

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
"Parents and Children"
Ephesians 6:1-4

INTRODUCTION

1. It is the filling with the Spirit which provides the dynamic for Christian homes (5:18).
2. The role of a wife is explicitly submission in an orderly home arrangement (5:22-24). Husbands are emphatically taught to love decisively unto death (5:25-33).
3. With the blessing of God (Psa. 127, 128), children also relate to the filling of the Spirit. Christian homes should be models of God's grace and glory.

1. CHILDREN TOWARD PARENTS vv. 1-3

a. Obey v. 1

1) Meaning The verb implies a readiness to hear. It has the sense of obeying orders. The wife has an equality and union which gives another quality to her husband relationship. Children are expected to give obedience to both parents.

2) Manner "In the Lord" connotes a Christian duty. A certain sacredness is given to the obedience rendered by the children. Here is a higher service than if rendered from fear or natural affection.

3) Message The very nature of the relationship of children and parents makes the injunction proper. It is a thing in itself right.

b. Honor vv. 2, 3

1) Defined While obedience is duty, honor is the disposition of which the obedience is born. That a wife is not servile in the home is shown that she is to be honored.

2) Described This is the first commandment with promise. "First" has sense of chief or primary and this means first in importance among those relating to social duties annexed with a promise.

3) Detailed In the O.T. there is specific prosperity and longevity of life for Israel (Ex. 20:12). It is here expanded for all obedient children. Prosperity and long life are promised for filial obedience.

2. PARENTS TOWARD CHILDREN v. 4.

Note: The "father" is used as representative of parental responsibility. Without slight toward the

mother. As head the father has a specific obligation. The word is used of both parents in Hebrews 11:23.

a. Negatively

Here is the common sin of fathers. They are not to excite the bad passions of their children by severity, injustice, partiality, or any unreasonable exercise of authority. No selfish gratification is to be linked with authority. The word "provoke" can be rendered "irritate" or exasperate (cf. Col. 3:21, Rom. 10:19).

b. Positively

"Bring up" means to educate or develop all one's powers (cf. Prov. 23:24; Eph. 5:29). Character development is essential. The sphere in which all of this is to take place is given: 1) Nurture and 2) admonition of the Lord. The former denotes all the wholesome restraints of a wise early education. It was used by the Greeks of the general education of a child. The latter term contains the ideas of correction and warning, both of which parents owe to their children. The phrase "of the Lord" shows that the total must proceed from the Lord. It is the Lord doing His work through the parents. It is Christian training.

CONCLUSION The interfacing of children and parents is critical (Ps. 103:13). A mother plays a major role (Prov. 29:15). Training is important (Prov. 22:6). Samuel was taught and trained (1 Sam. 1, 3), but Eli failed with his boys (1 Sam. 2:12, 23, 24, 3:13).

My little boy came to me one day
Placed his tiny hand in mine and said;
"Daddy, what is God like?"
And I said, "God is like love and sunshine,
And all the good things you know."
He smiled into my eyes and said:
"Then, daddy, God must be just like you."
I remembered how Jesus said that "God is
like a father."
And I had to bow my head in shame that I,
a father, was so unlike God.