

## **Family Study: Principles of Parenting Intro - for the College and Career Class at Gulf Coast Baptist Church 9/24/23 by Steve Thomas**

### **Introduction**

God has given parents a responsibility to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Scripture provides many principles to aid in this process. Two principles that many parents forget is that they are always teaching. Children will often hear what you say, and sometimes they will even learn from your words, but they will always see what you do, and they will learn much more from what they see you do, than from what you say to them. The second principle is that while parents are always teaching, children have a free will and they may not take the lesson away that the parent intended. They have spiritual enemies that they are learning to overcome as well, and these enemies twist the lessons that parents are trying to teach. It is painful as a parent to see your faults in your children, and it is also difficult to see them fail when they should have listened to your advice.

### **Scriptural Basis**

Ephesians 6:1-4 is a common passage that spells out responsibilities for members of the family. Children are to obey and honor. Paul is not putting believers under law, but highlighting the importance of familial submission by pointing out the promises that law provided for obedience. He is not transferring the blessings of Israel onto the Church here, but just declaring what is true. This commandment had an accompanying promise. This promise is referred to several times in the OT (Deut 4:40; 5:16; 6:3,18; 12:25,28; 22:7; Ruth 3:1; Psa 128:1-2; Is 3:10; Jer 42:6), but not once given to Grace Believers.

Parents are to teach obedience. This is not a natural occurrence in children, it must be developed. Fathers are not to enrage their children, but to bring them up (nourish - the same word used in husbands toward wives that Christ does for the Church) in the child training (paidea) and admonition (warnings) of the Lord.

There is a lot to unpack here. These are the principles that we will be dealing with in the next few lessons. Teaching obedience is a process. It takes a willingness to make our children unhappy in the present so that they can have access to happiness in the future. Many parents are not willing to do this, so they sacrifice their child's access to happiness in the future for a short term pleasure in the present. Delayed gratification is a principle that is part of the Christian Life. We will study David's parenting later in the class and see that he struggled with this principle.

Many parents struggle with provoking their children. Romans 7 teaches the response of the sin nature to law, it is awakened and stirred up by a quality of law. Many parents resort to the "because I said so" type of parenting where a power struggle is initiated, and the parent dominates the child with mental, physical, or emotional manipulation. This is not biblical parenting. Remember you are always teaching your child something. If you manipulate them, you will teach them to learn the process, and then learn to beat it. When they are mentally able to outsmart you, they will. When they are physically able to rebel, they will, and when they can

emotionally punish you for this style of parenting, they will. Biblical parenting takes faith, grace, and the spiritual power of God.

In the coming weeks, we will unpack these principles and see biblical basis for why the carnal methods do not work, and evidence that the biblical model does work.

### **Conclusion**

God gave the child to the parent, and He loves them more than the parent does. The parent might have a vision for what the child will become, but God has a plan that was written before the foundation of the world for these individuals. It is incumbent on the parent to seek God's will for your child's life. This is the path to principled parenting.