

## Good Shepherd, June, 2020

### Ephesians 6:1-4

It is Father's Day today, but we are not going to praise fathers, or mothers today, we are going to look at what God says to Christian parents and children.

- *If you are a child, God will tell you what your responsibilities are to your parents.*
- *If you are a parent, God will tell you what your responsibilities are to your children.*

Let's begin with children, Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy a long life on the earth. Children are to obey their parents. Two reasons are given: **It's the right thing to do and obedience brings blessings.**

Obedience to parents is simply the right thing to do. Parents have wisdom, experience and knowledge about life to make better decisions for their children than children can make for themselves. Parents usually know what is best for their children. But children don't always realize that.

The fourth commandment not only tells children to obey their parents but also to honor them. To honor parents means to show them love and respect. The Greek word used here means to treat someone as precious to you. We honor our parents by the way we live our lives and by the way we treat our parents, not only when we are living in their home, but also as adults who care for our parents because they need us.

The second reason is, obedience to parents brings blessings to the family. When children obey their parents, things go well for them. God is not saying that the more obedient a child is, the longer he will live. But the more obedient a child is the more he will enjoy life on earth. The obedient child is a happy child. The rebellious child is not so happy because he/she is getting into

trouble and suffering the consequences of their disobedience.

One of the hardest lessons in life, for children and for adults, is that we never get ahead by being disobedient or disrespectful to parents or anyone in authority. Life is better when we are obedient.

So what does God say to children? Obey your parents. Why? Because when you are obedient, things will go well for you You won't be in trouble all the time. This isn't rocket science!

Now, what does God wants parents to do for their children. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. There are two things: **Don't exasperate your children and train and instruct your children in the Lord.**

The word “exasperate” means to “provoke to anger.” It means to frustrate a child. How can this be done?

- By saying one thing and doing another.
- By always criticizing and never praising.
- By being inconsistent with rules and discipline.
- By making promises and never keeping them.
- By showing favoritism to one child.
- By having very high expectations for a child to reach.
- When these things are done, a child often becomes frustrated and disobedient. A little praise can go a long way.

The Lord also wants parents to bring up children in the training and instruction of the Lord. We are to train and instruct children according to God's Word. Instructing is to teach children while training includes discipline. Parents have an awesome responsibility to train and instruct the children God has given them. Our PreSchool, Sunday School, and Christian grade schools and high schools help parents, but the responsibility belongs to the parents.

- *Bring your children to church, that's good training.*
- *At home teach your children about their sin and their Savior.*

- *Train them to live according to God's will and Word.*
- *To train children properly also includes discipline.*
- *But be careful to discipline children in the right way: discipline with love, patience and understanding.*

Children learn much from our example.

- *Don't tell your children that it is wrong to something, and then you do it.*
- *Don't correct children for using bad language and then you say the same thing.*
- *We can't discipline our children for throwing temper tantrums when we fly off the handle at every little thing.*

Children, obey your parents. Parents, don't frustrate your children but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. The easy part is knowing what God wants us to do. The problem is doing it.

Children, do you always obey your parents? Do you always give them love and respect? Of course not; children are sinners!

Parents, have you ever frustrated your children or provoked them to anger? Have you been unfair in your discipline? Have you shown favoritism? Of course we have, parents are sinners!

Our children are not perfect and we weren't perfect as children either. Our parents were not perfect and neither are we.

Yet the promise of God is still there. When children honor and obey their parents, and when parents bring their children up in the training and instruction of the Lord, we will have a happier family.

Parenting is a tough job. Being a child is a tough job. We go to God's Word to get the knowledge, the strength, and the encouragement we need to be obedient children and faithful parents. It is good to remember that Jesus paid for our sins! Jesus is there to help us and to encourage us.

Another thing to remember is to forgive one another as God has forgiven us. Children, forgive your parents for the mistakes they make and parents, forgive your children for the mistakes they make.

Children and parents have responsibilities God gives us to do. **1** *Children are to obey their parents because it is the right thing to do.*

**2** *Parents, don't frustrate your children. Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

What is our goal in all of this? It is not just to help our children be good citizens in society, it is to help them be faithful to Jesus so they can join us in heaven one day.

A Biblical example of a good father is that of Job. He had seven sons and three daughters. From what Scripture says, Job was concerned for the spiritual welfare of his children. Fathers are not perfect and fathers know that, and we **pray** for patience, guidance and forgiveness from God, and love for our family.

Children, see what happens today when you tell your father you love him and thank him for the love he has for Jesus, you, and the family.

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