

The Parable of the Wooden Bowl



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A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law and four-year old grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred and his step faltered. The family ate together at the table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor when he grasped the glass, milk spilled on the tablecloth.

The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. "We must do something about Grandfather," said the son. "I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating and food on the floor." So the husband and wife set a small table in the corner. There, Grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner.

Since Grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl when the family glanced in Grandfather's direction, sometimes he had a tear in his eye as he sat alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food.

The four-year-old watched it all in silence. One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, "What are you making?" Just as sweetly, the boy responded, "Oh, I am

making a little bowl for you and Mama to eat your food in
when I grow up.”

The four-year-old smiled and went back to work. The words
so struck the parents that they were speechless. Then tears
started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was
spoken, both knew what must be done.

That evening the husband took Grandfather's hand and
gently led him back to the family table. For the remainder of
his days he ate every meal with the family.

And for some reason, neither husband nor wife seemed to
care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled or the
tablecloth soiled.

Children are remarkably perceptive. Their eyes ever
observe, their ears ever listen and their minds ever process
the messages they absorb. If they see us patiently provide a
happy home atmosphere for family members, they will
imitate that attitude for the rest of their lives. The wise
parent realizes that every day the building blocks are being
laid for the child's future. Let's be wise builders and role
models.

“Life is about people connecting with people and making a
positive difference. Take care of yourself.... and those you
love.... today.... and everyday!”

Lesson: Life is about People Connecting