

# The Renewed Family

## Colossians 3:20-21

### INTRODUCTION:

I heard about a young preacher who at his first church he had a newborn baby and he preached a sermon called – 10 infallible principals in raising godly kids.

- By the time he had pastored for 5 years he had a 5 year old and a toddler he preached the sermon series again this time tweaking it a little and calling it – 10 good principles for raising godly kids.
- By the time he had pastored for 10 years he had a 10 year old a 6 year old , and a 3 year old. This time he preached the series again, again changing it a bit, this time calling it – 10 ideas that could produce godly kids.
- By the time he had preached for 17 years he had two teenagers and a 10 year old – this time he renovated the series entirely calling it – Does anyone have any advice that might be helpful?

So I speak to you today not as an expert, but rather as one who *desires your sympathy*, and hopefully someone who has found a few truths in scripture that I can pass on to you.

When the Gospel came to the Roman Empire a **revolution** came with it. It was said of the Apostles, “These men are turning the world upside down” well in fact they were turning it right side up, but this is the nature of the Gospel. It is a revolutionary notion.

### PARENTING WAS REVOLUTIONIZED

In Roman society *pa-tria po-test-as*, that is, the authority of the head of the house, gave the father virtual life and death power over his entire household. He could cast any of them out of the house, sell them as slaves, or even kill them—and be accountable to no one.

**A newborn child** was placed at its father’s feet to determine its fate. If the father picked it up, the child was allowed to stay in the home; if the father walked away, it was simply disposed of—much as aborted babies are in our own day.

- **Seneca** - Seneca, a renowned statesman in Rome at the time Paul wrote the Ephesian letter, said, “*We slaughter a fierce ox; we strangle a mad dog; we plunge a knife into a sick cow. Children born weak or deformed we drown.*”

- **Hilarion** - A letter written in 1BC by a man named Hilarion to his wife, Alis, reads, “*if you have another child, if it is a boy, let it live; if it is a girl, expose it*” (Papyri Oxyrhynchus 4.744).

*Many times Christians would come along and adopt these abandoned Children.*

**The Roman culture had the idea that children were only good as far as they could be of some good to the parents. Children were your *free labor* and they were your *retirement plan*.**

**Our own culture seems to follow **two extremes** when it comes to Parenting Children.**

### **Devalue Children**

- 1/3 of all children that are conceived are aborted
- 1/3 of all births do not have anyone listed as father.
- 1 in 4 kids will go to bed tonight without a dad at home.

The other extreme is that the **Worship Children**

- Worship – is to consider them and their desires more valuable than Jesus and what He wants.
- Kids come before church, before time with the Lord, before everything.

**Well whether you are like the Romans that devalued children or whether you are like many Americans that worship your children our text today will be helpful.**

**TEXT: Colossians 3:20-21**

**20. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.**

Immediately, Paul strikes a tone that contradicts our tendency to **Worship AND Devalue**.

- The **child** is called to resign his or her place as a demigod in the home - and to become obedient.
- The **parent** is called to resign their tendency to worship the child, and called to oversee and train them for their good.

Most theologians agree that the *children* Paul is referring to were under the age of 15 - at 15 they would “graduate torah school” and be able to marry.

Around the age of 15, the wise Parent seeks to entrust the Son or Daughter with greater and greater responsibility. They should learn to think for themselves, provide for themselves, make life plans for themselves.

There is an unprecedented number of what is being called, **“Boomerang Kids”** who move back in with mom and dad in their 20s and 30s. Why? Because they didn’t transition into Adulthood properly.

**ILLUSTRATION:** By the age of 16 our oldest kids were working part time jobs and making good money. They were learning to manage a budget. They ask us for very little. Caitlyn is 13 and I have no doubt she will do the same.

Most theologians agree that **Mary**, the earthly mother of Jesus was around 15 when she bore the Lord. If Mary could carry the messiah, your 15 year old daughter should be able to fix her bed and cook breakfast.

So from birth through around 15 the child should **OBEY**, but from around 16 on, the child should be given more and more freedom and should take the position of “Honoring their Father and Mother” which is something we are to do throughout our lives.

I’m 44, I **HONOR** my mom, but I do not need to **OBEY** my mom. This verse is primarily talking about those under the age of 16.

This is one of those concepts that practically every culture, every language, every religion holds to the fact that children are to obey their parents – this is one thing that ***practically EVERYONE agrees on except children.***

Why? You have a sin nature that makes authority a difficult thing to deal with and some of you will never grow out of it.

That is why Paul put it in the Bible. Kids aren’t born obeying this one. Scripture says we go forth from the wound speaking lies. In the words of a 90’s hiphop band, they are ***naughty by nature. They must be taught how to obey.***

You have heard it said, “Spare the Rod spoil the child” That’s not what the bible teaches. Let me show you the strength of the language the Bible gives us when it speaks of training our kids.

- **Proverbs 23:13-14 (NASB95)**

<sup>13</sup>Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod,

he will not die. <sup>14</sup>You shall strike him with the rod And rescue his soul from Sheol.

- **Proverbs 13:24 (NASB95)**

<sup>24</sup>He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

- **Proverbs 22:15 (NASB95)**

<sup>15</sup>Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

- **Proverbs 29:15 (NASB95)**

<sup>15</sup>The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

### **Here are James Dobson's Advice for Discipline:**

- Spanking begins around 2 years, typically a spat on the hand – with the hand supported, if possible use a paint stirrer.
- Progress from there to using a thin paddle around the age of 3.
- Around the age of 5 use a thicker paddle with a significant handle.
- The child should rarely need paddled by the age of 6-8
- As your child moves into the pre-teen years you want to discipline more by restrictions of freedom.
- Remember the goal is to change their **heart** not just their **behavior**.
  - o For that reason, discipline alone is not sufficient, but must be coupled with training, prayer, example, etc.

## **BEWARE OF:**

### **a. Arbitrary/Inconsistent Discipline**

This is when discipline is determined by your mood rather than the child's behavior.

NOTE: It says Children obey your PARENTS

It is very important that parents are in sync when it comes to discipline. Or else the child will migrate to the Lenient parent. One is the **Cop**, one is the **Clown**. One will give you cookie, the other will taser you.

Children exploit this - if they want something they ask the **CLOWN**. If their sibling did something wrong they tell the **COP**. "Johny hit me taser him!

The expectations must be clear. If you haven't made them clear, you need to own that and give them a pass. Write it down if necessary.

Also, don't have a lot of rules, but enforce a few rules really consistently. If you do, you won't need an endless list.

### **b. Excessive Discipline**

- Does the punishment fit the crime?
- Do you punish for **accidents** or **attitude**?
  - **Example:** Spilling a drink is an accident, throwing the drink may be an attitude.
  - **Example:** Your teenager smarting off to mom is an attitude; your teenager forgetting to clean her room may be an accident.
  - Often it is helpful for mom and dad to deliberate together and discuss the propriety of the discipline.

### **c. Humiliation**

- Aren't you thankful that God doesn't humiliate us for our sin?
- Humiliation is a cruel means of discipline.

If at all possible, take your child to a private place and make sure they understand why they are being disciplined. Execute the punishment. When it's over it's over. No cold shoulder, not emotional torture. That is why the biblical method is so healthy.

Some people wouldn't dare spank their child, but they will emotionally torture them for a week. I don't see the wisdom in that.

### **d. Negotiation**

What do I get if I obey? To live... you get to live...

What about this? ONE, TWO, TWO AND A HALF....

This is NOT a negotiation...

**LISTEN:** It's better to approach discipline like a **referee** - make the call and enforce it. Don't get emotionally tied up in it.

I see this in Publix practically every time I go. A mom negotiating, bribing, threatening the child. I want to walk up and say, "Excuse me Mrs. Bln Laden, that will not work".

### **e. Condemnation**

- There is no condemnation of you in Christ and there should be no condemnation of your child. While at times your discipline may be very hard there should always be the heart of compassion and restoration.

### **The heart of discipline is found in Hebrews 12:9–11 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> 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? <sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup> 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.

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

Notice this command is specifically to Dads, not both parents. This is a tendency of Fathers. Some translations say, “Do not exasperate your child”. The root word is ASPIRE. To exasperate means to ROB OF ASPIRATION.

One of the ways you can gauge how well you are doing as a Dad or a Mom is by checking the Aspiration or Ambition of your kids. Do they DREAM? Do they Aspire to accomplish great things? Or do they rest on their laurels? Are they content with mediocrity?

In the moment it is sometimes hard to know whether your discipline was right or wrong. But you can always stand back and look at the child and see the direction, the trajectory they are headed.

Josh McDowell said it well, Rules without Relationship equals rebellion every time.

### **CONCLUSION/INVITATION:**

**CHILDREN:** If you are going to obey mom and dad, you will have to wrestle through a couple of big theological concepts. Paul assumed you are bright enough to do so, hence the command.

1. **Is Your God Sovereign?** - Is God ruler over all people and able to ensure that his ultimate will occurs? Is he all powerful? Can he change hearts? Well he is or he isn't - what say you?
2. **Is Your God good?** How horrible it would be if God was all powerful yet NOT good. He would be a heavenly hitler. How pitiful it would be if God were good yet not all powerful! He would empathize with you, but he couldn't do anything about it.

Have you ever realized how many songs we sing that remind us of the fact that God is all powerful AND good?

Those two beliefs make it possible for you to submit to human authority. You can assume that an all powerful, loving God holds the heart of the king in his hand and can turn it like water wheresoever he wishes...

Disobedience to a legitimate authority is theological problem. It speaks not only of what you think about that authority - but it speaks of your opinion of God. That is why it is a sin.

**SCENARIO:** Mom gives you direction, instruction (Stop playing video games and make your bed). You hear it, you consider it and you as a willful act choose to disobey. God told you to obey mom, but you choose not to do so. – Why would you make a choice not to obey dad unless:

- a. You don't believe God has your best interest at heart
- b. You don't believe God is big enough to direct the heart of your mom.

**That is why 1 Samuel 15:23 (NASB95) says,**

<sup>23</sup>“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.

*Witchcraft or divination is when you turn away from God's power and authority and seek power from a different source. That is exactly what you are doing when you reject God given, legitimate authority and seek a different way.*

**2 Timothy 3:1-2 (NASB95) speaks of a generation that is full of this sort of rebellion.**

<sup>1</sup>But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. <sup>2</sup>For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, **disobedient to parents,** ungrateful, unholy.

**So, children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right...**

**That is why, in the 10 commandment  
Before God says,**

- Do not murder
- Do not commit adultery
- Do not steal or lie

**God says, “Honor your Father and Mother”**

**If you persistently disobey and dishonor your parents, you will enrage and incur the wrath of God.**

**Proverbs 30:17 (NASB95)**

<sup>17</sup>The eye that mocks a father And scorns a mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.

Perhaps we should have that verse framed and hung in every child's room....

**Psalm 127:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth.

The must be polish, pointed, and propelled.