

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT -- HOME AND CHURCH

BIBLE TEXT : Ephesians 6:1-4

LESSON 356 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways" (Proverbs 8:32).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Ephesians 6:1-4

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

² Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

³ That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

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

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Duties of Children and Parents

1. It is right for children to obey their parents in the Lord, Ephesians 6:1;

Proverbs 23:22

²² Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

Colossians 3:20

²⁰ Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

2. If they honour their father and their mother, there is a promise that they may live long and be happy, Ephesians 6:2, 3;

Exodus 20:12

¹² Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 5:16

¹⁶ Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Jeremiah 35:18-19

¹⁸ And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

¹⁹ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

Matthew 15:4

⁴ For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

2. Parents should be tender toward their children and bring them up in the fear of the Lord, Ephesians 6:4;

Deuteronomy 4:9

⁹ Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

Deuteronomy 11:19

¹⁹ And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Psalms 78:4-8

⁴ We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

⁵ For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

⁶ That the generation to come might know *them*, even the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

⁷ That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

⁸ And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Proverbs 19:18

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

Proverbs 22:6

⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 29:17

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

NOTES:

The Home

The Bible is quite explicit in regard to duties of parents to children and children to parents. The home is a divine institution. God ordained it to be a unit. The Lord saw in the beginning that it was not good for man to be alone, and He gave him a helpmate. We are told that children are a heritage of the Lord.

A great responsibility rests on parents. "As is the home, so is the nation." The home is the bulwark of the nation. Another old adage advises: "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." If our homes are broken and divided, we will soon have a broken nation. If we build up strong Christian homes, we shall have a nation no enemy can overthrow.

When the Lord, through Moses, made a covenant with the Children of Israel, they were to appear before Him – their captains, elders, officers, and all the men of Israel, their wives, little ones, and strangers (**Deuteronomy 29:9-12** ⁹ Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. ¹⁰ Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel, ¹¹ Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that *is* in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: ¹² That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:). The whole family was to be present to worship the Lord. When Joshua entered the land of Canaan, he built an altar at Mount Ebal and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. He wrote upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses in the presence of all the Children of Israel. Then he read all the words of the Law to the congregation of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers among them (**Joshua 8:30-35** ³⁰ Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal, ³¹ As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. ³² And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. ³³ And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. ³⁴ And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. ³⁵ There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them:). The Lord instituted worship for the whole family.

In the time of Christ, parents wanted to bring their children to Jesus that He might bless them. The disciples rebuked them and wanted to thrust them away, but Jesus said: "Suffer the little

children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:13-16 13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. 16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.) We see the teachings of Jesus following the pattern of the Law in bringing the children to the house of God to worship. How quietly and respectfully children should behave in the church! They should be made to feel, by example of their parents as well as by admonition, that they are truly in the presence of God.

Family Religion

Another institution that is blessed of the Lord is family worship. In the old-fashioned Christian homes, the parents gathered the family once and sometimes twice a day and read the Word and then offered prayer. What a blessing to be brought up in a home like that! We cannot believe that many infidels spring from homes where the love of God dwells and parents are faithful to teach their children of the Word of God.

Under the Law all the household was to hear and obey God's words: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).

It is the parents' duty continually to teach their children the Word of God at home. Many leave that for the Sunday School teacher or the preacher on Sunday. The Lord said of Abraham: "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" (Genesis 18:19). We can see here the confidence the Lord had in Abraham. Does He have that confidence in us today?

One of the evils of this generation is that children rule their parents and not parents the children. What a chain of criminals we have as a result of such actions! We know the judgment that fell on Eli, the priest, when his sons made themselves vile and he **restrained** them not. If the Lord has entrusted children to one's care, they deserve a normal amount of time and attention. They have an immortal soul and should not be allowed to grow up as waifs on the street with no instruction in the Word of God.

Duties of Parents to Children

"Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." That children are to be corrected and chastened in clearly taught in the Bible. The inbred sin that children are born with will lead them into many sinful and bad habits unless dutifully watched over and restrained by parents. It takes much wisdom and the love of God to guide children aright. Some parents nag at their children and slap them around, which is almost worse than no punishment at all. If parents would take their children into their confidence and explain with love and kindness the difference between right and wrong, they would give the child a clearer understanding why he is being punished. Some parents pray with their children before they inflict punishment, which is especially good after the child is old enough to understand clearly. In one home there was a boy

of twelve years who took a dislike to a woman who was living in the home, and would say cutting things to her. The mother would take him into the bedroom and tell him that she would not permit him to talk like that. Then they would pray. One day she called him into the bedroom and he exclaimed, "Mother, I haven't said a thing since the last time you prayed with me."

Public Schools

Our public schools seem to feel that they have inherited our children and want full sway in the way they should be instructed. They have marked out a curriculum to which Christian parents cannot submit in some ways. Dancing, one of the main evils of today, is taught in almost every school. The attire required for gymnastics is against the morals of our children. Some of the books from the libraries are not proper food for the minds of our young people. Some parents censor the books their children bring home from the library; and if they are not suitable for the children to read, they send them back. Every parent should do this. The minds of our children are moulded by what they are fed.

Simplicity of Faith

A child's spirit is very tender. If parents have never deceived a child, he will have utmost confidence in them. Children can be taught about Jesus as soon as they can lisp the Name. Their simple faith will often put parents to shame. Sick parents are sometimes healed through the prayer of a child. A child's spirit is easily wounded, and parents should be very careful how they speak and act before them. What a responsibility to train a child in the way he should go!

Disobedience to Parents

Paul, in writing to Timothy, says that in the last days children will be disobedient to parents. In how many homes today do you find obedient children? A few years ago, the devil planned one of the most clever tricks to ruin our children that has ever been thought of. He slipped into the minds of our educators the theory that children should be given their freedom to act, think, and do as they please, that they should not be restrained, but should grow up to be their natural selves. The nation is reaping the result of such sowing. Never was lawlessness so rampant. Many of our criminals today are teenagers.

We cannot disregard the Word of God and expect model children. The Bible says: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15). The instruction in our lesson is: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." What a pleasure to go into a home where children are taught to obey!

"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise)". That promise is, "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." We wonder how many parents have sat down and reasoned with their children and told them about this commandment and the wonderful promise of the Lord. It is easier for children to obey the Lord if they are taught obedience to parents at home. There are some outstanding instances in the Bible of children whose lives were exemplary: Isaac, Joseph, Samuel, Timothy, and others.

Children as Examples

Children are exhorted to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11).

Children have their part in the Gospel, and we have some striking examples of some whom the Lord used to tell about God

and bring joy and happiness to others. We think of that little captive maid who told that great general in the Syrian army how he could find healing in the land of Israel. He came and found not only healing for his body but salvation for his soul.

Then there was the little boy Samuel who was consecrated by his mother to give all his time to service in the house of God. He waited on the priest in the Temple, and grew up to be a true prophet of God, a mighty prevailer in prayer, and a soul winner.

There is also the boy who gave his lunch to Jesus, that He might feed the multitude. These things should encourage children to obey their parents and to obey the Lord.

Think of children in that throng who strewed branches of palm trees in the way when Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. Hear their childish voices crying out: "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 21:9).

Today we are expecting Jesus to come again. How happy will be those children who, because of purity of life, will hear the trumpet sound, and will cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh!"

QUESTIONS

1. Quote passages of Scripture to show that children should obey their parents.
2. What are some of the results of children's disobedience to parents?
3. Repeat the first commandment with promise.
4. Give in your own words Moses' instructions to parents when and where to teach the Word.
5. Quote Jesus' words in regard to children coming to Him.
6. Name some Bible men who commanded well their household.