

## Children August 24, 2008 - Skip MacMillan

**Sequence:** God's virtues - God and you; God, you, and your marriage, and now your children.

### The Importance of Home Life

- God moves in families; covenants are made with the family - Genesis 17.
- Elders and deacons must manage their homes well or they are disqualified - 1 Timothy 3.
- God's view of children, Jesus' interaction, holy because of one believing parent - 1 Corinthians 7.
- Evidence of our relationship with the LORD--in the real life of our family is where it shows up.
- Testimony: the gospel can be seen in our marriages and families, BB Warfield's care for his wife.

### God's Call to Children

**"Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord" (Colossians 3:20).**

Addressed directly to the child.

#### **"Obey"**

is an expression of love, being loved and loving in response.

I am unconditionally loved by God, therefore I love and obey Him in response.

Parents, you are to unconditionally love your child and then call them to love and obey you in response.

Obedience "must never be made the condition of parental 'love' " (love comes first).

"When the parent is obedient to the vocation of genuine love, the child's obedience may become, like that of the Christian to God, a glad and loving response. Such obedience is 'pleasing to the Lord' " (and to the parent) -NT Wright.

#### **"everything?"**

**Child/Youth**, you are to obey your parents in everything.

No back talk, no whining, no ugliness, no deep exhales, no disrespect, but obey in everything!

#### **Parents**

1. Big responsibility; God is telling your child to obey you in everything, do you feel the weight?
2. What are you asking them to obey? It needs to be scriptural, with justice, righteousness and love.
3. Jesus warns those who would lead children into sin.  
". . . it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin" (Luke 17:2).

### **God's Call to Children - Proverbs 6:20-23**

"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."

## Why?

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, . . . "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1-3).

". . . this pleases the Lord".

**"Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged."**

### God's Call to Dads

**Throughout the Bible:** Genesis 18, Exodus 10, Deuteronomy 6, Proverbs, Psalm 78, Ephesians 6.

#### Genesis 18:19

Abraham: "I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just . . . ."

#### Psalm 78:1-8

God gave this child to you, not to the government, school or daycare, but you!

#### **"Do not embitter your children" - Colossians 3:21**

= exasperate, provoke, stir up, harass, constant nagging, belittling, to over-correct, arouse to resentment.

"Fathers, are urged not to irritate their children by being so unreasonable in their demands that the children lose heart and come to think that it is useless trying to please their parents"  
-FF Bruce.

#### **". . . or they will become discouraged" - Colossians 3:21**

= lose heart (NAS), broken spirit, disheartened.

When you embitter them, you are no longer training your child but punishing, taking out your anger on them.

#### **Think of how you are treating him!**

Is it out of your failures, problems, and disappointments?

If you keep this up where are they headed as adults?

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

**God's BIG purpose for your life is to encourage and instruct your children in the things of God.**

#### **1. You need to know, believe, place your faith in Jesus Christ and walk with God.**

As you do, God Himself will equip, train and prepare you.

#### **2. You need to be there.**

Michael Phelps, Olympics gymnast, and Olympic TV commercial.

#### **3. You have been called by God to teach them through your actions and words.**

## What are you teaching her?

- What is your schedule teaching them, your money, your marriage, your attitude toward people?
- What are you teaching them about God and the Bible?
- What are you building into her as her core?
- What is her value based on?
- What are you telling her really matters in life by your lifestyle?
- How are you defining success to her and for her?

That is great he made the basketball team, can play the piano, make all "A's," beat up my kid, got accepted to an Ivy League school, becomes a millionaire at age 28, but *do they resemble Christ?*

What if he makes less than the national average, lives in a one-bedroom apartment, is responsible and hard working, loves and is dedicated to his wife and child, loves the Lord with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, loves his church and community? Is this successful? Is this what we are training them to become?

I know what the world defines as success and I know what God defines as success and they are not the same!

*"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2: 15-17).*

## Teach Them:

- **Love**

God's unconditional love for them.  
To love God and to love our neighbor all in grateful response.  
Her value and worth are founded on the unshakable and eternal love of God.

- **Gospel**

**For Salvation:** Ephesians 2:1-10, Colossians 1:21-22.  
Salvation is found in no one else other than Christ Jesus, Romans 10:9.

**For Living Life:** value, worth, hope, purpose, character qualities, treatment of others, speech, goals.

"The parent's duty is, in effect, to live the gospel to the child; that is, to assure their children that they are loved and accepted and valued for who they are, not for who they ought to be, should have been, or might become" -NT Wright.

- **Disciple**

**Grounding them in the deep wisdom, truth, love, compassion, hope and humility of God.**

**God: teach a Biblical view of God.**

Jesus Christ: Colossians 1, Hebrews 1, John 1, Philippians 2.  
Holy Spirit is our guide, comforter, teacher.  
Virtues, fruits of the Spirit, His nature, abilities, deeds, power and wonders.  
Commandments: Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.  
His view of humanity: John 3:16-18.

**People: teach a Biblical view of people.**

Created in the image of God, all have sinned, all are equal.

To notice the child who has no one to play with, to protect the weak, to feed the hungry.

Tell her that people are what really matter, not stuff or things.

**Scripture** is from the heart of God, makes us wise, corrects, encourages, equips and gives us purpose.

Living word of God.

Read, meditate, ask questions, apply to our lives, trust God's word.

Here we find the two greatest commandments: love God and love our neighbors.

Here we find truth, grace, wisdom and love.

Here it tells us it is better to give than to receive, serve than be served.

Here we find God's peace, joy and purpose.

Tell her living by the Word of God is what is of infinite value.

- **Practical Life**

**Build a family:** look after each other, watch each other's back, forgive, build up.

**Academics:** study as if your studying for God.

**Fun:** golf, camp, boat, tennis, skate, art, travel, explore.

**Family Devotions:** pray, read Scripture and discuss and ask questions.

**Church:** worship together, help each other, forgive; we are patient with each other, give the benefit of the doubt, we don't gossip but build one another up, love is the trademark of the church.

**Community and World:** we are responsible to help, be compassionate with the poor, not judging those who do not believe in Jesus, give help and grace to our community, give without asking for anything in return.

**1 Thessalonians 2:11** - "We dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and *urging you to live lives worthy of God*, who calls you into his kingdom and glory."

**If we have no other "success" in our lives, let us Love the LORD our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and love our wives and love our children.**