

# New Covenant Parent Children Relationship

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of parents raising their children in a godly way, focusing on seeking the glory of God rather than seeking reputation or honor in the church. It highlights the significance of teaching children obedience, respect, and truthfulness, as well as the balance between kindness and severity in parenting. The speaker stresses the role of fathers in discipline and instruction, the need for mothers to step in if fathers are negligent, and the power of prayer in guiding wayward children back to God.*

**Duration:** 25:49

**Scripture:** Ephesians 6:1, Proverbs 22:6, Hebrews 12:7, Romans 11:22, John 1:14, Psalms 58:3

**Topics:** "Godly Parenting", "Role of Fathers and Mothers"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Okay, we want to go to the second section of family relationship and that is we dealt with husband and wife very briefly. I encourage you to meditate more on that. But let me remind you once again about the second part of father, parents and children.

Again, remember the principles we mentioned earlier about whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. So, I want my children to grow up in a godly way, not for any reputation in the church. It's a tremendous temptation to get a reputation in the church and that's why so many parents force their children to get baptized before they are even ready to be baptized.

And I never told my children to get baptized. I wanted them to come to conviction themselves. And so, I think all of them got baptized around when they were 17 years old or so.

I was in no hurry to get a reputation in the church. Oh, brother Zach's children are baptized. I couldn't care less for that.

It's garbage for me, the opinion of people. Do all for the glory of God and never for any honor for yourself. Because if God sees your motive, it's your own honor in the way you bring up your children.

He's not going to help you. God's not in the business of helping you to get honor. So, don't ask Him for His help.

Work on it yourself then. But if you're seeking the glory of God, you can be 100% sure that God will support you and help you till the very end. So, that's why I say, whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.

Bring up your children in secret, that in your home, they behave well and then they'll behave well in public. That they learn to respect parents. Why does the Bible say, God has given only one commandment for children? Ephesians 6, children obey your parents in the Lord.

Verse 1, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, for this is the first commandment which has a promise attached to it. Among all the ten commandments, no commandment had a promise.

Nine commandments had no promise attached to it. One commandment had a promise attached to it. That if you honor your mother and father and mother, verse 3, here's the promise.

It will go well with you and that you may live long on the earth. By living long on the earth, I understand, not living up to 150 years, Jesus lived only 33 and a half years, even though he was the most perfectly obedient child. It means living as long as God has planned for you to live on this earth.

For Jesus, it was 33 and a half years. For other people, it is 70, 80, 90 years, etc. But as long as God wants you to live on the earth, you will live, if you honor your father and mother.

That means God will control all the circumstances, accidents and sicknesses and all the things that can come to you, if you honor your father and mother. It's an amazing promise. Otherwise, how in the world could God give that promise, if this person is dependent on external factors? So, it's a tremendous promise and it will go well with you, which is the more important thing.

Living long is just a physical thing, but during that earthly life, it will go well with you. And so, I tell parents, do you want it to go well with your children? Which parent says no? You want it to go well with your children, then teach them to obey their parents. Teach them to respect father and mother.

Never, never to speak rudely to father or mother. And if you hear your child speaking rudely, either to you or to your wife, they would be probably more easily speak rudely to the mother than the father. If the father is a strict person, they're a little more scared.

Then you must say to your child, even if you're doing the most important thing, stop it. Go and apologize to your mother before you do anything else. Every single time, if they do it, if they speak rudely five times a day, they're going to stop the most important thing they're doing and go to their mother and apologize.

That's how we teach our children to respect their parents and never, never to speak rudely to their parents or use gestures with their hands that are disrespectful. And if parents are lenient here, they got themselves to blame if their child goes straight into the hands of the devil and brings dishonor. Forget about dishonor to your name.

Dishonor to God. That's more important. I'm not bothered about what dishonor comes to my name.

Jesus was despised and rejected of men. But I'm very concerned that my children should not bring dishonor to the name of Jesus Christ. And that is in secret.

When the devil sees the way my children grow up in my home, I don't want, nobody in the church sees them. I don't want the devil to say, God, look at this guy. He claims to be a servant.

Look at his, how his children, he makes them behave well in the church so that gets honor there. But God, can you see how his children behave at home? I don't want the devil ever to say that to God. I'm more conscious of the devil's testimony about me than about the testimony of other brothers and sisters in the church.

If you will keep that in mind that the devil's testimony about you is more important to you than what other brothers and sisters say because other brothers and sisters don't see you 90% of your life. The devil sees you all the time. And he says he's the accuser of the brethren.

I don't want the devil to accuse me about the way I brought up my children or accuse my children because I did something wrong to God. That brings dishonor to God's name. It brings great reproach on the Lord's name when my children are not behaving properly.

So this is the fundamental principle. And so in order to do that, the primary responsibility is put upon the father. It's very interesting when it says children obey your parents, both father and mother.

They must obey. And fathers, in verse 4, it doesn't say fathers and mothers. Fathers, don't provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

It's very easy to be angry with your children. And when you do get angry with your children, you must repent because anger is a sin. In all situations it is a sin.

If you discipline your children because they irritated you, that's a sin. To discipline them is right. But to get angry and discipline is wrong.

And yet every parent, if they're honest, will have to admit there are times when we have disciplined our children in anger. But I'll tell you what I did. I also disciplined my children in anger at times.

But I would always lock myself up in a room, usually the restroom, and say, Lord, forgive me. I slipped up there. Please have mercy on me.

I want to repent of it. And I did that every single time. I said, Lord, I'm going to come to a place where I will be able to discipline my children without anger.

And I believe I came there. But it took some years. But I would never have come there if I had not repented every single time I slipped up.

And I can guarantee the same will be true of you. It'll work for you if you repent each time and go before God and say, Lord, nobody saw me there. Nobody saw me.

It was just me and my child and the devil. No, I didn't lose my testimony before the church. But I lost my testimony before the devil who's reproaching you because of me, because I'm your child.

And I repent. I want to tell you, my brothers and sisters, your life will change radically when you're more interested in the devil's testimony about you than people's testimony about you. It really will change because he's watching you all the time.

So bring up your, don't provoke your children to anger by you yourself getting angry. Now this is, I have some things I have to, sometimes I have to explain this to the parents, because some parents have asked me, what if I raise my voice at a child? Raising your voice at your child is not a sin. And I use this example, if somebody is a hundred yards away from me and I yell out his name, I'm not angry with him.

He can't hear me. He's a hundred, two hundred yards away and I have to yell for him to hear me. And the same way, this child is sitting right in front of me and I tell him, drink up your milk, nothing happens.

Drink up your milk, nothing happens. I said, drink up your milk. He suddenly drinks it up.

You know why? Even though he was sitting there, in his mind he was one mile away. He couldn't hear me. When I said, drink up your milk, drink up your milk, he was too far away, he couldn't hear.

I had to raise my voice because he was so far away and he heard all of a sudden. He came back to the place where he was sitting. That's not a sin.

Raising your voice is not anger. You could be a supervisor in a factory and you may have to raise your voice, not because you're angry. You're not angry with your child.

You love that child, you're willing to lay down your life for that child. But you have to teach your child obedience. So don't condemn yourself because you raised your voice.

That's because the child is too far. Now don't use that excuse when you're speaking to your wife. She doesn't sit one mile away.

She's very close to you. You don't have to raise your voice with your husband or your wife saying they were far away in their mind. It's with children only it's like that.

So I mentioned that to liberate people who condemn themselves because they raise their voice. Don't be angry and bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. There are two things, instruction and discipline.

You cannot do one alone. If you do only discipline, you are a useless father. There are many fathers who are very strict in discipline.

I asked those fathers, how much have you sat down with your child and taught them the Bible? Zero. You are a useless father. Just discipline, discipline, discipline.

That's not what the father is supposed to do. Start with instruction. Take the trouble to study the Bible so that you can teach the Bible to your child.

Then you discipline when they don't follow that. It's instruction plus discipline. That's the balance and most fathers are imbalanced.

They are more ready to discipline than to teach. How much time do you fathers, I'm talking about fathers, spend with your children to teach them the Word of God? You cannot do it if you don't study the Word of

God yourself. I wanted to make sure before all my children left for college at the age of 18, I wanted to make sure of one thing that they really knew the fundamental teachings of scripture, all the doctrines of scripture, that they knew that.

And even after they left for college, I kept on writing to them to make sure that they knew the scriptures because I knew that if they are founded in scriptures, they'll be protected in an evil and adulterous generation. And I did not only instruct them, it says in Proverbs in chapter 22 and Proverbs 22, there are a First is verse 15, foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will remove it far from him. This is what the Word of God says.

Sometimes words alone are not enough, words of correction are not enough. There must be some type of discipline and there are various ways in which we can discipline. We can discipline a child by saying, you're not allowed to go and play today, this evening.

Or you got to go and lie down in your bed now for the next half an hour, go and sit in that corner, face the wall for the next one hour or something like that. It doesn't always have to be a spanking, but some way in which we punish them, it doesn't have to be physical, but I would also say this, never punish them by depriving them of food, that's evil. Like saying, all the others will get ice cream, but you won't get ice cream.

That's not the way to discipline a child. No, you must be wise in disciplining. When food is something they love to eat, I just mentioned that in passing, but discipline is important because foolishness is bound up in the heart of every child.

They're all born from the race of Adam with the flesh inside and it's amazing, the rod of discipline can drive it far away. The other verse in Proverbs 22 is verse 6 which says, train up a child in the way he should go and when he's old he will not depart from it. Here is a promise with a condition for the promise to be fulfilled.

The condition is what we have to do. Train up a child in the way he should go. Promise when he's old he will not depart from it.

It's like confessing our sins. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. What if you don't confess your sin? Then he doesn't forgive you.

See there's a condition attached to every promise. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that's the condition, and you will be saved. If we walk in the light, then we have fellowship with him.

If we confess our sins, he forgives us. If you train up a child in the way he should go, when he's old he will not depart from it. It's a condition.

Is there ever a person who honestly confesses his sin and the Lord does not forgive him? No. Is there any person who honestly walks in the light and can't have fellowship with God? No. Is there any person who honestly trained up a child in the way he should go and the child went astray when he's old? Impossible.

I say impossible because the Word of God is true. Don't ever put the blame on God for your failure. I decided that when my children were small.

I said Lord if my children go astray, I will not say, oh children are different, what to do, they are like that. No. I'll say Lord I did not fulfill the condition the way I should.

Maybe I was busy making money or in my case so busy traveling preaching the Word of God that I had no time to bring up my children. Then I should stop preaching the Word of God because my whole testimony of preaching is ruined by the way my children are living. Very important.

Timothy 3 says if a man does not know how to bring up his children, how is he going to take care of the house of God? He's got no right to preach in the house of God if he doesn't bring up his children properly. I believe that. I said Lord if my children go astray, I'll stop preaching.

I told the Lord that I have no right to preach. I'll honor your word. I don't care what people think about me.

I fear God. I'll tell you this, you do business with God, God will deal with you straight. You say Lord I'm gonna take your word literally.

I'm gonna take it seriously. I've no right to preach your word if I'm not brought up my children properly. Now let me also qualify this by saying children sometimes go through a little up and down, some rumbles in their life in their early teenage years.

That's because they are transitioning from child to adult and they think they are adults when they are not yet adults and the parents think they are children when they are not children. That transition period can be a bit difficult. Parents can be hard on their children and children can be very foolish and that's why parents need more wisdom.

Once a child has crossed the age of 12, that's not the time for physical discipline. That's over. But there are other ways we must restrain our children.

We must be strict with our children particularly if they are girls and they're immodestly dressed or going out with the wrong type of friends. Sometimes they don't know they're foolish. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child and we have to protect them.

Parents are given to children to protect them. So instruction and discipline. When we think of God, you know, it's much easier to think about God as a loving father and the Christian world, you know, the charismatic world is especially God's love.

Don't ever forget that. God is a loving father. You always think of God as a love.

Which father will withhold bread from someone, a child, you know, he'll never give a stone and all these wonderful truths which are all true. But that's one side of God, that he's kind, he'll never give you a stone if you ask for bread, he'll never give you a serpent if you ask for fish. All that is true but that is one side of God.

There's another side of God and that is he's a father who disciplines. It says in Hebrews in chapter 12, Hebrews 12 it says, verse 7, it is for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with sons, for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? Is there a father here, sitting here, who does not discipline his child? You are not like God.

You should be like God who disciplines his children. It says here, what son is there whom his father does not discipline? I'd say Lord there are millions of sons today unfortunately in the world whose the father's

never disciplined them. They've never understood how to discipline their children.

They only see God as a God of love, provide for them, care for them, provide for them, never discipline them. You are not like God. You're a bad representative of God when you only love and care for your son and daughter and you don't discipline them.

You're not representing God correctly. You're like, it's a, to me, the picture I use is of a, you know, sometimes outside these gyms they have a picture of a muscular man rippling with muscles all over, but I like to paint a picture of a man with one side all muscular and the other side skin and bones. Who would ever go into a gym like that, where you turn out like that? But that is the picture a lot of people present of God.

One side full of love, love, love, love, love. What about the discipline side? Zero. That's a wrong picture of God.

We must present God as the Bible says in Romans and chapter 11 the word behold, behold, behold always means look carefully. Fathers, mothers, Romans 11, look carefully. In verse 22, Romans 11 22, what should we look carefully at? The kindness of God, one side of God, and the severity of God, the other side of God.

If you want to have a balanced understanding of God, look carefully at His kindness and look carefully at His severity. If you want to be a good father and a good mother, be kind and be severe. That is the balanced picture of God or, you know, John 1 14.

It says in John 1 14 that the glory of God was seen in Jesus Christ, not just full of grace, no, it's balanced, John 1 14, full of grace and truth, kindness and severity. And this is where we read the help of the Holy Spirit to really be balanced. I've seen many, many Christian parents and fathers, the responsibilities on the father especially.

Now if the father is a useless father, like Timothy's father was, then the mother, Timothy's mother has to do the job of teaching the child. In fact, Timothy's mother taught him the scriptures. You read that in 2nd Timothy 1, but that's because his father was a Greek businessman who was probably only interested in making money.

So if your husband is like a useless father like that, who's only interested in making money and not interested in bringing up your son or daughter in the fear of God, then dear sister, you have to be like Timothy's mother, who had a useless husband, who was not at all a good father to Timothy. Well, the mother didn't just blame the husband, said, okay, my husband's not doing the job, so I got to do it. I mean, think if your husband is paralyzed and can't go to work.

Maybe you have to go to work to earn the living for the home. Think of it like that. My husband is spiritually paralyzed.

He does nothing. He's only thinking about himself. He doesn't care about the discipline and the instruction of my children.

You, mother, you must do the job then. And without complaining against him. I don't think Timothy's mother spent her time complaining about how useless her husband was.

She just did the job. Okay, my husband doesn't do it, then I do it. But ideally, it's the father's job.

The Bible says, fathers bring up your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. And one of the most important instructions that we have to give to our children is walking in the light. Fellowship with God is through walking in the light.

And I believe that's how we must teach our children. And one of the most important things in that is truthfulness. The glory of God is seen full of grace and truth.

The two most important things that I cared for in bringing up my own children was, one, respect and obedience to parents. And second, always speak the truth. I don't care if you've damaged the most valuable thing in the house.

Tell me the truth. I won't punish you. We all make accidents.

We all make mistakes. But don't ever tell me a lie. I was very strict.

I know times when I sat with some of my children and sat for long times. Are you going to tell me the truth here? I'm not going to let you go till you speak the truth to me. It's very, very important to teach our children to speak the truth because lying is there in our children from birth.

What's that verse? Let me see if I can remember it. It's in Psalm 58, I think. Yeah, Psalm 58, verse 3, where it says that from birth, the last part of verse 3, they go astray telling lies.

What's the one thing that right from birth they go astray telling lies? You see that baby crying as if he's in a terrible pain and you pick it up and it stops crying. It never wanted to. It wasn't in no pain at all.

It just wanted to be picked up. It was a lie. It was an absolute lie.

From birth, they go astray telling lies. And that is the one thing we have to eliminate from our children, this untruthfulness. We must never punish our children for speaking the truth.

We must reward them for speaking the truth. It doesn't matter what they did wrong. Nothing is as serious.

Nothing broken in your house or lost. Nothing is as serious as telling lies. And if the fathers can understand that, and you'll never understand that if you yourself don't value truth in your life.

You must value truth so much in your life. So dear brothers and sisters, it's so important for us to bring up our children in this day and age where there's so much of evil. And if you give them a good foundation in all the years that they are in your home, they'll be able to go out into the world.

And even if they have little rumblings and fluctuations in their life, they'll finally become steady. And if any of you have grown up children who are going astray, don't give up. Praying for them.

Pray for them. I've often told parents whose teenage children are around the world gone astray. I say pray for them, husband and wife.

Will you promise me that every day you will kneel down and spend at least five minutes praying for your child by name. And you keep doing that, and I tell you God will bring them back. There's an amazing power in prayer.

So there's never give up hope. It's a great responsibility we have in this day and age, especially when there's so much of evil in the world, to protect our children and bring them up. Don't just be satisfied with giving a good education.

A lot of people in the United States want to give a good education to my child. Good. It's a million times more important to bring up your children in a God-fearing way.

Not just that they speak the right language and behave properly in the church and take some active part in some church activity. No. But deep down in their heart that they want to live for the glory of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

That's what we should put into their heart. And if they don't see the parents seeking the glory of God in everything, they will not follow that, no matter how much you teach them. So it all begins with parents who say, I'm gonna seek the glory of God in everything in my life.

Then I have the moral authority to tell my children to seek the glory of God. There's a lot more to it, but the Holy Spirit will teach you. Amen.

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