

## INTRODUCTION

- What if I offered you a job? It very well may be the most important job in the world.
  - It certainly is one of the hardest jobs in the world
    - ❖ You are in charge. You set the vision, goals, manage the whole thing.
  - Should be a very honorable job, but is often humiliating and will likely exposes some of your worst traits.
  - The hours are long – in-fact it is an all call job. 24/7. And by the way it pays 0\$ / hour
- Today is a hard subject for me: parenting.
  - I don't feel that I have done exceptionally well.
    - ❖ I should have been much more graceful, hanging less expectations on the backs of others
  - And almost certainly spiritual attacks occur on the subject. And sure enough, there were – on multiple fronts.
  - Parenting can be really really hard
    - ❖ There are sooo many parenting books – every child and parent is unique
      - Thus, the combinations is even that more unique.
      - A book could be written for each .... I guess that is called counseling.
    - ❖ And there are no childing books – how to be a better child.
      - Because the intended audience wouldn't read them.
- Who likes to be corrected in their parenting.
  - Very personal; often an affront against one's identity
  - Like it or not our culture has a tendency to judge us heavily on our vocation and the success of our children.
- I am not planning on a bunch of practical anecdotes – a few sprinkled in along the way
  - I need to be careful here not to not offend my children
  - I am going to focus on the over arching philosophy based on the scripture
    - ❖ (with a bit of cultural prudence) – unique time in affluence and technology. I am more an more convinced we are faced with a very unique culture.
- There are a whopping 4 verses in Ephesians about parenting and childing.
- Summer series (Ephesians) Sit – Walk – Stand
  - Sit in the presence of the Lord and know who you are in the Lord
  - Now we are working through Paul's teaching on how we walk in light of that.
  - Then we will finish with How we stand against trials.
- (5:15) Paul address all of us, the Church - "Be careful how you live"
- (5:21) Then as he moves into advice for the household he says;
  - \*\* "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" \*\*
  - He applies that to marriage
  - And then applies it to parenting.

- Here are our four little verses.  
**Eph 6:1** Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord, for this is *right*. **2** “**Honor** your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), **3** “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”  
**4** Fathers, **do not** provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the **discipline** and **instruction** of the Lord.
- Two directives, one to children and another to their parents.

## Hierarchy

- First off here we often see God presenting a hierarchy of authority as it pertains to spiritual leadership. – which can get people up in arms. [HIERARCHY]
  - This is more complex as there is a governmental element not taken into account here, but Ephesians is addressing the church and behavior of believers.
  - Eph 4:6, 5:15, 5:21, 5:25, 5:22
- Anyone here tend to learn great life lessons without any pain?
  - There is a way, but it isn't the common way.
    - ❖ Learn from discipline or wisdom.
  - Hebrews really sets the tone of how this works.

**Heb 12:4** In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

**5** And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the **discipline** of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. **6** For the Lord **disciplines** the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” [Prov 3:11-12]

- ❖ G3809: **Train** (paideia) – discipline ∥ G3146: **flog [spank] (mastigoo) – chastise**
- ❖ G1651: Shamed (elegchō) – **Reproved/Corrected**.
  - Shame honor culture. Shame as a corrective measure, dishonors generations
  - This culture has been somewhat divorced from the idea due to extreme individualism
    - Shame is provocation for rebellion and rejection of authority.
- Let me read a little more of Hebrews. Because I think it is helpful.  
**Heb 12:7** It is for **discipline** that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not **discipline**? **8** If you are left without **discipline**, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ...that we may share his holiness. **11** For the moment all **discipline** seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- Let that set the mind set as we continue. [HIERARCHY]
  - Discipline comes in several forms. From parents, society, God, self
  - Discipline is inevitable
  - Wisdom comes from God through the cooperation of self-discipline.
    - ❖ Talking with Donnie about this he shared with me a teaching how discipline is freedom.
    - ❖ Breaks you from the bondage of sin – and as you develop self-discipline you are able to control the temptations and are free of them.

## Children

- Let's start with the children, just because the scripture does.
- How many in here are children? – what then the rest of you were test tube babies?

**Eph 6:1** Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord, for this is *right*. **2** "**Honor** your father and mother" (then a promise), **3** "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

- Quoting the Fifth commandment:: hinge between Honor of God and honor humans  
(1) No other God, (2) No Idols, (3) Name, (4) Sabbath -

**Ex 20:12** "**Honor (H3513: kabbed)** your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you (**ancestral - national promise**).

- God links this idea of earthly fathers and heavenly father in Malachi.  
Just like the author of Hebrews did.

**Mal 1:6** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name.

- The idea is this; One who is faithful with a little is also faithful with much. One who is dishonest with little is dishonest with much. Jesus teaching in [parable of Talents & Shrewd Manager](#)
- Disrespect to parents is disrespect to God.
  - ❖ You say, "but I have a right to speak up" – fine but disrespect is not achieving this.
    - You want to be heard, patience and humility are the tools of the spirit to open the ear.
    - Disrespect is anger and hatred. The tools of the devil to seed destruction of relationship.
- James echoes the idea. With our tongues we bless our Lord and Father and curse man who is made in the likeness of God. From our mouth come blessing and cursing. This ought not be so [James 3:9-10](#)
  - ❖ Point to ([prov 22](#))
- It is pride that opens your mouth to speak to your parents dishonorable.
  - ❖ You are wrong, I know what is right.
    - Rebellion against your parents is rebellion against God.
  - ❖ You said in your heart, 'I will ascend above them, I will make myself the most high.' [Isa 14:13-14](#)

- Notice that Paul directly ties obedience to honor (**H3513: kabbed**).
  - (**H3513: kabbed**) Two connotations: (neg)Weighty responsibility (pos) Honored.
    - ❖ Honor which is afforded to them as a position of authority and responsibility.
  - The heavy weight of the task of parenting at the very least deserves some honor,
    - ❖ Even though we blow it.
  - Parenting is an extremely difficult task and it deserves honor, even though we blow it.
- Say that your parents were so off task they don't deserve honor.
  - Not so uncommon with abuse, alcoholism, depression.
  - ① Remember the hierarchy – Obey God's authority first. Clear all through the Bible.

② You are called to break the cycle. The iniquities of the fathers will be visited to the third and fourth generation. The third commandment. Coupled with idols. Are there idols of destruction that your parents had or have? Don't propagate them.

- But God shows steadfast love to thousands of generations of those who love Him
- The idols change shape, color and hide in very devious ways. They will transform themselves and personalize them to you. Don't be tricked.
- Break the cycle. Become the first generation in God's Love.

**Rom 12:18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. **19** Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

- Example: is you don't have to become their financial partner, but still call them every week.
  - Love will heal.
- The continuation of Hebrews 12

**Heb 12:12** Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. **14** Strive for **peace** with everyone, and for the holiness *without which* no one will see the Lord. **15** See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "*root of bitterness*" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;

- Be at peace, forgive, give honor to the very difficult task of parenting – even if they blew it.
  - Being human is a hard task.
  - You don't have to condone sinful behavior or fall into the trap of being manipulated.
  - Fight back with Love and Forgiveness.
  - Honoring parents is honoring God.
- Let me paint the picture with even another shade of severity.
- God set up some very serious repercussions around abusing this in the Hebrew Nation.

**Deut 21:18** "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, **19** then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, **20** and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' **21** Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

**Deut 27:16** "'Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'"

- Why? It is so harsh. If this were the case today I would be short a few kids.
  - It is the fabric of society. The values, core lessons in morality, understanding relationships, how we treat each other: These are learned in the family arena.
  - The environment to learn without incurring devastating results.
  - The family is THE learning institution: I pray you have not left it to the playground at public.
    - ❖ The erosion of the family nucleus is the erosion of the society.
  - Many of the Levitical and social laws were to make a pure and strong nation.
    - ❖ As we see later in Israel's history the erosion of this and its effects.
      - Absalom's civil war against his father King David.

- So where are we now? Society's problems because we need to up our severity of discipline?
- Compare/Contrast **Deut. law** with the **Jesus' parable** of prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32)
  - Covenant of the Law – Perfection from works (sacrifice)
  - Covenant of Grace – Perfection from Christ (surrender)
    - ❖ Son full of pride, won't listen to wisdom, foolish
      - How many times have I heard; I just need to learn it on my own. **No - you don't**
      - Humble yourself and receive wisdom.
        - What that really means is I don't trust you, I don't believe you – I will make myself the most high -- I am the better person, parent, I am my own god.
      - There are some lessons you don't need to experience – learn from wisdom and don't sustain damage that can last a life time.
    - ❖ The father (God) shows Humble Patience and Heart of Forgiveness. This is what allows the child to return.
    - ❖ This is our Model after Christ. The Law has been fulfilled by Christ.
    - ❖ Giving all access to the father without death.
- Children:
  - Don't for a second think this is a parable about using your parents and then seeking forgiveness and getting best of both worlds.
  - Recognize how blessed you are under the covenant of grace. Don't be fools
  - Your parents are – unique eternal beings made in the image of God.
  - This is a hard job, disrespect undermines the fabric of society and Gods will.
- Segway to next section: about the patience and forgiveness of the father.

## Fathers

- Here is what I don't want to do, beat up fathers. We too often get reprimanded from the pulpit instead of encouraged.
  - Not to downplay the seriousness of the role of fathers, but I do not want to pummel you with statistics of how crucial the father relationship is and how you need to get serious.
  - We all need encouragement with this difficult task in this difficult time.
- Also, I would like to expand this to a more broad view than just fathers.
  - (1) These lessons are applicable to both roles – our culture father may not be in the picture anymore
  - (2) Tim Keller makes an interesting cultural observation that we should not ignore.
- He asked: why just address fathers?
  - Tremendous changes in parental relationship in the last 200 years, due to the industrial revolution.
    - ❖ Agricultural vocation (family work together for success) 80%
    - ❖ Industrial vocation (father leaves home for success) 3% farming

- So, parents, what is our part in this. Has a similar tone to the marriage relationship?
  - Wives submit – respect husbands :: Husbands Love – sacrifice – die for your wives.

**Eph 6:4** Fathers (mothers)(parents), **do not provoke** your children to anger, but bring them up in the **discipline** and **instruction** of the Lord.

- Provoke: Exasperate (NIV, MSG) : G3949; anger, push to rage
  - And we keep from that by:
  - Discipline: (Paideia) same word as in Hebrews, but sometimes here translated as nurture.
  - Instruction: (G3559: Nouthesia) admonition, call attention to
- Here is this pendulum between over control and apathy -or- absence
  - control – resulting in rebellion
  - apathy– resulting in Anomie (condition in which little moral guidance)
- These extremes are an attack on the structure of society and the structure God set up.
  - What Mara and I have found so challenging with this; it is variable. A constantly changing relationship. Begins with entire dependency – eventually seems you have no control.
  - Image from The Incredibles. [Incredibles]
    - ❖ Maybe some need to kick them out of the nest.
  - Then it is different for each kid.
    - ❖ *Story about Chance and Em in trouble.*
  - Teen years come along and what worked for keeping communication lines open for Kyra did not work at all for Emily.
- We are training humans, almost no pattern will repeat exactly.
  - Littles: guide with discipline (Spankings, Time out, Restrictions... )
    - ❖ Developing the correlation of action-repercussion
    - ❖ Just laying down the concept of decisions and self and others ...
  - Teens: guide with wisdom (yes Restrictions but mostly Conversations) (No Q ⊕ w/out Qty ⊕)
- What is the goal? Self-discipline and dependency hand off to God – Freedom paradox
  - All along pray – pray – pray. The one absolutely consistent element in all parenting.
- We are training humans – unique eternal beings made in the image of God.
  - We need to treat this task with the greatest of care.
  - **Proverbs 22** is commonly referenced in child rearing; pairs well with **Eph 6** bring them up in the **discipline** and **instruction** of the Lord.
 

**Prov 22:6** Train up (**H2596: chanak**) a child in the way [**the road**] he should go (**H6310 Peh**); even when he is old he will not depart from it.
- Key is “Train up”
  - Not (**H2614 chanaq**) to strangle or choke out. Use to describe a lioness killing her prey in (Nahum 2:12) imagery of how ruthless and haphazard Nineveh has been:: filling it’s caves with torn flesh.
  - (**H2596: chanak**) is in dedicated to as in sacrifices to sanctify the tabernacle/Temple (Duet, 1Kings)

- Then “the way [**the road**] they should go”
  - (**H6310 Peh**) literal is “his mouth”, Tenor
  - Example: Ex 4:10 Moses is heavy in his mouth (kabbed peh)
- In a more literal sense: Dedicate to building the road that becomes your child speech.
- I have heard this presented two ways (1) in the nature of the child (2) in the way of the Lord
  - C. H. Toy says “in accordance with the manner of life to which he is destined”
  - This can be deceiving though. The nature of a child may be contradictory to the way of the Lord
  - And how am I to know one’s destiny – hard enough to try and discern my own.
- I do not think this is talking vocational – It is spiritual.
- Take the context in the higher meaning, which to the ancient Hebrew, over and over again, there is the emphasis on raising up your children to honor God.

**Deu 11: 18** “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine **in your heart and in your soul**, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **19** You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **20** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

- The audience to this writing knew darn well what the “tenor” of their children should be.
- But that isn’t to completely reject the other interpretation. Because why didn’t Solomon just write that explicitly? It is a very interesting way of expressing the idea.
  - Poetic and personalized to the voice of the child.
  - As in everything in relationships it is a dance - a cooperation - understanding.
- It isn’t a call to control, but to guide. Pave the path for your children to be in their own relationship with our creator. That can’t happen if they are smothered or controlled.
  - That happens by working through the difficulties of life – relying on God and seeing Him work.
  - Paved with bricks of scripture and prayer and tears ... Walking it together with them.
- **Other side** of that **pendulum** is hands off – laissez faire.
  - *Sometimes it feels like there is nothing we can do. Not give up – rework strategy (40min).*
  - Giving up – laissez faire parenting is the fuel of Anomie.
- **Émile Durkheim**, (1897) *Anomie*: [a-nomos: negate law] a "condition in which society provides little moral guidance to individuals, breakdown of social bonds between an individual and the community"
  - Durkheim’s def: "an insatiable will", "the malady of the infinite" – desire that cannot be filled, increasing in intensity.
  - “anomie is a mismatch, not simply the absence of norms. Thus, a society with too much rigidity and little individual discretion could also produce a kind of anomie...”
  - The influence of a lack of norms.
  - Reduction of tradition and structure in religion, lack of meaning in labor (alienation), dive to pursue egoism instead of good for community.
  - Study looking into the increase of suicide in Iran in the last decade.

- ❖ Hinged on lack of self-control “lack of internal (personal control) and external (social control) lead to a range of counter-productive behavior.”
- ❖ Sequential Cascade of structural failures led to mental health issues.
  - (1) Family structure (2) Peer (3) Societal (\*4\*) Humanity – existential/ontological
- Parents we are called to lay the road for our child. One thread in the fabric of society
  - The erosion stops at our doorstep
  - There is and will be dysfunction; that that doesn’t mean we can’t work through it.
    - ❖ The battle of the dinner table: The difference behind the front door:
      - If you think your family is dysfunctional – it is good rich training ground.
      - Don’t get discouraged. This is a long-term goal.
      - Start the hard conversations – have them more often
        - It is never too late for God to work.
- There is nothing more exposing to our real true heart than marriage and parenting and family
  - But it is the seed to growing wisdom
  - As long as you are seeking **truth** and not to be just **to be “right”**
- Our model is Christ:
  - Not going to kid you it hurts, But we hurt Christ and he was patient and forgiving.
    - ❖ Father in the parable of the prodigal son
    - ❖ [Heb](#), which of you have bled for your faith
  - It is through trials and refining fires that we are forged into the glorious ornaments of God
- ([Isaiah 49:18](#)) Jerusalem you will wear your sons like ornaments.
  - Kids: Be that ornament
  - Parents: Wear them proudly
- ([Prov 17:6](#)) Grandchildren are like a crown to the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents. [\[NET\]](#)
- It begins with [Eph 5:21](#) “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”
- I want to point [Prov 15 !!!](#)

## PRAY

- Humility, open to receive – model all we do after you Jesus.