

Introduction

1. We want joy for our children.

(1) But when do want that joy to manifest

(2) short-term parenting

2. Fraught w/ Fear & shame

(1) Parent out of experience

(2) Parent out of fear

(3) Shame attachment disorder

3. The Goal

Matt 19:5 - Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?

(1) To help them leave

(2) To help them let go

"independence"

I. Children Are Members, Too (v. 20a)

1. Breaking New Ground

(1) Sign of blessing & favor

Psalm 127:3-5 - Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!

(2) Not treated as whole persons w/ rights, opinions, or spiritual responsibility

(3) Paul is addressing children as members of the church.

2. The responsibility of children

Ephesians 6:1-2 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise),

(1) Honor, by: (western stereotype)

1. Obey 2. Respect 3. Care

(2) Honor has a promise

Deuteronomy 5:15-16 - "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

1. Days may be long

Vulcan

2. It may go well w/ you

Literally
live longer

+ This means a full life, where God blesses & provides in unique ways.

II. Children Are Rebels, First (→ 2000)

Psalm 51:5 - Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

- (1) Turn your back on a toddler
- (2) Leave an adolescent w/ dessert
- (3) Give a teen a Ferrari.

Instruction, Love & Discipline they understand the far reaching effects of sin & the never-ending grace of God

1. Rebels Need Instruction

(1) Orientation

Proverbs 22:6 - Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

1. This is what we all want
2. Promise?
3. Proverbs (Rule) vs Ecclesiastes (Exception)
4. Our children are navigationally lost w/ parents to orientate them.

Gospel
is
compass

(2) Recollection

1. What you teach them, they will remember when life gets hard. Small unintentional lessons matter (Relationships, career, etc.)

2. Rebels Need Discipline

The first thing we should realize here is that discipline is indispensable if we are to have Christ's fullness in the home. Unfortunately, this is not true of American households in general. In the recently published letters between Karl Barth, the famous German theologian, and his friend Carl Zuckmayer, the celebrated German writer, Zuckmayer wrote:

If one has lived in America and seen in countless cases what injustice is done to children, one has enough of it. One sees too much that someone, hidden behind misunderstood psychoanalytical maxims, allows them to become little tyrants and ill-humored despots, despots whom adults crawl in front of for pure convenience, only to get peace; and one sees how this takes effect in the unfortunate adolescents when they, brought up without authority are confronted with the difficulties of life.

(1) Obey (absolute) different than submit (willing)
1. Obey = listen/under

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

It is interesting to note that many psychologists are finding more evidence that discipline is, indeed, the great ingredient for domestic fullness. Dr. Stanley Coopersmith, associate professor of psychology at the University of California, surveyed 1,738 normal middle-class boys and their families, beginning in the preadolescent period and following them through to young manhood. After determining the boys with the best self-esteem, he then compared their homes and childhood influences with those of the boys having a lower sense of self-esteem. He found three important characteristics which distinguished them:

1. The high-esteem children were clearly more loved and appreciated at home than were the low-esteem boys. The parental love was deep and genuine, not just an empty display of words. The boys knew they were the object of pride and interest, increasing their own sense of self-worth.

2. The high-esteem group came from homes where parents had been significantly more strict in their approach to discipline. By contrast, the parents of the low-esteem group had created insecurity and dependence by their permissiveness. Furthermore, the most successful and independent young men during the latter period of the study were found to have come from homes that demanded the strictest accountability and responsibility. And as could have been predicted, the family ties remained the strongest—not in the wishy-washy homes—but in the homes where discipline and self-control had been a way of life.

3. The homes of the high-esteem group were also characterized by democracy and openness. Once the boundaries for behavior were established, there was freedom for individual personalities to grow and develop. The boys could express themselves without fear of ridicule, and the overall atmosphere was marked by acceptance and emotional safety.³

(2) "In everything"

1. We tend to only enforce what matters or is convenient

(3) Failing to teach them to obey in everything, is abusive.

(4) How we discipline

1. Be proactive, not reactive when you can

+ Church hooligans

+ Daughter driving

+ Catch them doing right

2. Give consequences & rewards

+ Christians & rewards

+ Bible is full of rewards

+ Reward ≠ Bribe

3. Enforce Your Rules

Col. 3:23-24

Matthew 5:37 - Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'...

+ Don't over threaten

4. Effective Methods

Hebrews 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.

Proverbs 13:24 - Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.

Prov. 22:13 - Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die.

III. Children Are Provoked, Most (v21) Rebels Need Grace

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

1. The provocation of others

(1) By criticisms

1. Parents are competitive
2. Parents are insecure
3. Children are idols

(2) By assumptions

1 Timothy 4:12 - Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

1. Little value
2. Assume the younger, the less important words are & assume what conduct will be
3. Age \neq wisdom

Psalms 8:2 - Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength

4. In our homes & in the church our kids need to be elevated (culture elevates happiness)

2. The provocation of parents

(1) By severity

Proverbs 19:18 - Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death...

(2) By hypocrisy

Playing Favorites

1. Do as I say, not as I do is not a parenting strategy its a provocation

3. The provocation of Fathers

(1) By over-functioning

Proverbs 1:8-9 - Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

1. Instructions - discipline; chastisement; command; bring into order
2. Teaching - direction, decisions; to throw or cast

Psalms 103:13 - As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him...

(2) By under-involved

1. Just the fun parent because you're never around & feel guilty
2. Disengaged because you're tired
3. Delegate discipline

(3) Generational Curses

1. Demonic, sin, attachment

Conclusion

1. God is a good Father

Matthew 7:11

if you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

2. God is a present Father

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

3. God is a stable Father

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

4. God is a pleased Father

Mark 1:11

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."