

Brian & Seth,

It's been a long time since I have written you a personal note!

I want to tell you both how proud of you I am and that I love you very, very, much! You both are men who have character & leadership skills I could never have taught you! We all know NONE of us are perfect but some overcome the tribulations of this world & show others a path which leads to truth as both of are doing. Here's why you are able to do these things!

A couple of years before Brian was born the Alex Haley TV series "ROOTS" from his book "Roots : The Saga of an American Family" was being aired and a certain scene struck me so much I used it in our lives!

It was a scene where his great-great-grandfather, Kunta Kinte, was born and Kunta's father took him out under the stars, lifted him up & told God to "behold, the only thing greater than yourself." The scene showed me that we should offer up EVERYTHING to God! So when you both were about two or three months old, I took you out in the night, looked up at the stars, held you up, totally exposed & naked before God & told God you belonged to Him! I told Him that He had to guide you because, if it was totally left up to me, I would "screw you up so bad" and I didn't want you to grow up being like me!

I want you to be like Him!

There's a song by Phillips, Craig & Dean titled "I want to be just like you 'cause he wants to be just like me!" (It makes me cry every time I listen to it! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdhSeA1hva4>) This song takes me back to that moment when I offered you up to the Lord!

Now more than ever we all must become like Him, because if we don't know our Lord and have a relationship with Him we are doomed to eternal hell! The scripture below describes what I'm talking about.

2 Timothy 3 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)

3 But understand this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress *and* trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear].

² For people will be lovers of self *and* [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money *and* aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud *and* arrogant *and* contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing), disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy *and* profane.

³ [They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate *and* loose in morals *and* conduct, uncontrolled *and* fierce, haters of good.

⁴ [They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures *and* vain amusements more than *and* rather than lovers of God.

⁵ For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny *and* reject *and* are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].

⁶ For among them are those who worm their way into homes and captivate silly *and* weak-natured *and* spiritually dwarfed women, loaded down with [the burden of their] sins [and easily] swayed *and* led away by various evil desires *and* seductive impulses.

⁷ [These weak women will listen to anybody who will teach them]; they are forever inquiring *and* getting information, but are never able to arrive at a recognition *and* knowledge of the Truth.

⁸ Now just as Jannes and Jambres were hostile to *and* resisted Moses, so these men also are hostile to *and* oppose the Truth. They have depraved *and* distorted minds, and are reprobate *and* counterfeit *and* to be rejected as far as the faith is concerned.

⁹ But they will not get very far, for their rash folly will become obvious to everybody, as was that of those [magicians mentioned].

¹⁰ Now you have closely observed *and* diligently followed my teaching, conduct, purpose in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness,

¹¹ Persecutions, sufferings—such as occurred to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, persecutions I endured, but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

¹² Indeed all who delight in piety *and* are determined to live a devoted *and* godly life in Christ Jesus will meet with persecution [will be made to suffer because of their religious stand].

¹³ But wicked men and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving *and* leading astray others and being deceived *and* led astray themselves.

¹⁴ But as for you, continue to hold to the things that you have learned and of which you are convinced, knowing from whom you learned [them],

¹⁵ And how from your childhood you have had a knowledge of *and* been acquainted with the sacred Writings, which are able to instruct you *and* give you the understanding for salvation which comes through faith in Christ Jesus [through the ^[b]leaning of the entire human personality on God in Christ Jesus in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness].

¹⁶ Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof *and* conviction of sin, for correction of error *and* discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action),

¹⁷ So that the man of God may be complete *and* proficient, well fitted *and* thoroughly equipped for every good work. (You may like a better translation so read it however you like.)

Here Paul is instructing Timothy (spiritual father to spiritual son) about holding on to the teaching, no matter the cost!

Men who study the bible and put God's word first as the guide for their lives need to be the primary instructors (Praise God! I know your wives are doing a fantastic job of ministry with your kids, but believe me, dads are irreplaceable in this process!) of our children's spiritual and moral upbringing. This starts at home with fathers! Revival starts in the home first with each one of us individually! Then when we make a difference in our own home, God expands our territory and allows us to have influence in other domains.

As Godly men & fathers our primary job toward our children is that we should take it very seriously to instill in them, cultivate in them, & lead them into a relationship with Jesus Christ so that they will be saved! Teach them to humble themselves and have a heart to repent so they will go to Heaven!

We need to teach God's word from the bible in context so it will be a guide, a standard, a plumb line so all behavior & actions are measured by the word so that they can truly know right from wrong!

Guys I only say this because of the times. The bible guarantees that persecution is coming to Christians! As Godly men & fathers we must be prepared to stand for the righteousness of Christ that God placed in us because Revelation 12:11 is our final test which says "And they overcame him (*v. 10 calls him "the accuser"*) by of the blood of the Lamb and by of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." (*Emphasis mine.*)

We don't like to think or talk about it, but death is our reward. We will all die and go to either our heavenly reward or hellish reward! We must be preparing for heaven if we believe in God the creator of all things! There is only one way to Him & that is through His only Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! AMEN!!

I know I have never been a perfect father & please forgive me for that, but as I've progressed in my relationship with Jesus, through actually reading & studying the bible for myself, my eyes have become acutely aware that our time on this earth is short! Every day we need to read, study & pray for God to speak to us through our Guide & Comforter the Holy Spirit in order to overcome the persecution we are about to face!

I pray for you everyday! I pray that revival breaks out in your homes and in your lives!

Be a better father than me!

I love you very very much! Hey, Jesus Loves YOU!

Dad