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# Without Love

*by: Ronald L. Dart*

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I was shocked. One urban school district, in the first three months of school, had 19 reports of weapons confiscated and 42 assaults by kids. That's awful. But what is really bad is that this was *only in the first grade and kindergarten*. It would be bad enough if it was only in one school district. It isn't. It is common across the country.

According to Ronald Stephens, Director of the National School Safety Center, "violence is getting younger and younger" in the schools. At first, it was high schools that had to have special schools for disruptive youngsters. Then it was the intermediate schools. Now it is elementary schools that must have special schools for unmanageable kids. Something awful is going on among our youngest kids.

Why is this happening? A seasoned elementary school administrator in Miami, Karen Bentley, said something that was so piercingly simple. She said, "Kids aren't getting enough lap time." The words leaped off the page at me, because they pulled together a broad range of impressions I have been getting about troubled youth.

One teacher says simply that a lack of socialization at home is responsible for the wild behavior. What we are getting, she said, " is a kid whose body is six years old but has the emotional response of a three-year-old. Imagine a child with the terrible twos in a six-year-old body."

It is true that aggressive behavior in children is absolutely linked to the violence in movies and on television. But that is only a part of the story, and not the most important part at that. Children are dying for a simple lack of lap time. Their lives are being ruined because they grow up without learning how to love and be loved. It isn't just the time they are spending watching television. Television could be a perfect, wonderful medium and the kids would still have problems. It is not what they are getting. It is what they are NOT getting. Lap time. Time spent with mother's arms around them. Time spent playing with daddy. Time in which they experience love and learn how to love.

What is it about love? I suppose evolutionary theory would connect it to sex, but if there is one thing that should be clear by now, it is that love and sex are two entirely

different things. Sex does not explain love. It may explain initial attraction, or it may not. But it does not explain love.

Maybe the reason human beings can love is because we are made in the image of God. But unlike God, we only have a finite capacity for love. We can only love so many people, I mean really love them. This may explain Solomon who could never find a woman. He had seven hundred wives and 300 concubines, but he still could not find the love of his life.

"Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, *counting one by one*, to find out the account: {28} Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; *but a woman among all those have I not found*" (Ecclesiastes 7:27 28 KJV).

He couldn't find one woman, because he tried to love a thousand. He could never love any one of his wives like Isaac loved Rebekah, like Abraham loved Sarah. And poor David, great man that he was, never had that one woman he loved above all others, that one woman who alone could make him happy.

And here we have kids being taught all about sex in school. But is anyone teaching them about love? Even the admirable abstinence program isn't enough. Only love is enough.

But the real tragedy is that the schools cannot teach kids about love. That is the job of the mommas and the papas. And if they don't do it at the earliest time, it may never be done at all. Genetic research has learned that the human genome has a switch that enables language learning and that it is open very early and for a very short time. A kid who is not exposed to spoken language when that window is open will always have a problem with languages.

Suppose there is a window for learning about love that is open very early, but not for very long. To tell the truth, a lot of the social pathology we see right now is perfectly consistent with that possibility. When I think about these poor kids throwing tantrums at age six that one might expect in a terrible two, my heart aches. I can only imagine the fear, the anger, the confusion that besets that little heart and mind. These kids are in pain deep, psychological pain. God only knows where some of these kids will wind up, in jail, on drugs, or dead. It gives new meaning to the old question, "Have you hugged your kid today"?

The worst part about this is that a child who cannot learn to love his family, may find himself unable to love God either. It was Rollo May in *Love and Will* who said that when men lose the power to love, they substitute power over. I think that is what you

see in uncontrollable kids. They are unable to love, and they are trying to gain control of their environment. They can't do this like an adult, so they get their way by screaming and violent behavior.

I know what I am saying is frightening, and it puts a horrific burden on parents. But then, you already knew this down in your heart, didn't you? You already knew that children need love like they need mother's milk. Maybe you thought it was just automatic that it required nothing special from you. But He who made us, made us so that we would need our mothers and our mothers would need us. And He made us to need fathers as we grow up, too.

What we now see in our society is a growing absence of love. And the reason why the love is going away is because God is going away. When we start denying that we are created beings, made by God, when we declare that man is a product of natural laws and evolution, that what we call love is no more than sexual attraction, we end up denying the *possibility of love*.

Without love, our society will ultimately collapse. And without God, we will finally be without love. God help us to turn our families around while we still can.

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*The late Ronald L. Dart was a Christian evangelist whose teachings still inspire thousands of people around the world. His legacy spans decades. For more information about the teachings of Ronald L. Dart, visit [RLDEA.com](http://RLDEA.com) where you will find booklets, articles, sermons, Bible studies, and books by Mr. Dart.*

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### **Discussion Questions**

1. What are your thoughts about the idea that there is a link between the decrease in 'lap time' and an increase of aggression in children today?
2. How much has technology actually helped in this decrease in family social interactions?
3. Do you think that society as a whole wants to ignore the link that quality family time means less violence in our children and instead blame violence on other factors?
4. If so, why would that be? What would be the benefit to ignore the importance of quality family time?
5. What are ways that your family does to ensure family time happens every week?
6. What are things that we can do to teach love to our children?

7. How important is love to you?
8. Do you agree that there “is a growing absence of love” today?
9. Do you agree that there is a direct correlation between a decrease in the importance of God and a decrease in love?
10. How can God’s ecclesia help each other to increase both in our lives?