

Instructions to children and parents 10/31/2021

1. We continue in our study of Colossians as we continue to unfold the second great theme of the book; the sanctification of the saints. Most recently we started examining specific areas... or relationships ... in which this sanctification is exercised. Over the last two weeks we looked at the relationship between husband and wife and what the sanctified life looks like in the context of that relationship.
 - a. Divinely designed hierarchy
 - i. Husband has authority; but in the context of his responsibility
 1. Wives are to joyfully submit to that authority, giving honor/respect to the husband as the one who bears responsibility
 2. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church
 - a. It shows how that authority and responsibility is to be exercised; for the good of the one loved, as one receiving care and nurture.
 - ii. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church
 - a. It shows how that authority and responsibility is to be exercised; for the good of the one loved, as one receiving care and nurture.
 - b. We looked at the provision God has made to prevent and correct perversions of this appointed hierarchy
 - i. Biblical instruction on selecting a spouse; the qualities that should be desired
 - ii. Admonitions against being unequally yoked; not joining the believing with the unbelieving
 - a. 2 Cor 6:14 Gary's concerns
 - i. The context is not specifically for marital relationships; rather all spiritual partnerships.
 - ii. I hope I did not leave the impression that we are to have no contact with unbelievers... that is patently not the case. We are to have no partnership... no joining of purpose and identity. How can light and darkness have the same purpose? Desire the same end result? Have
 - iii. General discipline and correction that comes through the body of Christ; through intimate involvement with each other
 - iv. Formal discipline where the unrepentant professed believer is put out of the church and considered as an unbeliever
2. This week we will be looking at another hierarchical relationship... that between parent and child... and the instructions given to each. So, two weeks ago I felt the weight of teaching on the relationship between husbands and wives with my wife in the room...

This week I am teaching on the relationship between parent and child with my son in the room. Pray for me...

3. We saw over the last few weeks that the divine design for marriage has been, and continues to be, under attack in our culture. It is no different when we examine God's design for parent child-relationships
 - a. There is both a stated and unstated belief in our culture that children are equal (or superior) than adults in their levels of understanding and wisdom.
 - i. Summerhill; "At Summerhill all lessons are optional, and pupils are free to choose what to do with their time. Neill founded Summerhill with the belief that "the function of a child is to live his own life—not the life that his anxious parents think he should live, not a life according to the purpose of an educator who thinks he knows best."
 - ii. In the media
 1. Parents depicted as slow... out of it. It's the kids that have to get stuff done...save the day. The movie "ET"
 - iii. "Professionals"
 1. "The new professional experts maintained that parents and children were equals, families should be democratic, and parents should be willing to negotiate any conflict with their kids. The result: a surfeit of children who defy authority, are openly disrespectful, argue, have no respect for adult-child boundaries, and are ruled by the tyranny of their undisciplined emotions." John Rosemond, Psychologist
4. The texts we will be looking at this morning paint a very different picture...
 - a. Col 3:20,21 *"Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart."*
 - b. Eph 6:1ff. *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3 SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*
 - i. "Children" teknon; basic word for offspring.
 - ii. Does not speak specifically to age; what age is in mind?
 1. Context is "under authority" and "in the household" A child of any age, while living under the roof of his or her parents, are also under their authority. There is a responsibility to obey

- a. One would hope the instructions and expectations from the parents would be different for a 5 yr old and a 25 year old!
- 2. "In all things"
 - a. The sole exception would be in things that would oppose the will and teachings of God
 - i. Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."*
 - 1. Obedience to god takes precedence over obedience to man
 - a. Acts 5:28ff. *"The high priest questioned them, 28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."*
- 3. Why? (Col) "for this is well pleasing to the Lord" Or (Eph) "for this is right"
 - a. Not based upon "quality parentage" or parental wisdom
 - b. Based upon an understanding that God has placed them in authority.
 - i. It does, however, come with the promise of blessing; "SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH" Why might that be?
 - 1. Wisdom and maturity comes through submission and learning to yield
 - 2. Godly behavior often leads to success in life
 - iii. In contrast
 - 1. 2 Tim 3:1ff. *"But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control,*

brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”

- a. “disobedient to parents” makes this list. It’s serious!
2. Even more disconcerting; Prov 30:11ff *“There is a kind of man who curses his father And does not bless his mother. 12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes, Yet is not washed from his filthiness. 13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes! And his eyelids are raised in arrogance. 14 There is a kind of man whose teeth are like swords And his jaw teeth like knives, To devour the afflicted from the earth And the needy from among men.”*
 - a. This is not how God has designed it to be
 - i. Ps 127:3ff. *“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth. 5 How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them”*
 - ii. Prov 6:20ff *“My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother; 21 Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. 22 When you walk about, they will guide you; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you. 23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life”*
 - c. Now we go back and look at instruction to parents. Col 3:21 *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.”*
 - d. Eph 6:4 *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”*
 - i. “Fathers”; better translated in the plural, “parents”
 - ii. “exasperate”; “stir up”, not automatically negative. Only used twice
 - iii. “Provoke to anger”; again, only used twice, here and in Rom 10 where Israel is moved to anger over the inclusion of the Gentiles in the promise.
 1. What, then, is in mind here?
 - a. Unfairness
 - b. Being untrustworthy
 - c. The thought or reality of being unloved; undervalued

- i. Actions and attitudes that cause the child to “lose heart”
Athumeo; to be disheartened, dispirited, broken in spirit
 - 1. All of the above, plus being...
 - 2. Overly critical
 - 3. Untrusting/controlling
 - a. Can come from good, but unwise, motives; wanting to keep them safe
 - 4. Unencouraging/discouraging
 - a. Personal example
 - 5. Unaffectionate (c-1c above)
 - 6. Unclear or changing standards (c-1b above)
 - 7. Favoritism (c-1a above)
 - 8. Those things specific to the child
 - a. Their interests and passions
 - b. Their “calling”
 - c. Their talents
- 2. The relationship between parent and child is of great value and importance in God’s design
 - a. Already touched upon this truth above. It is to be a great blessing to both parties
 - b. It is to be the way that God’s truth is communicated to the next generation
 - i. Prov 22:6 *“Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*
 - ii. Deut 6:4 *“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”*
 - c. God is dishonored when it breaks down, and He desires and seeks to restore it.
 - i. Malachi addresses a rebellious nation whose love has grown cold toward the God who called and delivered

them. They are disobedient and rebellious. Their religion is a hollow shell at best, and a perversion at worst. Included in their national sin is the breakdown of familial love and care. Listen to how he closes his prophetic message...

ii. Mal 4:4ff *“Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. 5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.”*

1. Of all the things that God could have had Malachi end with, he ends with a call for the restoration of “the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers”
 - a. The family is designed to protect the hearts and faith of His people
 - i. “throughout your generations” repeated over and over again

Closing thoughts

Ps 78:4ff. *“We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done. 5 For He established a testimony in Jacob And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers That they should teach them to their children, 6 That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children, 7 That they should put their confidence in God And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments, 8 And not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not prepare its heart And whose spirit was not faithful to God.”*

This is true of parents to their children. It is equally true in the body of Christ. We should all make it our mission to encourage each other to *“put their confidence in God And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments, 8 And not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not prepare its heart And whose spirit was not faithful to God.”* Let us pray