



Building Blocks

by Thomas E. Trask

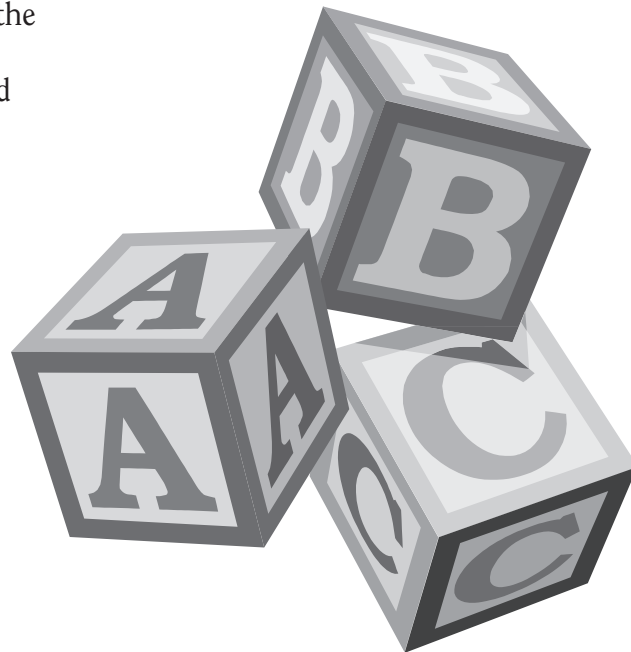
Every child has had the joy of playing with building blocks some time or another. I can remember seeing how high I could stack one block upon another without it falling over. Or, if someone else was building a tower of blocks, one would wait until he or she had stacked them high, then would come along and knock them over, often to the dismay of the builder.

This matter of loving and raising children is a lifetime of building blocks. It is important that one has a good foundation to build upon. In order for that to happen, one must start with the building block of **character**. This begins when children are small. We teach them what has value and worth in the sight of God. Children are building blocks that are precious in His sight. The Lord has placed great value upon a child. The Bible states if one should cause a child to stumble, that one could incur the Lord's wrath (Matthew 18:6).

Another one of these building blocks is the block of **integrity**. Children must be taught

to be truthful. This will begin to shape their lives. The lessons they learn will enable them to make good decisions built upon truth.

Another block in the forming of character at a tender age is **respect**. My parents used to say, "Respect your elders." Mother and Dad were putting build-



ing blocks in place so that I would respect my parents, respect adults, respect Sunday School teachers, respect my pastor, and respect those who had authority over me.

A crucial building block is

one of **habit**. It is interesting how easily a child will acquire habits—good or bad. What might be a cute action early in a child's life can become a habit that isn't cute any longer. It is important to teach children the habit/practice of praying. Then when they can read, they can learn to read the Bible. This then becomes a part of their lives, and the Word of God begins to shape their character.

Children need to have the building block of **self-discipline**. When a child is small, he learns if he throws a temper tantrum, he most likely will get his way. However, if he is taught self-discipline early in life, it will serve him well as he grows up.

So we build one day at a time, one block at a time, one life at a time, and this building will last for all eternity.

The Bible states, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Training is putting one block at a time in place.

Questions for Further Study—

1. List passages from the Bible that can teach children the importance of integrity, respect, and self-discipline.
2. How can you help instill good habits in the lives of the children within your ministry?
3. List three ways character was instilled in your life. How can you reproduce godly character in the lives of your children?