

Children Obey, Fathers Train

Ephesians 6:1-4

Ephesians 6:1 **Children**, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honor your father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

3 That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.

4 And, you **fathers**, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Colossians 3:20 **Children**, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. 21 **Fathers**, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Ten Commandments

Judges 17:6 In those days *there was* no king in Israel, *but* every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.

I. Children Obey Your Parents – this is right

Love of God – discipline is good for us

- Why pick on kids?
- Why do we have to obey parents?
- Who's the boss? Why have a boss?

Absolutes – certainties, boundaries, “No”

- Laws of Nature – don't put things in your mouth, don't eat spoiled meat, don't, lick metal poles in winter,
- Laws of Highway and Safety – stop, don't drink & drive, no speeding, no parking, no stopping, etc.
- Laws of Mutual Respect – do unto others..., don't spit,

If you don't respect your parents, you won't respect any authority very long.

If you do not obey your parents, by choice, you won't obey God by choice either.

II. Fathers (Parents) Do Not Provoke - Nurture

“Train up (not tear down) a child in the way he should go...” - Proverbs 22:6

- Unreasonable Demands – “Mow the lawn” – I'm only 5 yrs old
- Unexplained Rules – “Because I said so.”
- Uncontrolled Anger - spankings

Encourage, do not discourage – “I am proud of you.”

(ie) Dog Training/Obedience School

(ie) Boundaries with Kids –

Conclusion: All of us need authority and submission to authority. It is for our benefit and blessing. Authority begins with parents. For all of us it begins early in life and extends to death. Learning submission to higher authority (constituted authority) is a fruit of the Spirit filled life.

Introduction

As we come to this passage in Ephesians 5 and 6 we are faced with the issue of submission. To many submission is a humiliation, a groveling, a demeaning thing. Yet, the Spirit of God calls it a response to being filled with the Spirit. It is part of the “overflowing cataracts” of the Spirit’s presence just like, speaking, singing, making melody, and thanking. The very next word is “submitting.” That does not mean groveling, being a rug for others to walk on, but to humbly take your place in the order of things that God, in his wisdom, has established.

In another place Paul calls it, “in honor preferring one another.”

Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;*” He uses “Philo-storgos” combining the word friend and parental love. He uses the Greek compound word with, “**storge**.” remember that word? It is a word for familial love, love of family members for one another. There is nothing contradictory about in honor preferring one another. That is submission – recognizing some brother or sister’s right to exercise authority Divinely given them from above. The term “preferring one another” is “**proegeomai**” meaning, go before, and go behind. In other words preferring one another is respect of following the leader. One leads, one follows. You cannot have all leaders and no followers. Someone has to lead and someone has to follow.

That is the natural order of things.

- When a man opens the door for a woman that is “proegeomai.” When a someone says, “No you first, please.” That is not a struggle for the upper hand. It is submission. It is “**philostorge**.”
- When someone steps to the side of an elderly person and says, “Let me do that for you. Let me help you. Let me hold the door for you.”
- That should not cause us grief and conflict to have to honor someone elderly.
- Nor should it be grievous to honor your husband, a parent, an elderly person, a teacher, a pastor, a mayor, a governor, or the president.

It is spiritual to bow to constituted authority. That is what Paul is getting at in this passage. It is about constituted authority, not competition. It is about honor and respect, not about “lording” it over others or controlling someone else.

In our passage Paul identifies **3 levels of authority** which should reflect our submission and thus the presence of the enabling Holy Spirit

- Husbands and wives,
- children and parents (fathers),
- slaves and masters.

Last week we considered husbands and wives submitting one to another. This morning we are looking at children and fathers in Ephesians 6:1-4 (NIV): Let us read

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1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
2. "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--
3. "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."
4. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

A parallel passage occurs in Colossians 3:20-21(16-24) that sheds some clarifying light on this passage: Let us read that and its context.

Colossians 3:16-24 (NIV)

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
17. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
18. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
19. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
20. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
21. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
22. Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.
23. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,
24. since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

And one more parallel passage from the Old Testament would assist us this morning.

Exodus 20:1-17

The Ten Commandments

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make for thyself an idol
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy
- 5. Honor thy Father and Mother**
6. Thou shalt not murder
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness
10. Thou shalt not covet

There are two commands from the Lord here in this passage. They are for our good.

First it is to children, then it is to fathers (or parents).

I. CHILDREN OBEY YOUR PARENTS

It is not a grievous command.

Eph. 6:1

- 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*
- 2. "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--*
- 3. "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."*

(ie) Socrates (470 - 399 BC)

"The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers." – Socrates (450 BC)

(ie) Mark Twain

"When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years."

The Love of God vs Discipline

For many the idea that love and authority go together is distasteful, even and oxymoron. We feel like it is antithetical to love. Love does not demand. Yet, that is not true. Love does demand. Not in the sense of a dictator demanding allegiance but a lover who expects honor and respect. The Word of God tells us that *if we are without discipline or chastisement we would be bastards*, fatherless children (Hebrews 12:8). God loves, but God also commands. Jesus said, *"If you love me keep my commandments."* (John 14:15, and John 15:10) And all this in the context of the Holy Spirit being sent to us.

The trouble, in part, is that we view commands as rigid, unreasonable demands, just as Adam and Eve reacted to God's limited commands for them in the Garden of Eden. His demand was loving and reasonable. But the one receiving the restraint of love often feels cheated. It is a feeling. Feelings are attitudes stirred within us based on a thought. Change your thoughts and you change your feelings.

We cannot fail to understand as we look at such passages that God gives us commandments to follow. He has the right to do so. He gave Adam and Eve commandments long before the laws of Moses. Commandments are not bad things. They are not arbitrary prohibitions. They are loves protections.

The Lord loves every child he disciplines. Discipline, correction, or chastisement is a loving response to our disrespect to his commands. He loves us and always does what is best for us. There He cannot overlook, wink at, or excuse our casting aside his commands as if they did not matter. They do matter. **They are for our good.**

Absolutes – certainties, boundaries, “No”

- Laws of Nature – don't put things in your mouth, don't eat spoiled meat, don't, lick metal poles in winter, Gravity, electricity, water = drowning
- Laws of Highway and Safety – stop, don't drink & drive, no speeding, no parking, no stopping, etc.
- Laws of Mutual Respect – do unto others..., don't spit,

(ie) boundaries, laws, limits of liberty – rules of the home and family

- Why pick on kids? Foundation of society –
 - *no child who truly honors his parents grows up to live life in jail.*
- Why do we have to obey parents? 2-Logics –
 - It is right
 - It has a promise
- Why have a boss? Who's the boss?

If you don't respect your parents, you won't respect any authority very long.
If you do not obey your parents, by choice, you won't obey God by choice either.

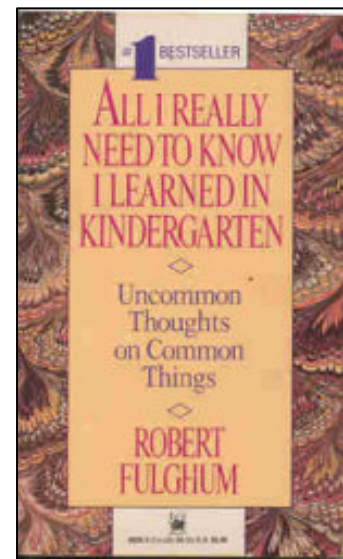
FACT: “If a child does not learn obedience to authority at home, i.e. obedience and submission to his parents, then he will probably not obey authority outside the home.”

(ie) "All I Ever Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten"

Robert Fulgham

These are the things I learned..

1. Share everything.
2. Play fair.
3. Don't hit people.
4. Put things back where you found them.
5. Clean up your own mess.
6. Don't take things that aren't yours.
7. Say sorry when you hurt somebody.
8. Wash your hands before you eat.
9. Flush the toilet.
10. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.



II. FATHERS PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO ANGER

Eph.6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Hebrews 12:10 (KJV) For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

Hebrews 12:10 (NIV) 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.

1. Spankings

The Lord loves whom he disciplines. Discipline is not punishment to do harm. It is correction and restraint, even if that restraint has to hurt. It hurts for our good, and for a good reason. We understand pain. We understand privation. We understand scoldings. We understand a good tating to. We understand a good licking.

A father who does not consistently discipline his children does not love them. He abuses them. Either he corrects them or he lets them run wild, ignores them, or leaves them to ruin themselves and grow up like wild weeds, good for nothing. He is not a good father. A good father disciplines his children for their good.

Why, When, and How Do You Spank?

Discipline must be loving and consistent every time, all the time. Why do you yell at your child? Why and when do you spank your child? How and when and with what do you spank? Think about it. Spanking, time out, scoldings are not to be reactions, but thought out actions for the good of the child, not for the release of your steam. What are your just and consistent punishments? Are they clear? Are they written down? Do they ever change?

2. The Word “NO”

Every good parent has learned the importance of the word, “NO!” It protects. It trains. It guides. It shapes. It helps. And it encourages them to do what is right for their own good. **FACT:** “If a child does not learn obedience to authority at home, i.e. obedience and submission to his parents, then he will not obey authority outside the home.”

No, Means No

Father, if your “no” or your demand is based solely on your momentary emotion, then you are teaching dictatorship, not love or fatherhood. You discourage your child from obeying by not being easy to read and understand. Discipline is not about your need for peace and quiet. It is about your child’s development and emotions. When you let him get away with a “no” one day without correction, but not the next you encourage chaos and selective obedience, and selective disobedience.

3. Fathers Can Provoke Children To Be Angry

Three ways to raise angry children

- Unreasonable Demands – “Mow the lawn” – I’m only 5 yrs old
- Unexplained Rules – “Because I said so.”
- Uncontrolled Anger – spankings, moody discipline, inconsistent discipline

Know The Why?

Never should a parent answer a “why” with “Because I told you so!”

That may be true, and may be what your patience allows, but it discourages your child from knowing the reason for the “no.” He has a right to know the reason.

Know The Rules

Fathers, be consistent and just in your rules. Don’t change them on a whim. “No” one day needs to be absolutely NO every hour of every day, or you will confuse, discourage, and anger your children.

Encourage, do not discourage – “I am proud of you.”

4. Train up a child

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

If we were train our dogs as some people pretend to train and discipline their children then our world would be overrun with mad dogs, pitbulls biting and devouring everything and everyone in sight. Train up is a good instruction. **Train up** – do not tear down. Build them up. Encourage them. Help them see the good in themselves and in others.

(ie) Dog Training/Obedience School

My dog chases cars. What do I do?

- 1) Chase him. (He’ll think it’s a game.)
- 2) Yell at him. (He doesn’t speak English – he doesn’t understand)
- 3) Spank him and yell at him. (He will think you don’t like him, he won’t like you)
- 4) Reward him when he finally comes home. (You will reinforce chasing cars)
- 5) Laugh at him, then spank him. (You will make him neurotic)

Rules for Training Your Dog

1. Always reward good behavior
2. Never ignore good behavior
3. Do not reward undesirable behavior
4. Do not punish undesirable behavior (correct it)
5. Do not let your dog ignore a command
6. Never call the dog to you then punish it.
7. Don’t blame a sick dog for misbehaving. Get a vet.
8. Always interrupt the behavior pattern you want to change.

Does your child know the rules, and know the punishment for breaking the rules? Do you? Are they written down? Are they consistently applied? Do Mom and Dad know and agree on the rules?

Conclusion: All of us need authority and submission to authority. It is for our benefit and blessing. Authority begins with parents. For all of us it begins early in life and extends to death. Learning submission to higher authority (constituted authority) is a fruit of the Spirit filled life.