

## INTRODUCTION

We have been studying through 1 Timothy, and lately have been working in chapter 3, about what a man must be like in order for him to be considered blameless, and ready to be chosen by the church as a bishop, that is, an elder, a pastor.

In verses 4 and 5, we have found that a man doing well as head of his own household is essential to his being ready to be a church pastor, or deacon.

Well, the subject of a man doing well with his own children is already very dear to us. We care so very much about our children, and we feel so intensely our own sinfulness, ignorance, and weakness as parents, that we yearn to know and understand whatever God has said that can help us be obedient to Him and be a blessing to our families.

So at the point in 1 Timothy 3 where being a good father is mentioned, I'm now starting to take us to several places in the Bible, wherever I have been able to find this subject. Having introduced the subject last week, I am today planning the next out of several sermons about a man ruling his own house well, having his children in submission.

**Today we look to the book of Genesis, to consider the time when God said of Abraham, "He will command his children."**

## TEXT

Genesis 18:19

NKJV For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

## BODY

**Today we look to the book of Genesis, to consider the time when God said of Abraham, “He will command his children.”**

### I. God Knows Abraham

A. God knows Abraham; God said about Abraham, “I know him,” or “I have known him”

1. God knows everything about how Abraham was in the past
  - a) that Abraham had grown up worshiping false gods

Joshua 24:2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.

- b) that several years before, Abraham had not been content with his wife, and had taken another wife, or a concubine, from among his servants

Genesis 16:3-4 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. 4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

2. God knows everything about Abraham’s condition in the present
  - a) all his remaining sinfulness
  - b) all his human weakness
3. God knows everything Abraham will do and not do in the future

B. But it is not mere knowledge of which God is speaking, but the special knowledge He has of Abraham as one of His own choosing, as one who believes in Him

1. God’s knowledge of Abraham involves choice; God has chosen Abraham
2. God’s knowledge of Abraham involves love; God loves Abraham

C. God’s knowledge and choosing and loving of Abraham were by God’s grace toward Abraham, not because of Abraham’s deserving;

D. APPLICATION: God knows everyone who believes in Him

1. He is well aware of your sinful past, of your remaining sinfulness, of your doubts, of your weaknesses
2. but He has chosen you, He loves you, He knows you

## God knows Abraham

- II. God Knows That Abraham Will Command His Children
  - A. It may be an unfamiliar or uncomfortable thing for you to think of a man “commanding” his children
    - 1. maybe you can picture an army officer or sergeant commanding soldiers
    - 2. but you might never have even used the word “command” to describe a father dealing with his own children
  - B. But that is what the Bible says, that Abraham will “command” his children
    - 1. it is very interesting to me that when I looked up “command” in the 1821 Webster’s dictionary, this very verse was given as the example! And this was the definition:
      - a) To bid; to order; to direct; to charge; implying authority, and power to control, and to require obedience
    - 2. that is our English word; but of course we are interested to know if that accurately reflects the Hebrew original
      - a) it does, which I saw when I word-searched all the places in the Old Testament where this word is used
      - b) most of the uses of this word described God commanding us!
      - c) other examples were
        - (1) kings commanding their subjects
        - (2) masters commanding their servants
        - (3) Moses commanding Israel
        - (4) fathers and mothers commanding their sons
      - d) I found 17 places in the book of Genesis where this word is used of people commanding people under them, and in no case did those commanded not obey, and do what they had been commanded

### C. APPLICATION

1. in 1 Timothy 3:4-5, we read about a man's responsibility to "have his children in submission"
2. here we see part of how that is done; a man commands his children
3. a man has authority to command his children
4. typically a man has actual power to control his children (you are big; they are small!)
5. typically a man, if he prioritizes it, if he applies himself to it, actually can require obedience
6. I remember learning from some parenting specialist, that parents should not command their children;
  - a) instead they should say things like,
    - (1) Mommy needs you to pick up your toys
    - (2) wouldn't you like to come in now, so you can have a snack?
  - b) I think I went for that when I heard it
  - c) now I don't think very well of that kind of thing; the bible says here that Abraham would command his children

God knows Abraham, that he will command his children

### III. Abraham Will Command His Children Regarding Both Aspects of What Is Right

A. To keep the way of the Lord; which means to worship God as He has commanded, rather than to have some man-made religion.

1. see what this phrase means “the way of the Lord” in the case of the kings of Judah 2 Kings 21:19-22
2. Abraham will command his children to worship God as He has ordained, rather than allowing them to adopt whatever man-made religion is in the culture around them
  - a) Abraham and his family are strangers, aliens, foreigners in the land of the Caananites
  - b) all around him, the people worship idols
  - c) Abraham will command his children not to adopt the religion of the people all around them, but to keep the way of the Lord
3. see this also in Abraham’s grandson, Jacob - Genesis 35:1-7a
  - a) God told Jacob to go to a certain place and build an altar to God there
  - b) Jacob told his household to put away foreign gods, and ceremonially to purify themselves; and that they were going to a certain place to make an altar there to God
  - c) Jacob’s household obeyed, putting away all their foreign gods
  - d) APPLICATION I noticed in that history that what Jacob commanded his household sounded much like what we all say to our households in one way or another: “Take a bath, put on clean clothes, we’re going to church”
4. APPLICATION Distinguish between the external aspects of religion that a man can accomplish by commanding his children, and the internal aspects of religion that only the Holy Spirit can accomplish
  - a) external: go to church; read the Bible; sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs
  - b) internal
    - (1) saving faith
    - (2) repentance unto life
    - (3) these are evangelical graces wrought inside a person by the work of the Holy Spirit

- B. To do righteousness and justice, which means to treat other people right
1. stated as
    - a) GEN righteousnesse and judgement
    - b) KJV justice and judgment
    - c) NKJV, ESV righteousness and justice
  2. H6666 *tsedaqua* rightness itself
  3. H4941 *mishpat* judgments or decisions based on rightness
  4. these two words are used together many times in the Old Testament scriptures
  5. so the phrase essentially means, “to treat people right”
  6. Abraham will command his children to do what is right to other people
- C. Love for God and for your neighbor
1. Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

God knows Abraham, that he will command his children, both to keep the way of the Lord, and to do righteousness and justice.

IV. By Abraham Commanding His Children, God Will Bring to Abraham What He Has Spoken to Him

- A. God has just promised to Abraham that his wife Sarah will have a son, having already promised that by Abraham's seed all nations will be blessed, and Abraham will have descendants as numerous as the stars
  - 1. but God is also about to pour out destruction on some of Abraham's ungodly neighbors, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah and the whole plain where they are; and Abraham's nephew Lot is down there among them; because Lot is Abraham's nephew, and is himself a righteous man who is grieved over sin, God's angels will rescue him and his daughters, but only by that miracle will Lot escape destruction on the people he lives among
  - 2. in order that Abraham's sons not be destroyed also, by other outpourings of God's wrath, they will be commanded to worship God and to do what is right toward other people; God, then will save Abraham's children from the destruction He brings on the wicked around them
- B. God has spoken to us about blessings He has for us; God also prescribes means by which He will bring us those blessings
  - 1. e.g. God spoke to Israel through Moses and Joshua, telling them He would give them victory over their enemies in the land of Canaan
    - a) then, at the first fortified city they came to, Jericho, God told them to march around the city for seven days; the city walls fell, and the army of Israel ran in and conquered
- C. In our households with our children
  - 1. one of my daughters came to me several years ago - "He died for me!"
  - 2. Acts 2:38-39 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."
    - a) God promised that all people, including children, who repent, calling on the name of Jesus Christ, will be forgiven their sins
    - b) we are to see to the fulfillment of this promise by using the means God has provided us, commanding our children what is true religion and right treatment of other people

c) so, that girl, on the other side of the world from Jerusalem, and 2,00 years after that promise was made, received from God what was promised by means of her mother first teaching her to read, then giving her a Bible, and commanding her to read the it

D. In terms of pastors for the church

1. Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you shepherds [GEN pastours] according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.
2. Ephesians 4:11-15 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:
3. God said He would give us shepherds who will feed us with knowledge and understanding; the Lord Jesus' apostle wrote us that indeed Jesus Christ would give His churches gifts of pastors and teachers, by which the church is built up to maturity; but those pastors are given to us by God through men commanding their own children

## CONCLUSION

God knows Abraham, that he will command his children, both to keep the way of the Lord, and to do righteousness and justice. By this, God will bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.

Let every Christian man here aspire to this very thing.

If this seems hopeless to you, beyond you, cry out to the Lord for mercy.



Anna - Prelude (please pick)

Anna - Trinity xvi "Doxology"

Anna - Trinity 1 "Psalm 100"

Rita - Trinity 122 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Rita - Trinity 677 "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus"

Chris - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: Psalm 78:1-7

Roel - Scripture Reading: ~~Galatians 4:21-31~~ Colossians 3:17-25

Thad - Congregational Prayer:

Jeff - Benediction: Numbers 6:24-26

JRY:

The first phrase, “keep the way of the LORD” means to worship Him rather than to worship idols. See Judges 2:7-22, 2 Kings 21:19-22. The second phrase, “to do righteousness and justice,” means to treat other people rightly.

Judges 2:7-22 So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. 8 Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. 9 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. 10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. 11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; 12 and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. 13 They forsook the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. 14 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. 16 Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. 18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way. 20 Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, 21 I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, 22 so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will

keep the ways of the LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept them, or not."

2 Kings 21:19-22 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. 20 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. 21 So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. 22 He forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

Calvin:

That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. Moses intimates that Abraham should become possessed of the grace promised to him, if he instructed his children in the fear of the Lord, and governed his household well. But under the person of one man, a rule common to all the pious is delivered: for they who are negligent in this part of their duty, cast off or suppress, as much as in them lies, the grace of God. Therefore, that the perpetual possession of the gifts of God may remain to us, and survive to posterity, we must beware lest they be lost through our neglect. Yet it would be false for any one hence to infer, that the faithful could either cause or deserve, by their own diligence, that God should fulfill those things which he has promised. For it is an accustomed method of speaking in Scripture, to denote by the word that the consequence rather than the cause. For although the grace of God alone begins and completes our salvation; yet, since by obeying the call of God, we fulfill our course, we are said, also in this manner, to obtain the salvation promised by God.

JRY:

-God had promised things to Abraham; yet God said that the promises would be fulfilled because Abraham obeyed

## V. God Knows Everyone Who Believes in Him

- A. We are going to see today how God's dealing with Abraham as a father to his children instructs us regarding God's dealing with us as to our children
- B. Abraham is the father of all who believe in the gospel promises of God; much of what the Bible says about Abraham is true of all who believe as Abraham believed

1. Genesis 15:5-6 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.
  2. Romans 4:20-25 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS." 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.
- C. God knows the man who believes in Him through Jesus Christ
1. knows everything about him
  2. chose him
  3. loves him
  4. deals with him by grace

RV/ASV For I have known him, to the end that...

RSV No, for I have chosen him...

NIV For I have chosen him...

NASB For I have chosen him...