

BUILDING A GODLY HOME

4. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS

I.

Introduction

In the past I spoke on the subject of home. I said that God has His own recipe for godly home that we need to follow. The ingredients it calls for are:

Eph 5:1 ¶ Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Eph 6:1 ¶ Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

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

Today I would like to continue to speak on the subject of godly home and deal in detail with the forth ingredient:

II.

Building a godly home

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

Each of us was born. Each of us is a child of his/her parents. This commandment is given to children, any children, even to adult children.

Pr 23:22 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

When our parents are old and we are ourselves are adults, it does not mean that we should quit obeying them in the Lord.

God gave this commandment as one of the ten commandments of the OT, which means that it is very important:

Ex 20:12 ¶ Honour thy father and thy mother...

One can honour his parents only if he/she obeys them in the Lord. If a child does on the outside what parents tell him, but with a bad attitude inside, then he/she is not obeying them in the Lord. Beside it, obeying must be in harmony with God's will, in order to be obedience in the Lord. In other words, children are not commanded by God to obey their parents in everything even if it goes against God's will. For instance Jonathan did not obey his father, king Saul who plotted to kill David and Jonathan did what was right with God:

1Sa 19:1 ¶ Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David;

2 but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted greatly in David. (19:2) So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide.

Take note what kind of commandments God put in the same group of ten commandments with honor your father and mother:

1st: Ex 20:3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2nd: Ex 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Ex 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

3rd: Ex 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4th: Ex 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

5th: Ex 20:12 ¶ Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

6th: Ex 20:13 Thou shalt not kill.

7th: Ex 20:14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8th: Ex 20:15 Thou shalt not steal.

9th: Ex 20:16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10th: Ex 20:17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

This was sort of a constitution of God's OT Laws. Honour your father and mother is one of them.

Now, take note position of this commandment (honour thy father and thy mother...) among the ten commandments. While the first four commandments dealt with man's relationship to God under OT, the last six commandments dealt with man's relationship to other humans under OT. Remember how Jesus summed up the ten commandments in to two greatest commandments?:

Mt 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Now, our commandment honour your father and mother is the first commandment in the second group of the ten commandments that Jesus summed up in love your neighbour as yourself.

Not only it is the first commandment in the second group, it is also the first commandment with promise:

Ex 20:12 ¶ Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

De 5:16 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.

Throughout their history Israelites often did not honor God and did not honor their parents and many of them died by hands of their enemies and lost the promised land and were never able to retrieve

it in full extent.

Except of 4th commandment regarding sabbath, all other commandments are incorporated in the NT and bind us today, including honor your father and mother and promise connected to it:

Eph 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

Eph 6:3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Today the promise is not related to a promised land on the earth, but simply to life on earth. How many children died untimely, because they did not obey their parents? Too many! How many children did not obey their parents and ruined their life with addiction to drugs, alcohol, gambling etc. Too many!

Why is it important for children to honor father and mother? Because they gave life to them. They brought their children in to this world. God gave them authority over their children and responsibilities to take care of them physically and spiritually, regardless if the parents realize it or not. If parents do not believe in God, do not study His Scriptures to find out their responsibilities, then they cannot bring their children up to be physically and spiritually balanced children. Such children have deficiency in their spiritual development. There is a spiritual hole in them striving to be filled up with something. Thanks to be to God that in His providence we had an opportunity to fill up that spiritual hole with faith in true God and His Word. Too many people fill it up with philosophies or man-made religions. However, even to those of parents who are not spiritually minded apply the same general principles of life under the sun, certain common rules, or common wisdom, common sense, that one can observe throughout years if not from the Word of God, then from his own life or lives of other people, especially from mistakes for which one paid a heavy price. Therefore even most of parents who are not spiritually minded are equipped with certain measure of this common sense that is lacking in their children and they can clearly foresee the dangers to children's well being or even to their life on this earth. When children fail to obey their rules based on this common sense, they often end up ruined, crippled or even dead.

We need to be different kind of parents, parents who are spiritually minded and who want to bring up spiritually minded children. Parents who learn about their God given authority and responsibilities to their children directly from God's Word. The purpose is for children to realize that by obeying our authority they obey God who gave this authority to parents. The goal is for children to see our heavenly Father reflected in us as parents. Heavenly Father who loves His children, takes care of them and is merciful to their shortcomings. Heavenly Father to whom they will want to submit themselves one day.

In other words, it is our task as parents to teach our children to obey us in the Lord, for this is right. How do we do that with 1 or 3 years old? They do not understand concept of God or moral responsibility to obey their parents. They do not have any long term goals. All they can see now are their immediate needs – they want to eat, drink, play, go outside, etc. and they have very strong desires to satisfy these needs regardless what their parents tell them or what other people think of them. Should we require anything of them since they do not understand our reasons for our instructions. Should we ignore their self-centeredness, disobedience, lack of self-control, because because they “do not understand”? If we do so, how in the world they will ever obey us as parents in the Lord? If the child is self-centered, disobedient and lacking self-control at age of 1 year, he/she will be twice as worse at age of 3 years and tripple as worse at age of 6 years. If parents do not require anything of their children at age of 1 year since they “do not understand” and mommy and daddy spoon-feed their little babies, do

all cleaning up the toys and other messes, drop everything they do when their babies make dissatisfied grunt, children will get use to it, become lazy, complacent with this situation, by the age of 3 years they will take it for granted and by the age of 6 years they will believe it is their prerogative to be little kings and their mommy and daddy to be their personal slaves.

No, this way they will never learn to obey their parents in the Lord. So what to do? They do not understand our reasons, but we cannot wait till they will understand them, for it will be too late. The bad foundation will be laid that will greatly influence their life.

The answer to this question is training. Even a monkey can be trained. Will it ever understand reasons of its trainer? No. If monkeys, dogs, pigs, horses, tigers etc. can be trained without understanding human reasons, why cannot a human being. Have you seen a dog that obeys his master' commands? Have you seen a dog on who his master yells his commands while the dog cheerfully ignores him? What is the difference? Training. Now, have you seen a child that obeys his parent's command? Have you seen a child on who his parent yells his commands while the child cheerfully ignores him? What is the difference? Training.

III. Conclusion

What we need to do is to train up our children in the Lord for it is right. They do not understand our reasons? It does not matter. Important is that we understand our reasons, fulfill our God given responsibilities to train up our children to obey us in the Lord:

Pr 22:6 ¶ Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
{Train...: or, Catechise} {in...: Heb. in his way}

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