

(Basics) 52. Responsibilities of Parents and Children

by Zac Poonen

Parents have a responsibility to bring up their children in the fear of God, to honour them, and to discipline them with the rod of discipline to remove foolishness from their heart.

Duration: 13:10

Scripture: Genesis 9:20-25, Proverbs 22:15, Matthew 6:33, John 19:26-27, Acts 5:29, Ephesians 6:1-4

Topics: "Parental Responsibility", "Child Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of teaching children to obey the commandment of honoring their father and mother. He advises against punishing children for accidental mistakes, but emphasizes the need for discipline and punishment when they act in rebellion or anger. The speaker also highlights the significance of living according to God's plan for our lives, regardless of the length of our lifespan. He urges parents to prioritize teaching their children the values of God's kingdom, righteousness, uprightness, and honesty. The sermon concludes with a reminder for fathers to avoid provoking their children to anger and instead raise them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Transcript

And we want to continue thinking today about the Christian home. We first thought of husband-wife relationships in our first two studies. In our last study we thought about bringing up children.

This is a very important area and we want to think about it a little more today. We want to look today at the one commandment that God gives children. Do you know that God gave Adam and Eve only one commandment? You all know about the ten commandments that Moses gave to the Israelites? But God gave Adam and Eve only one commandment and they disobeyed that and brought chaos into the world, into their home, into their mutual relationships.

Their first child that was born to them grew up to be a murderer, killing their second child. It was tragic. But in the same way, we find that God has given one commandment for children.

And He has not made it difficult. He has not given children ten commandments. He has given children only one.

And we read in Ephesians 6, verses 1 and 2 and 3, what that commandment was. It was given in the Old Testament as part of the ten commandments. The fifth commandment, honour your father and mother.

And it says here in Ephesians 6, that is the first commandment God gave which had a promise. And the promise was that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth. Now I want to ask you parents.

I want to first speak to you parents. Do you want it to go well with your children? Do you want your children to live long on the earth? Or do you want your children's lives to be shortened? Do you want it to go badly with your children? It's not talking about your children being intelligent or healthy or capable or rich or great or any such thing. When it says it will go well with them, it means that it will go well spiritually.

Even if they work as peons in an office or corporation sweepers, that doesn't matter. If they are godly, they will be great in God's eyes. The point is not their earthly position.

The point is that it goes well with them spiritually. What does it mean that they live long on the earth? Live up to the age of 100? No. Jesus lived only up to 33.

To live long in New Testament terms means to complete God's plan for their lives. Whether they die at 20 or 60 or 100. The point is to complete God's plan for their lives before they leave the earth.

God has got a specific plan for your children. Please remember that parents. And don't destroy that plan by putting other values into the heads of your children.

That they think other things are more important than God's kingdom and His righteousness. Uprightness, straightforwardness, honesty. These are far more important than anything on this earth.

And so fathers are told in Ephesians 6.4. Don't provoke your children to anger. Don't keep on irritating them by nagging them and scolding them day and night. But bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Instruction first of all. Teaching them scriptural principles and secondly discipline. We need to punish our children because the Bible says in Proverbs 22 and verse 15.

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. But the rod of discipline will remove it far from him. Every child is born into the world with foolishness bound up in his heart.

It doesn't matter whose child it is. Whether it's an atheist child or a God-fearing Christian couple's child. They both are born with the same flesh and the same old man that has a tendency to sin.

Foolishness is bound up in their heart. How can this atheist child and this God-fearing couple's child have that foolishness driven out of their heart? Only one way. The rod of discipline.

There is no other way. And parents who do not use the rod are not going to bring up their children in a godly way. We need to use the rod of discipline because we want to drive out that foolishness.

And the Bible says the rod of discipline will drive it far away. The foolishness is in the heart. But the rod is applied to the bottom and it drives out the foolishness from the heart.

This is God's way. You might as well follow it instead of the teaching of modern psychologists. All these techniques that modern psychologists teach.

See what is happening in the western world today. With children growing up, rebelling against their parents with no respect for their parents. This is the result of modern psychology and ignoring the word of God.

And go and see the homes where people have followed the simple old-fashioned teaching of Proverbs 22.15 and see the difference. The Bible says you can save your child from hell by using the rod. Don't spare him, it says, even if he cries.

What should we use the rod for when they don't obey the one commandment which God has given them? You know that that is the most important thing for children to learn? If your children break something expensive. Maybe you have an expensive dish or vase or something like that made of china. Expensive and they accidentally drop it and break it.

Are you going to punish them for that? It's foolish. Now if they do it in rebellion and anger, they certainly need to be punished. But if they do it accidentally, your loss may be great in terms of money.

But it's no use punishing your children for what they did accidentally. Don't you and I do things accidentally? And make mistakes? What do we need to teach our children? That one commandment which God gave children. Honor your father and mother.

That means respect them first of all. And obey them. We have to teach our children that.

And if you are a son or a daughter listening to this program, let me tell you. If you want it to go well with you. And if you want to fulfill the length of your days that God has appointed for you on earth.

Honor your father and mother. Even if you are 75 years old and your parents are alive, honor them. Honor them till you die.

You don't have to obey them once you leave your home. And set up your own home or you are earning your own living. Jesus obeyed Joseph and Mary as long as he lived in that home.

The moment he left that home after his baptism. Once his mother came and told him about the lack of wine in Cana. And he said, woman, what have I got to do with you? Don't interfere in my ministry.

Jesus didn't disobey the scripture there. He honored his mother. He cared for her when he was hanging on the cross.

To take care of her, to provide a home for her. But he did not listen to her once he left the home. But as long as you are living at home under your parents' authority.

The command for you is obey your parents. Do what they say. Unless they tell you to disobey the word of God in some area.

Then you have to obey God and say we ought to obey God rather than men. Like the apostle Peter said in Acts of the Apostles chapter 5 verse 29 and 32. But in every other area you must obey them.

But honoring them must be true throughout your life. Even when you leave your home. Respecting them.

Never speaking evil about them. You may see many weaknesses in your parents. Hide it.

Do you know why Noah's son Ham was cursed? Do you know why? When he saw his father's nakedness. Instead of hiding it, he went and spoke to others about it. Do you speak about your father's weaknesses which you have seen at home? Or your mother's weaknesses? There will be a curse on you.

Like there was on Ham. Get rid of that habit. Why do you need to expose your father's weakness and mother's weakness to other people? If you want pray for them.

But keep it hidden. Unless you are seeking for advice from some godly brother. To whom you go and share.

This is a problem you are facing. Then it is alright. Because that godly brother may need to know your problem in order to help you.

That's the only situation in which you should reveal the way your father or mother are behaving which may not be godly. But to talk about them as gossip will bring the judgment of god upon your life. Because you are not honoring them.

This is so important. It is so important for us as parents to teach our children obedience. To break their stubborn will when they are young.

So that they learn to obey us as their parents. That is how we prepare them to obey god one day in the future. But if you don't break their will when they are young.

They will never be able to obey god later on in life. It will have to be a miracle. It does happen in some cases.

God is great. But it's our responsibility as parents to do it early in life. When shall we start punishing them, correcting them? As soon as they are able to understand.

If they can understand what you are saying when they are one year old or one and a half years old. That's the time to start punishing them. If they disobey.

And the earlier you start, the sooner you can finish. By the time a child is thirteen years old, there should be no more need to use the rod on that child anymore. If you started when the child was one.

And if you did it in the fear of god and wholeheartedly. But if you were careless, then you have a problem on your hands when your child is a teenager. He does not know how to speak respectfully.

He does not know how to obey you. He does not know how to obey god. This is the tragedy in many Christian homes.

What shall we do? Repent. Say lord have mercy on us. And those whose children are still in that early stages, not yet teenagers.

Do what scripture says. Bring them up in the fear of god. Teach them to fear god.

And the greatest thing you can do as husband and wife is be united. Don't be divided in the punishment of your children. Be united in following scripture.

When husband and wife are divided, it brings chaos into the home. It opens a door for the devil to come right in and destroy your children. Be united and the devil will find no gap between you to come through and attack your children.

And be a good example. Don't tell your children to do what you can't do yourself. Be a good example.

Be united father and mother. And be a good example. And from such a life, god will be able to lead your children in godly paths.

One last thing. Parents, pray for your children by name every day. Every single one of them.

All through your life, pray for your children by name every single day. That they will grow up in a godly way. And then god's heart will be satisfied.

As our homes become godly examples and a light in the midst of a dark world.

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