

Ministering to Children and Parents

By Pastor Charles Storey

(BASED ON EPHESIANS 6:1-4)

Ephesian 6:1-4 AMP Version

“Children, obey your parents in The Lord [that is, accept their guidance and discipline and discipline as His representatives], for this is right [for obedience teaches wisdom and self-discipline],² Honor [esteem, value as precious] your father and your mother [and be respectful to them] – this is the first commandment with a promise—³ So that it may be well with you, and that you may have a long life on the earth. ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to the point of resentment with demands that are trivial or unreasonable or humiliating or abusive; nor by showing favoritism or indifference to any of them] but bring them up [tenderly, with loving kindness] in the discipline and instruction of The Lord”.

These verses contain essential concepts that are relevant and valuable for raising children in today’s culture. Let’s explore these major concepts and how they can be applied in raising children in the modern world.

Obedience and Honor

Ephesians 6:1-3 the concept of obedience and honor is emphasized in verses 1-3 where children are encouraged to obey and honor their parents. In today's culture, where individualism and self-centeredness are prevalent, teaching children the value of obedience and honoring authority is crucial. Parents can model respect and authority through consistent discipline and fair expectations, fostering a sense of responsibility and understanding of their role in the family and society. Fathers as positive role models (Ephesians:4)

This verse addresses fathers but this concept applies to parents in general as role models for their children. In today's culture with media and various influences shaping children's values, being a positive role model is essential. Parents can demonstrate godly character, empathy, and integrity, providing a strong moral foundation for their children to follow. By living out their faith and values, parents can lead by example and instill these virtues in their children.

Nurturing and training in the Lord (Ephesians 6:4)

This verse encourages parents to bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. In today's culture where secular influences are the norm. Parents can prioritize spiritual nurturing by

integrating faith into daily life. This can involve regular family devotions, prayer times, attending church meetings together, and engaging in discussions about biblical values and how they apply to real life situations. By grounding their children in the teachings of Christ parents help them develop a **resilient faith** that will stand the challenges of modern culture.

Balanced Discipline and Grace

Verse four also advises parents not to provoke their children to anger but to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. In today's culture a **balanced approach** to discipline and grace is vital. Parents can set clear boundaries and enforced consequences for disobedience, while also **demonstrating grace and forgiveness** when their children make mistakes. Creating a loving and nurturing environment, where children feel secure and supported allows them to learn and grow without being overwhelmed by fear or resentment.

Communication and Listening

Effective communication is crucial in raising children in any culture. In today's fast-paced world, where distractions abound, parents can prioritize active listening and open communications with their children. **Taking time to understand their thoughts, feelings, and concerns** fosters trust and

strengthens the parent child relationship. This open dialogue allows parents to address challenges, provide guidance, and support their children through various life experiences.

Adaptability and Flexibility

Today's culture is dynamic and constantly changing, and parenting requires adaptability. Parents must be open to learning and understanding the challenges their children face, such as technology, social media, and peer pressures. **By being flexible in their approach to parenting, parents can adapt their guidance and support to best meet their children's needs in an ever-evolving world.**

Summary

Ephesians 6:1-4 offers major concepts such as obedience, honor, positive role modeling, spiritual nurturing, balanced discipline and grace, communication and adaptability. These concepts are invaluable for parents raising children in the culture of today. By incorporating these principles into their parenting approach, parents can equip children with a strong moral foundation, a resilient faith, and the tools needed to navigate the complexities of the modern world with wisdom and discernment.

Discipline is a common thread-in several of the scriptures we are using in our "ministering to

children segment”. “Disciple” is a word that is essential to understanding discipline; student, learner. A working definition of disciple is one who submit to and model the actions of a learned or mature teacher.

So, discipline is the activities and processes the master, teacher or parent use to assist the student or child to mature into the likeness of the teacher or parent or disciple.

The process of disciplining children consists of the same activities necessary to make disciples, as exhibited by Jesus, as He disciplined the twelve. The following scriptures highlight the steps parents or teachers use to “reproduce in kind”.

1. **Teach and Instruct:** Proverbs 1:8 “My son, hear the instructions of your father, and do not reject the teaching of your mother”.

2. **Train in Righteousness:** Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go [teaching him to seek God’s wisdom and will for his abilities and talents], even when he is old, he will not depart from it”.

3. **Discipline with Love:** Hebrews 12:6 “For The Lord Disciplines and corrects Those Whom He Loves, And He Punishes Every Son Whom He Receives and Welcomes [To His Heart]”.

4. **Correct and Rebuke:** 2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is God -breathed [given by divine inspiration] and is profitable for instructions, for conviction [of sin] for correction [of error and restoration to obedience] for training in righteousness [learning to live in conformity to God’s will, both publicly and privately- behaving honorably with personal integrity and moral courage”.

5. **Encourage Obedience:** “Children, obey your parents in The Lord [that is accept their guidance and discipline as His representative], for this is right [for obedience teaches wisdom and self-discipline”.

6. **Teach Self-Control:** Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] is love [unselfish concern for others], joy, [inner], peace, patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law”.

7. **Lead by Example:** 1Peter 5:3 “not lording it over those assigned to your care [do not be arrogant or overbearing], but be examples [of Christian living] to the flock [set a pattern of integrity for your congregation”.

8. **Use God’s Word for Guidance:** Psalms 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”.

9. **Be Patient and Gentle:** Colossians 3:12 “So, as God’s own chosen people, who are holy [set apart, sanctified for His purpose] and well beloved [by God Himself] put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience [which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper]”.

10. **Pray for wisdom and guidance:** James 1:1-5; “If any of you lacks wisdom [to guide him through a decision or circumstance], he is to ask of [our benevolent] God, who gives to everyone generously and without rebuke or blame, and it will be given to him”.

These concepts which are all based on scriptural principles, the same principles used by disciples to reproduce in kind. These discipline scriptures can be used by parents to raise their children in the ways of the Lord. These scriptures when used as a guide by parents create a legacy of discipleship into the future.