

Children and Fathers

Psalm 127:4 it likens children to arrows. It says, *like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth*. The purpose of an arrow is not to stay in the quiver, or the arrow-bag of the warrior. The purpose is to be shot from the warrior's bow toward the target.

[20] Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. [21] Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (Colossians 3:20-21 ESV)

GOD HAS SIMPLE INSTRUCTIONS TO CHILDREN AND FATHERS.

The question we want to ask is: What are the instructions?

In this book of Colossians we find 2 instructions.

Instruction #1 - Children: Listen to your parents and do what they tell you to do. **3:20**

Children, obey your parents in everything,

This is the number 1 job of a child who still lives under the authority of his or parents.

The word obey carries the idea of listening and responding accordingly. A child is to listen to the demands, commands,

requests, and advice of parents, and do what he/she is told to in the way the parents want it done.

God knows that no parents are perfect, but this is still His command.

(The Reason Why) - This is what God wants to see of you. **3:20**

for this pleases the Lord.

God is pleased with a child's obedience to his/her parents. A child's fellowship with God the Father grows stronger when he/she obeys his/her earthly father and mother.

If a child learns at a young age to listen and obey his/her parents, he/she will learn to listen and obey God during adulthood.

Instruction #2 - Fathers: Do not raise your kids in such a way that makes them bitter toward you or God. **3:21**

Fathers, do not provoke your children,

Out of everything that God, through the Apostle Paul could've said in this little letter, God chose to focus on this one idea: do not provoke your children. I wonder: Why? Maybe God is telling us that this is the worst trap a father could fall in - to raise his kids in such a way that they become bitter.

Provoking a child means to stimulate or to stir up anger and negativity within a child. It means to treat them in such a way

that they feel like fighting against you - like they want to challenge everything you ask of them.

What provokes a child to wrath?

Let me offer you 12 ideas.

1. Failing to communicate and express love and affection toward your children. 1 John 4:19
2. Failing to practice what you preach. 1 Corinthians 11:1
3. Failing to listen and understand your children. 1 John 5:14
4. Failing to be consistent in your expectations and consequences of misbehavior. Hebrews 12:6
5. Failing to encourage your children. 1 Thess. 2:11-12
6. Failing to keep your promises. Josh. 21:45
7. Failing to give children responsibility in order to display confidence and trust. 2 Cor. 3:4-6
8. Failing to schedule time for your children. Gal. 4:1
9. Failing to have fun together. John 2:1-2
10. Failing to share your heart and failures with your children. James 5:16
11. Failing to apologize when you have been wrong. Matt. 5:23-24
12. Failing to make them feel important to you. 1 John 3:1

No Christian dad would want their kids to say, “I want nothing to do with you, and I especially want nothing to do with that God of

yours. Forget you, forget the Bible, forget God, Forget Jesus. If this is what it's like to a Jesus person, I'm out."

(The Reason Why) - You do not want to crush your child's spirit. 3:21

lest they become discouraged.

Do you want your kids to grow up to be adults feeling incapable, incompetent, un-important, unloved, unappreciated, unwanted? No. You don't want to discourage them, to crush their spirit.

I think God is telling us to be careful. Love on your kids the way God has loved on you. Treat them the way God has treated you.

The time a parents has with a child goes very quickly. Before long, a parents has to release them in to this world - let em go - let em fly - just like that archer and his arrow.

When it comes to and archer, an arrow, and a target, we should ask: what's the target? I think Chip Ingram was right when he said the target is:

Romans 8:29

[29] For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son... (ESV)

God has simple instructions to children and fathers.

Children: listen and obey your parents - do what they tell you to do. God is pleased with that.

Fathers: don't frustrate your children, making them bitter - don't crush their spirit.

