

Ephesians 6:4 And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In the previous Scriptures we looked at each role in the family; each was commanded to do something that they had not been doing. This command was immediate with steps following to abound in the Scriptures. In verse 22 wives are commanded to submit to their own husbands; in verse 25 husbands are commanded to love their wives; in Ephesians 6:1 children are commanded to obey their parents. This is a Biblical family. This is not the result of the workings of our flesh; we've established the fact that of our own flesh we cannot and will not do these things. We are by nature selfish and unforgiving.

When you harbor unforgiveness note that you are acting like the old man. Unforgiveness is not of God.

Being a Biblical family is the result of being filled, controlled, by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18. When we are controlled by the Holy Spirit love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance will flow forth from us. This will be towards others, and especially towards our families. Let's get into verse 4.

Verse 4- And: this is a continuation of the previous instructions concerning the family.

We must remember when Paul wrote the inspired Word that there weren't any chapters or verse numbers. These were added later by the translators to help us. There isn't a break in the teaching here but instead a continuous flow.

Verse 6- ye fathers- It is obvious this word "fathers" refers the male parent, but it is also used of parents in general.

I Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

People often use this verse as speaking just to the father, but if you keep it in context it is in the middle of verses speaking of widows. Notice the word any; it is speaking of any Christian. In this context it is speaking of any Christian that has a widow in their family. They are supposed to take care of them and if they don't they are worse than an infidel, an unbeliever.

We see the same principal here in Ephesians 6:4, as at times there is not a father in the home due to death or divorce. The parents are not to provoke their children to wrath.

provoke- To make angry; to offend; to incense; to enrage. W.D. 1828 edition.

This provoking can be done by offensive words which cause injury and can incite a war. When you have a war inside the home there is division and a house divided will not stand. War is not pleasant and people are scarred for life in a war.

This word provoke is a present imperative and is a command to do something in the future and involves continuous and repeated action.

This also carries with it the implication of stopping an action that has been taking place. Scriptures are telling us to stop provoking our children and we are to do this continually. Again, here we are told not to do something, we are told not to provoke our children to wrath. wrath- to anger alongside, i.e. enrage: -anger, provoke to wrath.

A great and terrible example of this is with David and his son Absalom. David was very busy doing kingdom work and didn't take time with his children, neither did he discipline them. He also gave a bad example when he went into Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah killed. David's son Amnon raped his half sister Tamar who was Absalom's sister; David didn't discipline Amnon. This enraged Absalom who planned a dinner party and invited all of David's sons; at the appointed time Absalom had Amnon killed. Absalom ran away and then came back later only he couldn't see the king's face; this enraged an already spoiled man to the point of hatred toward his father and Absalom conspired against his father David to overthrow and kill David. His conspiracy wasn't successful and Absalom also was killed. David mourned. When you look at this you see David provoked his son to wrath; the outcome was his son hated him.

If you want your children to hate you give them everything they want; don't discipline them; don't ever tell them no; tell them the bad things in their life is not their fault but always someone else's; don't give them any responsibilities; and let them be the boss. Let them be the one to give the orders and when they get older they will blame you for everything. This is one side of provoking your children to wrath. The other side is to be overbearing and setting your expectations of that child at unattainable levels. People are different; children are little people, so they are different also. One of your children may excel in sports, the other may excel academically. You can't expect one to be just like the other and when you do you will provoke them to wrath, to anger. Encourage them to excel in all areas, and encourage them in the areas they excel.

Verse 4- but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Genesis 18:19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

We have a great responsibility to bring up our children, to raise them.

We must understand that we are not raising up little angels. Children are born totally depraved.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

We are dealing with little devils. It is our responsibility to train them up.

The most important thing we can teach them is the Gospel. We are to teach them the Law of God and teach them that they are transgressors of the Law.

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

We are to teach them that they cannot keep the law, and that they are sinners.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8 But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Always give Bible and don't ever push for a decision. Multitudes of kids have made professions of faith simply to get their parents off their backs. Then their parents are in denial when those same kids are living like the devil later in life. They say they are just backslidden, when Biblically, they are lost. Our first responsibility in training up our children is to tell them about Jesus Christ. We are to invest the Word of God in them.

You may have the question on when to start; start when they are in the womb. Never stop until you or them are in the grave. This doesn't mean that you brow beat them, but that you lovingly give them the Word of God.

Verse 4 nurture- That which promotes growth; education; instruction. W.D. 1828 edition.
admonition- discipline and training.

To instruct. Training of a child, and hence generally: education, discipline; instruction as consisting of teaching, admonition, rewards, punishments, etc...

This calls for a systematic discipline and instruction.

Training is what is done, instruction is what is said.

It's not do as I say but not as I do. We are to be the example for our kids to follow. There are do's and don'ts in this training and therefore there are blessings and consequences; for us and for them.

When we discipline our children we are giving the appropriate reward. We are to do this early.

Proverbs 13:24 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

We are distinctly designed for the rod to be used on us. God made us this way. I know this world system says it is child abuse to whip our children, but the Bible says if we love them we will whip them, and we will do it early.

We must use the rod according to the Bible. We do this and we will not abuse our children.

I encourage people when they discipline their children not to use their hand. Always use the rod. Our hands should represent love. When our children see our hands they should think of the hand that loves them and cares for them and these hands they know they can come to and find comfort and protection.

The rod should remind them of restrictions and repentance.

Our responsibility is to train up our children. The Lord has given them to us and He has also given us His Word on how to train them up.

When we spare the rod we allow our children to grow up into a rebellious lifestyle. Never having to face real consequences they live life as consequences not being real. When our children mess up explain to them where and how, then give them the consequences. This way they know why they are getting the rod. This is discipline with instruction. After the rod pray with them. This gives them wisdom.

Proverbs 10:13 In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.

Notice the place specified for the rod; the back of him. This would be his rear end.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13, 14 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Proverbs 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

Proverbs 29:17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

This correction with the rod is for our children's benefit. It is not to damage them in any way and when it is done Biblically it will not damage them. Let's look at some benefits.

Proverbs 4:10-12

way- the pathway of one's life.

Right paths are the straight paths. These are paths of uprightness. This is a good quality.

The parent is saying I have raised you up; I have personally trained you; I have lived the example of an upright life in front of you. I have been involved in your life. You have seen my mistakes, you have seen me admit when I was wrong, you have seen me apologize, you have seen me forgive, and you have seen me serve the Lord. You have received instruction, child, you are no fool. I have confidence in you.

verse 12- When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

You have been trained, live out your training. And when you have kids, train them.

When we biblically train our children, and when they receive that training, the results are joyous for all involved.

This takes time. This is not easy. Multitudes would rather put their children on some type of medicine to calm them down instead of taking the time to train that child to be able to use what God has gifted him with.

We are no stranger to the results of not training up our children. We see it all around us. It is heart breaking, and very alarming. How will the next generation be? Look around at them.

Parents, we have a great God given responsibility to raise our children up unto the Lord.

Ultimately you can't control how they turn out. Your part is to raise them up according to the Bible. Encourage them, exhort them, edify them, and when needed rebuke them and love them with the rod.

This takes time and much effort. Thank God for His mercy and grace. To God be the glory.