

Col 3:18-25

18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

22 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

There is an old Chinese proverb which says,

- one generation plants the trees,
- another gets the shade.

A good place to start today's study is here in Colossians 3 and verse 15, let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

Verse 16 tells us to let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

And finally verse 17 says to give thanks to God giving thanks to Jesus in all things.

Then in verses 20 & 21 we see two commands,

- one is positive and the other is negative.
- Children obey, and Fathers, do not provoke.

Eph 6:4 is a parallel verse to this.

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

- under Roman law a father could do what he saw fit with his children.

Ps 127:3-5

3 Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,  
The fruit of the womb is a reward.

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,  
So are the children of one's youth.

5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;

A heritage is a "possession a property or an inheritance."

Some translations use the word "gift or reward" for heritage.

The ultimate reward God has for you is yet to come.

Dan 12:3

3 Those who are wise shall shine  
Like the brightness of the firmament,  
And those who turn many to righteousness  
Like the stars forever and ever.

Mark 9:41

41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

Isa 40:10 **also says** when the Lord returns He is bringing His rewards with Him.

Paul opens in verse 20 by stating that children are to obey their parents.

Children don't naturally or willingly obey, and fathers naturally provoke.

**All have sinned:**

Isa 53:6

6 All we like sheep have gone astray;  
We have turned, every one, to his own way;  
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Prov 22:15

15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;  
The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Ps 51:5

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
And in sin my mother conceived me.

Ps 58:3

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb;  
They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.

Col 3:20

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

Paul uses the present active imperative in this verse. This is an ongoing command.

To obey means (to listen with stillness or attention).

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I think in today's society it's more challenging for children to obey,

- no excuses but they are inundated with technology.

Part of the problem is that adults are either doing the same thing,

Many children in today's world are growing up on their own,

- and they need direction in their life.

Paul is taking verse 20 of Colossians from Ex 20:12, the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment. You'll notice a promise associated with the Exodus verse, there it says: 12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

Eph 6:2-3

2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

So here is a double blessing, one is that it's pleasing to God and two, that it may be well with you and you may live long.

Prov 16:1

7 When a man's ways please the Lord,  
He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

When Peter and other apostles were freed from prison in Acts 5 by an angel of the Lord, the Captain of the temple and some guards found them again teaching the gospel in the temple. When they were brought before the high priest he asked them, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?"

Acts 5:29

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.

So parents, don't ask your children to lie for you.

- Don't put them in a position where
- they have to make those type of decisions.

I'm sure Jesus was obedient to His parents.

To any child that is asked to make up his bed or clean his room, don't say, that's not pleasing to the Lord.

If either of your parents ask you to do something, don't argue with them.

- Do what they've asked since it's pleasing to the Lord.

**Children need to learn to obey before they can command.**

Prov 6:20

20 My son, keep your father's command,  
And do not forsake the law of your mother.

Prov 10:1

1 A wise son makes a glad father,  
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

Let's take a closer look at verse 4 of Psa 127.

Ps 127:4

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,  
So are the children of one's youth.

**People shoot arrows at a target. The goal is to hit the bull's eye.**

**When we launch our children into the world,**

- we want to be sure we've prepared them
- in their walk with the Lord and
- that we've prepared them for life in general.

Prov 22:6 says train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

The Hebrew word for **“child”** is speaking of any child from infancy

- until the time he or she
- can serve in the military and serve in battle.

**We are to train them in the way they should go.**

- Not the way we think they should go.

We are to teach the children in accordance with the way God has created them.

**When Paul dealt with people that had come to Christ in Thessalonica, he used two metaphors.**

7 Thess 2:7

7 But we were gentle among you (that is to be kind and not quarrel), just as a nursing mother cherishes (to take care of) her own children.

We too should be gentle with our own children.

1 Thess 2:11-12

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you (in the Greek this literally means one by one. Paul was saying that they dealt with each individual just the way a father deals with each of his children differently), as a father does his own children, 12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

We want to be encouraging to our children

- we want them to walk worthy of God.

The following are some thoughts on child development:

Birth to age 1: The dependent phase (the child needs security).

At ages 1 & 3 children go thru the exploratory phase which is the freedom to explore.

They also go thru the imitation phase at the same age.

- As they explore they also imitate
- what you do or what their siblings do.

And this is where the conflicts begin

- because children don't quite understand what "no" means.

When Solomon said not to provoke your children to anger, he was saying,

- "don't be so harsh on them that they will naturally want to rebel."

When your children want to show you something,

- as difficult as it is, don't just blow them off
- as if you're listening and you really aren't.

After the terrible two's comes the next phase of a child's life where they are pretending to be mommy or daddy.

The first 4 years of a child's life are crucial to their development.

Henry Ward Beecher

It is not hard to make a child or a tree grow right if you train them when they're young, but to make them straighten out after you've allowed things to go wrong is not an easy matter.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995) *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. Edited by A. Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, p. 847.

Children ages 8 to 18 are spending an average of 7.5 hours of their daily time

- on entertainment, either on computer or television.
- They are spending an average of 114 days a year on entertainment.

According to Forbes there were 37.9 million

- single parent households in the U.S. in Nov 22.
- That's about 29% of American households
- compared to 13% in 1960.

**1969 Plan to depopulate America:** <https://frontline.news/post/us-depopulation-plan-hits-new-milestone>

Listen, if we're going to claim the promises of God then we should obey the commands of God.<sup>2</sup>

Col 3:21

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

In other words, don't stir your children to anger. How does this happen even in the life of a believer?

Sometimes we're too strict, give your children room to grow.

Don't be looking for faults in them

- and don't expect perfection from them.

Finally Paul says, if we're doing these things,

- if we're provoking our children,
- they may become discouraged.
- They may lose heart.

When people become discouraged,

- they often turn to other sources for encouragement.

Eph 6:4 is a parallel passage to verse 21:

Eph 6:4

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Notice three things in this verse, "bring them up, train them and admonish them in the Lord." This is the answer to not disheartening your children.

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<sup>2</sup> Pentz, C.M. (1990) *The Complete Book of Zingers: Over 5,000 Perfect One-Liners*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., p. 220.

First you bring them up, that means to love them tenderly.

The Greek word for “bring them up” in verse 4 is the same word Paul used in Eph 5:29 when he said:

**Eph 5:29**

29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but **nourishes** and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. (First you bring them up, then you nourish them. This means to warm with body heat, to love them tenderly)

So you have to love them, then you have to discipline them consistently. Proverbs says not to spare the rod.

**Prov 22:15**

15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;  
The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

This is speaking of destructive behavior.

But Solomon said the rod will drive the foolishness away.

**Prov 29:17**

17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest;  
Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

And last, we want to love our children wisely. It’s up to us to love our children and to teach them God’s word.

To the Corinthians Paul said,

**2 Cor 13:11**

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.