

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

Parenting: God's Way

Ephesians 6:1-4

1999

Introduction

The man in the supermarket was pushing a cart which contained, among other things, a screaming baby. As the man proceeded along the aisles, he kept repeating softly, "Keep calm, George. Don't get excited, George. Don't get excited, George. Don't yell, George."

A lady watching with admiration said to the man, "You are certainly to be commended for your patience in trying to quiet little George."

"Lady," he declared, "I'm George."

Today we are going to consider "Parenting: God's Way". We've already discovered in our previous studies in Ephesians that the husband is to be the spiritual leader and head of the household -- a position that is best described as "Servant/Leader". Today, we are going to look at aspect of that leadership -- child rearing.

Unfortunately, many Christian men have abdicated their spiritual leadership in the home -- and in particular -- their call to provide the spiritual training for their children -- to their wives. So the wife and mother, often by default, is the one who reads the Bible to the kids. She prays with them. She teaches them moral and ethical character. She sings them to sleep and blesses them.

Socrates once wrote:

"Could I climb to the highest places in Athens, I would lift up my voice and proclaim; Fellow citizens, why do you turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth, and take so little care of the children to whom you must someday relinquish it all?"

And men, we can't expect our wives or the church to do what God has called us to do. We need to be our kid's hero. Spiritual leaders in a day when godly men are hard to come by.

Howard Hendricks

"Your home is the number one influence in the life of your child. The average church has a child 1% of his time, the home has him 83% of his time and the school for the remaining 16%. This does not minimize the need for churches and schools, but it establishes the fact your home is 83% of your child's world and you have only one time around to make it of maximum benefit."

I The Duty Of Children

A. The proper attitude toward parents

Lev 19:1-3 "The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy. "'Each of you must respect his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God."

1. They are to be obeyed

Col 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in everything ..."

2. They are to be honored

Ex 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

B. The motivation for respecting parents

1. It is commanded by God

Ex 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

2. It pleases the Lord

Col 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."

3. It is the right thing to do

Luke 2:51-52 "Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

C. The dangers of disrespecting parents

1. You will be cursed

Deut 27:16 "Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or his mother."

2. Your eyes will be pecked out

Prov 30:17 "The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures."

3. You are worthy of death

Deut 21:18-21 "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard." Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid."

Matt 15:4 "For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.'"

4. Your lamp will be snuffed out

Prov 20:20 "If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness."

D. The benefits of respecting parents

1. You will give joy to your parents

Prov 10:1 "The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother."

2. You will have a better life

Deut 4:40 "Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the LORD your God gives you for all time."

3. You will be protected from danger

Prov 6:20-24 "My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life, keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife."

4. You will enjoy long life

Prov 3:1-2 "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity."

Prov 4:3-4 "When I was a boy in my father's house, still tender, and an only child of my mother, he taught me and said, "Lay hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands and you will live."

5. You will be pleasing to God

Col 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."

II The Duty Of Fathers

As in the case of husbands and wives, not all the obligation is on one side. Parents have their duties, and a warning is directed in particular to the fathers.

A. Fathers are not to provoke children to wrath (i.e., discipline without love)

Provoke = exasperate; irritate or annoy to the point of anger

As the New English Bible puts it, “you .. must not goad your children to resentment.”
Col 3:21 “Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”

Ways a father can provoke or embitter a child:

1. Mocking or imitating
2. Tormenting or humiliating
3. Being harsh or scolding
4. Being hypocritical or unreasonable
5. Physical or verbal abuse

It is right for parents to require obedience of their children. But is not right for parents to have unnecessary rules and regulations or to constantly dispense endless petty correction. This discourages children.

B. Fathers are to bring them up in the:

Bring them up = “to rear up to maturity”

1. Training of the Lord – 2 Tim 3:16

Training = education, instruction; including disciplinary correction

The word was used originally of bodily nourishment, but came to be used for the nurture of the body, mind and soul. It suggests “development by care and pains”.

a. Teach them God’s Word

Deut 4:9 "Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."

b. Impress God’s Word on them

Deut 6:3-7 "Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

2. Admonition of the Lord (i.e., discipline tempered with love)

Admonition = Calling attention to(an error), mild rebuke or warning

The only other use of this word is in 2 Tim 3:16

2 Tim 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

- a. **Teaching** = Instruction what is true and right
- b. **Rebuking** = Pointing out error
- c. **Correcting** = Redirecting to the right path
- d. **Training in righteousness** = Systematic instruction in the truth

The highest duty of parents is to bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Dale "Parents should care more for the loyalty of their children to Christ than for anything besides, more for this than for their health, their intellectual vigor and brilliance, their material prosperity, their social position, their exemption from great sorrow and great misfortunes."

C. Fathers are to be balanced in their parenting

- 1. Discipline without love: Child abuse
- 2. Love without discipline: Permissiveness
- 3. Love with discipline: Godly parenting

Heb 12:5-11 "And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

When fathers properly administer both love and discipline, by example they show how God raises His own children in the family of God.

July 1994, Dr. James Dobson's Focus of the Family Bulletin

According to a recent study, young men with high self-esteem shared some common childhood influences. There were three major characteristics of their families.

- (1) The high-esteem group was clearly more loved and appreciated at home than the low-esteem group.
- (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

- through their permissiveness. Their children were more likely to feel that the rules were not enforced because no one cared enough to get involved.
- (3) The homes of the high-esteem group were also characterized by democracy and openness. Once the boundaries were established, there was freedom for individual personalities to grow and develop. Thus, the overall atmosphere was marked by acceptance and emotional safety.

III The Dividends Of A Fathers Training

A. You will impart wisdom to him

Prov 29:15 "The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother."

B. You will establish him spiritually

Prov 22:6 "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Ps 78:5-7 "He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands."

C. You will drive folly from him

Prov 22:15 "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him."

D. You will protect him from death

Prov 19:18 "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death."

E. You will save his soul

Prov 23:13-14 "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death."

F. You will be filled with delight

Prov 29:17 "Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul."

Conclusion

1. Young people, you have a very specific responsibility before God to obey and honor your parents. Ask God to give you an obedient heart and a desire to honor your parents in a manner that pleases the Lord. Make your parents job a delight. And your life will take on greater joy and pleasure as well.
2. If you are a parent, ask God for the wisdom and discipline to properly teach and train your child in the Lord. And Dad's, decide today that you will no longer abdicate your calling to spiritually disciple your children to your wife. Take on your God-given leadership role of training and instructing your children in the ways of the Lord. You will never be the same -- and when your kids are grown -- you will be their hero.

