteousness and wisdom of the child's life.

Every movement of your life has its reactions. Favourable or otherwise. But in no place are these reactions felt more keenly than in the hearts of parents. Jesus knows just how mothers and fathers feel about their children. Did He not follow Jairus to his home and grant life anew to his daughter? Did He not cause the funeral of the widow of Nain's son to be stopped? And will He not grant new life to every father's son and mother's daughter who calls on Him ? Of course, He will! New Life with that righteousness and wisdom which will bring rejoicings to the hearts of both mother and father.

"My son, be wise, and make my heart glad" (Prov. 27:11).

Affectionately yours, J.F. Rowlands.

"God be gracious unto thee, <u>MY SON</u>." Gen. 43:29

THE ACME OF TRUE FATHERHOOD

My dear Son

The greatest responsibility I have concerning you is to lead you to Christ and to see, thereafter, that you walk faithfully in His ways. Some parents forget this solemn duty and concentrate more on trivialities.

A true father should be able to look down into his child's cot and say with Hannah, "For this child prayed" (1 Sam. 1:27). The world is all too short of children born in the atmosphere of prayer!

Parenthood carries tremendous responsibilities today! Greater perhaps than during any previous generation. It is necessary that prospective fathers and mothers shall realize this and make prayerful provision accordingly.

As your father, it is my duty to lead you to that place where God's Graciousness may be showered upon you. I may be able to feed you, clothe you, house you and educate you. But that is not all ! What about your soul? How can I make preparations for your acceptance of Christ as personal Saviour? Much as I love you, I know so well that God loves you more than I can ever love you. He gave Jesus to this world to be World Saviour! He gave Jesus to you personally to be YOUR SAVIOUR!

Better were it that you had never been born than that, being born, you should live and die in your sins!

The world is badly in need of praying mothers and praying fathers! The acme of true parenthood is born out of prayerfulness. A man cannot be a true father to his child unless he is a man of prayer. And the same applies to the woman who wishes to be a true mother.

In our modern world, the major emphasis is being laid upon the material side of things. The spiritual is being shamefully neglected. The material minus the spiritual gradually turns animal!

God is my record, how greatly I long after you, my son! (Phil. 1:8). Always in every prayer of mine for you making request with joy (Phil. 1:4). And God be praised for answered prayer! I have no greater joy than to hear that you walk in truth (3 John 4). I have always striven to train you in the way you should go: and I know that when you are old, you will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6).

Every father should be solicitous of Divine Favour for his child. Divine Favour upon his temporal future and Divine Favour upon his Eternal Future! And to this end every father should pray without ceasing. There is no legitimate juncture in a parent's life when prayer becomes obsolete or unnecessary.

May God be gracious unto you, my son, all the days of your life! This was Joseph's prayer for Benjamin and it is mine for you (Gen. 43:29). "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num. 6:24-26).

Always yours lovingly, J.F. Rowlands.