

THE ARCHER

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I think my [previously mentioned adoration for the Spartans](#) is what induced my excitement over the thought that as a *parent*, I am an *archer*; a *warrior*. Parent for more than .5 seconds in this crazy world of ours and it doesn't take long to embrace the warrior persona. I don't mean to be a Debbie downer; there are some beautiful experiences I will enthusiastically shove my kid into the direction of; but the truth is there's a lot of evil out there too — stuff I'd like to successfully battle against so that my boys are exposed to the truth about evil at the right place at the right time.

"Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court." — Psalm 127:3-5

I always thought this verse was about having a lot of kids. Like the Duggars should be crazy equipped to defend their name. And probably there's some real truth to the concept of power in numbers, but **I've opted to consider that this verse has as much to do with the archer as it does the arrows.** Just because one has a quiver full of

arrows doesn't mean one knows what to do with them. I think there's wisdom in knowing the *capacity* you have to manage your arrows well — better a few directed well, than many without the asset of direction and control.

If a good parent is like being a warrior, and their children are like arrows, this infers a lot. Being a warrior (a good one at least) requires a tremendous amount of training, direction, leadership ability, and skill. If you are to grasp an arrow, place it in your bow and set it up to hit a bulls eye -- you aim decisively, with the appropriate equipment, correct stance, and constantly consider factors that influence the trajectory of the arrow upon your release. I found this website that covers [12 steps to shooting an arrow](#), and the parallels to parenting wisely are pretty remarkable.

Alternatively...

"Like an archer who wounds at random is one who hires a fool or any passer-by." —
Proverbs 26:10.

It is possible to become an archer who wounds wherever his unintentionally directed arrows land as opposed to being a skilled warrior who uses his arrows purposefully. Arrows in the hands of a warrior are far more useful than arrows in the hand of a fool.

I am deeply grateful for a husband to parent with who is interested in being a skilled warrior. I would forever regret placing the care of my little treasures in the hands of a fool or passer-by. Parents — we are meant to be warriors, and our children are meant to participate in a useful way. Directing them is critical. They are a huge part our [legacy](#).

So I feel the elephant in the room is that not all of our little arrows will find the bullseye that we're aiming for, right? Ultimately that's not our job. Kind of mixed feelings to that truth, right? I think it's both relieving and frightening. **While we can do everything in our power to aim for the bullseye, we cannot define our success by where our little arrows choose to land (since they are alive and loaded with free will).** As I have previously mentioned, this is gut-wrenching stuff... shocker, right? But I think in the same breath there is a tremendous relief in knowing that since we aren't raising puppets, there's something more than the outcome of their decisions that we are ultimately responsible to God for. I pray that the way Brandon and I equip ourselves to parent will land a bullseye for the eternal stuff with our littles, but even

more, I hope that my efforts as an archer are pleasing to the God who gave me the privilege of the role.

Let me end with this — in so many ways parenting is such a glorious glimpse into the relationship we have with God ourselves. And I think we can all say that we would choose free will for our children over birthing robots, right? So did God. Which explains so much about his pursuit of us, about the pain in our world, and about our need for Jesus, doesn't it? Food for thought. For now; I pray that you equip yourselves well, love on your little arrows, and for the love of all things precious — be willing to be warriors for them. From one archer to another — let's do this.