



## Hope Permeates All Aspects of Life

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Hope begins developing at the age of two, yet, it permeates many if not all aspects and relationships throughout life. Even some of the most remotely views in life such as that of culture and the arts are related to the development of hope at the age of two.

The two year old develops hope as the child witnesses how his or her parents treat each other as parents, and respond to him or her when the child becomes angry and throws temper tantrums during what is referred to as the "Terrible Twos." The response that the parents show their child makes a lasting conscious and subconscious impression of what is possible and not possible, and what is valued and not in life. This impression is so strong that it even affects the child's belief system as he or she grows up and determines whether going to Church is meaningful or not.

For instance, as the child starts throwing the temper tantrum, if the parents treat their child with discipline and yet with reason without becoming too angry themselves, then the child grows up knowing that one can be angry but work through it with dialogue, reason and perseverance. As the child becomes an adult, he does not panic and give up on a relationship when there is emotional difficulty and challenge, but rather uses hope to resolve the difficult situation.

The child is also impressed by seeing how the father treats the mother as the child begins throwing the temper tantrum. For instance, the child becomes angry because her mother does not meet all of her immediate demands of food and pampering. By screaming and shaking her hands, the child is disapproving and trying to tear down in her way the loving relationship that exists between her and her mother. However, if the child's father intercedes, shows, discipline, and protects the mother, the child learns that love can be expressed in a safe manner and no amount of aggression can destroy love. If the child does not see the father protecting the mother, as she grows up, she thinks that love cannot be expressed safely in a relationship. Instead, she thinks that all relationships must be controlled and manipulated. The child does not have the hope that love can prevail. This distrust in the power of love not only affects all human relationships, but also affects one's relationship with the ultimate Love, God. A child that does not develop hope may believe in God, but does not believe that God is powerful enough to overcome all difficulties in life. A thought pattern may be "God rules up there, but humans rule down here." Ultimately, this view determines whether a person becomes a lasting member of the Church as an adult or not.

There are many other ways that the hope a child develops at the age of two ends up affecting him or her the rest of one's life. Of course, if a person's childhood has not been ideal and the relationship with the parents had not been sufficient to develop a sense of hope, that does not mean that a person is doomed to hopelessness, despair, and broken relationships the rest of one's life. Rather, it means that a person must go back, revisit those early relationships, and reestablish that sense of hope and see life from a more hopeful perspective.