

The Rearing of Your Children



Part II

by
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THE REARING OF YOUR CHILDREN

Please open your Bibles to Ephesians chapter six and verse four. I would like to bring a message entitled "The Rearing of Your Children," part two.

By way of introduction let me say this, Dad and Mom. The responsibility for the rearing of your children is your responsibility. The church may assist and it should. The Christian School may assist and it should. Society itself may provide some limited assistance; that is fine and good. But the discipline of your children, the rearing of your children, the training of your children, is your responsibility. It cannot be shifted to the Pastor. It cannot be shifted to the Youth Pastor. It cannot be shifted to the Sunday school teacher. It cannot be shifted to the Christian school teacher. It cannot be shifted to the church services.

Dad and Mom, the training of your children is the responsibility that you must bear. In Ephesians 6:4, the Bible says, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: Dad and Mom, you are to be very careful that whatever you do in the rearing of your children, you do not cross the line to frustrate them to the point that they do not know what is truly expected of them because the demands are too great or unreasonable. And it is your responsibility to take them from a baby all the way to maturity by the things that you physically do and by the words that you give.

We are looking at several biblical principles on the rearing of your children.

We have already noticed this: Break their rebellion. It is the very first thing that you must do. Your children, by nature, are sinners. Do you realize what that means? It simply means this: your children are born sinners. They do wrong naturally. They do not do right naturally.

If you leave your children to themselves as the Bible says in Proverbs 29:15 ("A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."), they will bring you to shame. They will embarrass you. They will bring you to shame if you leave them to themselves.

The most basic way that the sin nature demonstrates itself is in the rebellion of your children towards authority. If you have children, you know it is but a matter of hours before you discover that rebellious sin nature, that nature that wants to have its own way whenever it wants it. That is the natural instinct of every child.

Dad and Mom, that is the nature of man; and it is your responsibility to break that will. It is your responsibility to bring your children to the place of submission to authority, and the Bible makes it very clear that the way it is to be done is by the rod. I have searched the Bible through, and I don't find any other solution to rebellion but the rod. In Proverbs 22:15, the Bible says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

I am not saying that is the only thing that you do, but that is God's solution to rebellion every time. The rod!

Dad and Mom, you must break the rebellion in your children. You must break that rebellious spirit. You must break that rebellious attitude. It is the very first thing that you must do. Other things come along with it, but it is the most important thing you can do in the early days of your children. Break their rebellion!

We have already noticed this: Teach them verbally what is right! In Proverbs 29:15, the Bible says, "The rod and reproof give wisdom." "Reproof" in the book of Proverbs is verbal instruction. It may come in the form of rebuke. It may come in the form of actual instruction. You cannot merely spank your children and expect them to know what is right; that teaches them rather what is wrong. You need to teach them verbally what is right. In Deuteronomy 6:7, the Bible says, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Thou shalt talk of "them," speaking of the commandments of the Word of God; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house.

Dad and Mom, you ought to be on the lookout for the opportunity to teach your children about spiritual things and things in general. It is proper that you spank your children to break their rebellion, but it is also proper that you verbally teach them biblical principles to follow.

But notice, number three: Provide a consistent and godly example for them to follow. One of the reasons your children reject your values, Dad and Mom, is not because you had no values, but that you were inconsistent in those values. Your children never become convinced that what you said was, in fact, important. Listen! You are wrong if you think that you can say one thing at church, or one thing in public, and live another way at home and that your children will not pick up on that. They will pick up on that long before everybody else does.

You argue in front of your children and then you fuss at them about arguing. You complain in front of your children and then you fuss at them about complaining. You criticize in front of your children and then you fuss at them about criticizing. You gripe in front of your children and then you fuss at them about griping. You yell in front of your children and then you fuss at them about yelling. You are teaching your children something else all together.

You say, "Jesus Christ is precious to me." So let me ask you something. How precious is He? You never seem to work Him into your conversations.

You speak about control and you are uncontrolled. You speak about self-discipline and you are undisciplined. You are very carnal in your living in front of your children, and they see right through that. They don't buy into that kind of Christianity at all; and that is why, Dad and Mom, sometimes your children reject

your values—because they have not seen them consistently practiced in your own life.

As a parent, you must always remember that you need to demonstrate to your children what you believe and why you believe it—that your Christianity is very real to you.

In Proverbs 23:26, the Bible says, “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” You ought to live in such a way in front of your children that you could say, “Children, you ought to live like daddy lives. You ought to live like mommy lives.”

Now no parent is perfect and parents ought to be willing to forgive themselves of their inconsistencies; but just don't be willing to live with it. Do you see the difference? You may be inconsistent in some area, but you must not be willing to live with it. You must not be willing to tolerate it. You must not say, “O well, that is just the way I am.” If that is just the way you are and it is wrong, you ought to change. If you were an unsaved person, you could not change. But if you are saved, if you are born again, if you have been cleansed by the shed blood of Christ, you have the Holy Spirit of God indwelling you, and you can change.

If God draws a line and says, “Here is what I want you to be,” then you can be that. If God says, “be here,” you can be there. Listen! You can do anything God tells you to do. If God tells you to rear your children, you can do it. If God tells you to be in charge, you can do it. If God tells you to love your wives, you can do it. If God tells you to be submissive, you can do it. If God tells you to honour your parents, you can do it. If God tells you to be a spiritual Christian, you can be one. In Philippians 4:13, the Bible says, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”—literally, through Christ who keeps on giving me strength.

So you must provide a consistent and godly example for your children to follow. However, your authority does not rest upon your ability. Your authority rests upon the Word of God. Your children are to obey you. Period. Why? In Ephesians 6:1, the Bible says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” Therefore, if your children disobey you, they are wrong.

The child says, “I know my parents are not perfect, so I am going to rebel. Then I can blame them and God will let me go free.” You are wrong, young people. Your parents are not perfect. That's right. But you are not to obey your parents because they are perfect. You are to obey your parents because they are your parents. Did you get that? You are to obey your parents because God, in His sovereign plan, let them be your parents.

Dad and Mom, you must provide a consistent and godly example for your children to follow.

Please notice, number four: Control their crowd. A vast majority of God's people don't believe this way any more. The Bible says a lot about the crowd you

spend time with and their influence on your conduct and their influence on your character.

In Proverbs 28:7, the Bible says, "Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father." Do you know what the Bible is saying? It is simply saying this: the child that hangs around riotous men (and, in this case, rebellious children, children who are rebelling against God, children who are rebelling against their parents), God says he will bring his parents to shame.

Dad and Mom, you have got to face a decision. Either you can control your children now and take some heat that it may bring, or you can leave them to themselves and wind up in shame later on. The choice is yours. You need to decide. You need to determine to go ahead and take a little heat right now and not wind up in shame latter on.

In Proverbs 7:6, the Bible says, "For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding." Notice, this young man was in a crowd that was not good for him. They contributed to his problem.

In I Corinthians 15:33, the Bible says, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." You could say it this way, "Evil communications corrupt good morals. Evil communications corrupt good teaching." What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: if you hang around the wrong kind of people, they are going to influence you. They are going to influence your life.

Dad and Mom, you are to know the danger of the crowd better than your children do. I doubt seriously that if you tell your children, "don't be around so and so," they are going to understand. They may say, "I understand," but I doubt they are going to understand very much. Your children are not always going to understand. They are going to think you are picking on them, but you are an adult. You are to know best for your children more than they do.

Boys, girls, and teenagers, your parents know what is best for you. They really do. They know what they are talking about. They have been there. They have been through the teenage years. They have already learned by their mistakes. They have already learned by some biblical principles; they have gained from the Word of God. You ought to listen to your parents because they know what is best for you.

Dad and Mom, you live in a day when you are taught by the media, when you are taught by society, to be intimidated by your children. You ought not be that way. You have to love them and know what is best for them. And, if you know what is best for them, then you need to do what is best for them.

You say, "But they will not always understand." Of course not. They do not always understand but that is not the issue. The issue is, "Do you understand?" Dad

and Mom, do you understand the issue? Do you know what is best for your children? If so, then you need to do it! Do you understand the Word of God? If so, then you need to guide them by it!

Let me ask you something. If you do what is right, if you do what is biblical, who is on your side? God is. If you do what is right, if you do what is biblical, you have an ally in the Holy Spirit of God. If you do what is wrong, if you do not do what is right, if you do what is not biblical in order to please your children, you don't have God's help. You are in serious trouble. You must do what you are convinced is biblically right. That is why parents must always control the crowd their children spend time with.

In Psalm 119:63, the Bible says, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee." You are to be a companion to those who love the Lord. You ought to see to it that your children hang around children that love God, those who are concerned about spiritual things, and those who are interested in spiritual things.

In Proverbs 13:20, the Bible says, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed!" I am sure that you would like your children to understand that verse, but they do not have to understand that verse. You do. What is the Bible saying? It is simply saying this: if you will hang around wise people, you are going to get wiser; but if you hang around fools, you are going to be destroyed with fools.

All right, if you want your children to be wise, then you ought to do every thing you can to get them to hang around wise people. If you want to preserve them from destruction, then you ought to do every thing you can to keep them from hanging around that boy or that girl who is in rebellion against God, who is in rebellion against his or her parents.

Not all rebels are ugly. Not all rebels are mean. Not all rebels are wicked. Not all rebels are like that. Some rebels can be very polite, but they are in rebellion against God's authority, they are in rebellion against their parent's authority. Dad and Mom, if you notice rebellion in your children's friends, you need to do every thing you can do to break off that relationship. You say, "Preacher! That is an awfully hard thing to do, to regulate, and to monitor." Of course it is. But if you love your children, you will do it.

If you took your children to a doctor and the doctor said your children have a dreadful disease, but it can be cured although it will cost you a small fortune, you would say something like this, "Whatever it takes. We are willing to sell every thing that we own." If you would be willing to sell everything that you own in order to save your children from a dreadful disease, then does it not make sense that you ought to do everything you can do in order to keep them from evil companions? It is a hard thing to do, but you need to do it. You need to love your children more than they can understand.

Your children do not understand what you are doing right now, but one on these days they will come back to say, "I did not understand what you were doing then! But I surely am glad that you did it."

Dad and Mom, you need to think for your children because they have not learned some things. However, they will learn these things in time if Jesus carries and you do your job properly. They will learn these things. They will learn these things in time. But right now you have the advantage of time. They don't have it. So you need to help your children. You need to guide your children. You need to take care of your children because you love them.

What am I saying? I am simply saying this: if you truly love your children, you need to control the crowd they spend time with.

But notice, number five: Pray for your children. You cannot escape the great responsibility you have in the rearing of your children, in the training of your children. The Bible is very clear on this. But you must not forget the power of prayer.

Listen folks! If God cannot answer your prayers, if God cannot provide His convicting power in the lives of your children, what can you do? If you try to do it alone, if you try to do it alone with your children, your children are in serious trouble and so are you.

Now don't use prayer as an excuse for poor parenting. If you will not break their rebellion, if you will not teach them verbally what is right, if you will not provide a consistent and godly example for them to follow, and if you will not control their friends, if you will not do those things that you can do but have not been willing to do, then prayer is not going to make up the difference. But if you will do that which is in your power to do, I am convinced that there is a God in heaven who hears and answers the prayers of dads and moms and does for their children what dad and mom cannot do.

You say, "Preacher! What must I do?" You need to pray for your children.

But notice, number six: Be filled with the Spirit. What is the secret to the rearing of your children? The secret to the rearing of your children is being filled with the Spirit. In Ephesians 5:18, the Bible says, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Then there will be these results in Ephesians 5:21, which says, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God is how he introduces the subjects of "Husbands, love your wives;" "Wives, see that you reverence your husbands;" "Children, obey your parents;" and "Parents, rear your children."

Let me ask you something, "What is the secret to a happy marriage? What is the secret to a happy relationship between parents and children?" It is that you be filled with the Spirit, that you be right with God, that you be in fellowship with the Lord.

Think with me. If you are not filled with the Spirit, if you are not right with God, if you are not in fellowship with the Lord, it will affect the way you think; it will affect the way you talk; it will affect the way you act; it will affect the way you discipline your children; it will affect your discernment; it will affect your marriage; it will affect your relationship with your husband; it will affect your relationship with your wife; it will affect your relationship with your children; it will affect everything about you.

But, if you are filled with the Spirit, if you are right with God, if you are in fellowship with the Lord, you can love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it; you can be a loving husband; you can be a submissive wife; you can honor your parents; you can rear your children.

If you are going to be a good parent, you need to be filled with the Spirit. You need to be right with God. You need to be in fellowship with the Lord.

Dad and Mom, what must you do?

Number one: You need to break the rebellion in your children. It is the very first thing that you must do. Other things come along with it, but it is the most important thing you can do in the early days of your children. Break their rebellion.

Number two: You need to teach them verbally what is right, and don't expect them to know what is right if you have not taught them what is right. You ought to be on the lookout for the opportunity to teach your children about spiritual things and things in general.

Number three: You need to provide a consistent and godly example for them to follow. You ought to live in such a way in front of your children that you could say to your children, "You ought to live like daddy lives. You ought to live like mommy lives."

Number four: You need to control their crowds. If you notice rebellion in your children's friends, you need to do everything you can do to break off that relationship.

Number five: You need to pray for them. If you will not do those things that you can do but have not been willing to do, then prayer is not going to make up the difference.

Number six: You need to be filled with the Spirit. Keep a very short account of sin in your life, and don't wait until you go to bed at night to confess and forsake sin.

How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

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