

Lesson 16: Parenting, Part 1

Introduction:

“Successful parenting is not first about what you’ve produced; rather, it’s first about what you have done.” – *Parenting*, by Paul Tripp

I. An Exegesis of Ephesians 6:1-4

Eph 6:1–4 – *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

A. Ephesians 6:1 – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”

1. “Children” (*teknon*) – refers to children in the home who are _____ on their parents.
2. “Obey” (*hupakouo*) – To listen _____ and then _____ the command.
3. “In the Lord” – qualifies “obey”, not “parents.”
4. “This is right” – means requiring obedience is not an _____ parenting method. Obedience is right, and disobedience is unrighteousness in the sight of God.

B. Ephesians 6:2 – “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise).

1. “Honor” (*timao*) – A reverent attitude. This honor rules out obedience that involves reluctance, anger, defiance, complaining, whining, grumbling, murmuring, and below-the-breath comments. In this case, disciplining the _____ may be more important than the behavior.

“A change in behavior that does not stem from a change in the heart is not *commendable*; it is *condemnable*.” – *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Ted Tripp

2. Honor is the position of one’s _____.
3. First commandment with a _____ promise.

C. Ephesians 6:3 - "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

1. "That it may be well with you" - refers to the _____ of life.
2. "That you may live long in the land" - refers to the _____ of life.

"The promises [connected] to the commandments are intended to excite our hopes, and to impart a greater cheerfulness to our obedience; and therefore Paul uses this as a kind of seasoning to render the submission...more pleasant and agreeable." - John Calvin

D. Ephesians 6:4 - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

1. "Fathers" (*Patera*) - can refer to both parents (cf. Heb 11:23), yet fathers are addressed directly, likely as representatives of the parental unit.
2. "Provoke" (*parorgizete*) - to anger alongside, to enrage or exasperate. How do we provoke our kids to anger?
 - Domineering and demanding
 - Overcorrecting and micromanaging
 - Comparing
 - Smothering and being overprotective - "helicopter parenting"
 - Neglecting out of selfishness - "They just want attention!"
 - Withholding discipline for unbiblical reasons
 - Favoring the child who is compliant and doesn't anger you
 - Over-discipline - exasperating them, threatening them with huge punishments (grounded for life), hurtful words
 - Pushing them too hard (e.g. in school, with only worldly goals in mind)
 - Condescending attitude with rolling of the eyes, etc.
 - Constant criticism - constantly focusing on the bad while ignoring the good
 - Not enough encouragement
 - Forgetting they are just kids, and that we, too, need parenting from our Father
 - Marital disharmony
 - Child-centered home vs. Christ-centered home
 - Habitually disciplining in anger
 - Modeling anger
 - Double standard (i.e. "I can be angry but you can't!")
 - Over/Under-emphasis on rules
 - Not admitting you're wrong nor asking forgiveness, while demanding it from them

3. “Bring them up” – because Rom 3:10-18 says on their own, they’re headed down a road that leads to:
 - a. Unrighteousness
 - b. Further misunderstanding
 - c. A life away from God
 - d. Worthlessness
 - e. Shameful and deceitful speech
 - f. Eagerness to harm others
 - g. Ruin and misery
 - h. No peace
 - i. No fear of God

4. “Discipline” (*paideia*) (ESV, NASB) – training (NKJV), nurture (KJV).
 - a. The word *paideia* is used 6x in the NT (translated as “discipline” here in Eph 6:4 and 4x in Heb 12:5-11; and is translated as “_____” in 2 Tim 3:16).

2 Tim 3:16 - *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for _____ in righteousness.*
 - b. Discipline/Training always comes after teaching. It means making sure they know what to do, helping them make it a habit, and correcting them when they fail.

“Teaching gives knowledge. Training gives skill. Teaching fills the mind. Training shapes the habits. Teaching brings to the child that which he did not have before. Training enables a child to make use of that which is already his possession.” – *Teach Them Diligently*, Lou Priolo
 - c. We conclude that *paideia* (“...bring them up in the *paideia* and instruction of the Lord”) includes more than just chastisement. It is a more comprehensive word that includes ensuring that teaching is correctly put into practice.

5. “Instruction” (*nouthesia*) (ESV, NASB) – admonition (NKJV) – denotes words of admonition that are designed to correct while not provoking or embittering. This implies:
 - a. That there is something wrong
 - b. That the confrontation is verbal
 - c. That there is a _____ for the child being confronted
 - d. Because it is restorative and not punitive, it rules out clamor and slander

II. A Deeper Look at Discipline¹

A. The _____ of discipline (Hebrews 12:1-11)

1. Parents, you must look to Jesus!
 - a. Look to Him _____ (v. 2)
 - b. Look to Him for _____ (v. 3)
2. Parents, you must consider your position!
 - a. You, too, are a child who needs _____ (v. 5)
 - b. Remember that God disciplines you because He _____ you (v. 6)
3. Parents, *now* look to your kids! Our foundation for disciplining our children is God's love for us in discipline.

B. The _____ of discipline

1. To model _____ love for us (Heb 12).
2. To show them that we long to _____ God.

John 14:15 – *If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*
3. To show them we _____ them as our children.

Prov 13:24 – *Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.*
4. To show them their need for the Gospel.

C. The _____ for discipline

1. Because we are sinning if we don't.

Jas 4:17- *So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*

¹ Adapted from Kent Dresdow's conference session, *Parenting: Discipline*, 2019, available at www.NCTconference.org.

2. Because it is God's way of curbing our children's foolishness and sin.

Prov 5:23 – *He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is led astray.*

Prov 10:17 – *Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof leads others astray.*

Prov 22:15 – *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.*

Prov 23:14 – *If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.*

3. Because it is God's way of producing righteousness and character in believers.

Heb 12:11 – *For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

4. It leads to prudence and understanding.

Prov 15:5, 32 – *A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent... Whoever ignores instruction despises himself, but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence.*

5. It teaches them respect for authority.

Heb 12:9 – *Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?*

D. The _____ of discipline

1. Discern the problem

- a. What happened? What did *they* do? What did *you* do? Etc.

The goal: To seek the truth, eliminate your assumptions and identify _____.

- b. What were you _____ and/or _____ when you
(disobeyed/sinned in some observable action, such as):

- Hit your brother (younger child)?
- Took her toy (younger child)?
- Went to that party and _____ (older child)?
- Lied (any child)?
- Other (fill in your child's areas of heart-level disobedience)

The goal: to help them see the _____ of their disobedient action, and not just dwell on the action itself.

- c. Did your sin of (fill in the blank) make things better or worse between you and that person (sister, friend, parent, etc.)?

The goal: to help them see the progression: desires → temptation → sin → hurt (Jas 1:14-15)

- d. What does God say in the Bible about how you should respond in that situation?

The goal: to have them think about how to replay the situation by replacing their sin (putting it off) with godliness (putting on Christ).

2. Be consistent

- a. Follow _____ guidelines

“What gets in the way of parenting is one thing: the character of the parent. We turn God-given moments of ministry into reasons to be angry... we are often mad at our children, not because they’ve broken God’s law, but because they’ve gotten in the way of the laws of our peace and comfort... sadly, there are moments when we are mad that our children need us to walk down the hall and parent them once more. ...

Many children become *emotional weathermen*. They have come to understand that the rules of the house tend to change with the emotion of the parent who is present. So, they’re constantly checking the weather in order to gauge what they can get away with and what they can’t. Because parental engagement and authority have been inconsistent, their submission to it is inconsistent as well.” – *Parenting*, Paul Tripp

- b. Use _____ language

3. Carefully administer

- a. Before: with _____

- b. During: in _____

- i. As promptly after the offense as possible
- ii. In private
- iii. It’s painful, but not bruising (Heb 12:5-11; determine what’s effective)
- iv. It’s measured and you’re in control
- v. It’s done in a gracious manner

- c. After: toward _____
- i. Affection! Hug and/or hold them (Lam 3:32).
 - ii. Proclamation! Bring in the gospel in order to highlight both your sin and theirs, and our common need for Jesus—this is the good news of the gospel that brings hope!
 - iii. Supplication! Pray with them and pray for them.
 - iv. Restitution! Have them make it right.

E. The dangers of discipline

1. Doing it in anger (Eph 4:31, 32, 6:4; Col 3:8; Matt 7:1-5).
2. Doing it as punishment and not discipline.
3. Doing it in a cruel or injurious manner.
4. Doing it without teaching.
5. Doing it to get behavior change alone.
6. Doing it in a thoughtless, or lazy “catch-all” manner.
7. Doing it because they’ve offended you (not God).
8. Requiring too much, too fast, causing them to lose heart.

What is the main thing you have learned from this lesson?

As a result, what is the Lord asking you to change?

Recommended books:

- *Parenting*, by Paul Tripp
 - Great first book to read because it covers “the big picture.”
- *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, by Tedd Tripp
 - Gets to root issues (cf. also, *Withhold Not Correction*, by Bruce Ray).
- *The Faithful Parent*, by Martha Peace and Stuart Scott
 - Especially helpful for the person who says, “I get the why, but how?” It includes specific chapters for each age group.
- *Teach Them Diligently*, by Lou Priolo
 - Emphasizes instruction and is filled with Scripture.
- *Don’t Make Me Count to Three*, by Ginger Hubbard
 - Good for the parent who asks, “What do I do when I’ve given instruction, but they aren’t obeying...what’s next?” Perhaps *most* helpful for moms, especially with toddlers through elementary school.
- *The Heart of Anger*, by Lou Priolo
 - Great not only to address an angry child, but also helpful (and convicting) for angry parents and thus angry homes (c.f. also, *Getting a Grip: The Heart of Anger for Teens*, by Lou Priolo).
- *Disciplines of a Godly Family*, by Kent and Barbara Hughes
 - Helps parents establish great habits in all areas of family life
- *Family Worship*, by Joel Beeke
 - Primarily recommended for men, as they are called to lead in this area.
- *Age of Opportunity*, by Paul Tripp
 - Great for help with teens (cf. also, *Get Outta My Face*, by Rick Horne, which is especially helpful for reaching angry, unmotivated teens).
- *Treasuring Christ When Your Hands are Full*, by Gloria Furman
 - Great for the mom who needs hope.