

- I) **V4 INTRO:** And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the
 - a) **TODAY:** We conclude our series by sharing on raising our children to desire to serve Jesus
 - 1) Ps 127:3-5 Behold, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

- II) **LIFE:** Has often been described as a race that we are running
 - a) Some view the race as a sprint, and exert all of their energy over a short time
 - 1) Others consider it more of a marathon
 - 2) Over time, I have come to believe it is more like a *relay race*, won by a successful exchange

- III) **WE HAVE BEEN:** Handed the baton of faith in Jesus from faithful witnesses who shared with us
 - a) These faithful believers guarded the message of faith and handed off to us
 - 1) **NOW:** We have the responsibility of taking this message and sharing it with others
 - 2) We parents are to hand the baton of faith to our children, and to our children's children
 - 3) Dt 4:9 Take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, *lest you forget* the things your eyes have seen, and lest they *depart from your heart* all the days of your life. And *teach them* to your children and your *grandchildren*

- IV) **OBVIOUSLY:** Bringing children to faith in Christ is of utmost importance
 - a) It is a spiritual task that all of us must work very hard at and be fully dedicated to
 - 1) We need to *encourage* our children to faith in Jesus: *too many discourage it*
 - 2) Mk 9:42 Whoever shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he was cast into the sea.
 - 2) **THERE IS:** No guarantee of success, which serves as a powerful incentive to do our best

- V) **SOME SAY:** We will let our children decide *what faith* if any they will practice when they are older
 - a) This is unwise because we are the *greatest constant influence* in their lives
 - 1) We need to exert as much godly influence as we possibly can, over a lifetime

- VI) **CHILDREN:** Are growing up under incredible pressure to conform to the present age
 - a) **FACT:** Everything about this world system works against children serving the Lord
 - 1) 1 Jn 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world --the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does --comes not from the Father but from the world.

- VII) **OUR CHILDREN:** Are under daily influences that entice them away from following the Lord
 - a) **PEER PRESSURE:** Desiring to fit in
 - b) **SEX:** When they should have intercourse, not whether they should or should not (Prop 73)
 - c) **ALCOHOL/DRUGS**
 - d) **VIOLENCE**
 - e) **MATERIALISM:** Lying to get what you want, no matter if it is called "misspoken"
 - f) **ENTERTAINMENT**
 - g) **EXTERIOR BEAUTY, RELIGIOUS APATHY:**

- VIII) **KEY:** Their entire early years are guided by us whether we realize it or not
 - a) **WE CONSTANTLY TEACH THEM:** Whether we realize it or not simply by the way we live

- I) **WITH THIS IN MIND:** Paul writes *Fathers*, do not provoke your children to wrath but *bring them up*
 - a) **POINT:** Love your children, and treat them with kindness and gentleness
 - 1) **THE FACT IS:** Cruel parents generally have bad children
 - 2) Godly parents *correct* their children with an affectionate concern, not anger

- II) **NOTICE:** We are to *bring up* our children in the *training* and the *admonition* of the Lord
 - a) **BRING UP:** This speaks of nourishing our children
 - 1) We *nourish* our children through training and admonition
 - 2) **TRAINING:** Instruction, which aims at increasing virtue (moral excellence)
 - 3) **ADMONITION:** Speaks of appealing to their understanding or exhorting them

- III) **POINT:** Nourish and discipline them in the love of Jesus, using His word as your guideline
 - a) **THOUGHT:** Our instructions and examples are to encourage them to godly lives

- IV) **KEY:** We must remember that faith in Jesus is not *natural* for them
 - a) They are born with a *nature in rebellion* to God, and a child left unattended will ruin their life
 - 1) Ps 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
 - 2) Pr 29:15 The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child *left to himself* brings shame to his mother

- V) **V4 THIS IS WHY:** We parents are commanded to *raise* our children *in the Lord*
 - a) **OBVIOUSLY:** It is our responsibility to *train up* our children in the things of Jesus
 - 1) It is not the job of the church, school, friends, childcare providers or members of our family
 - 2) **STILL:** We are grateful for a community that shares our values and encourages our children

- VI) **TO SUCCEED:** We must adopt the values of the Kingdom and not of the World
 - a) We need to establish proper priorities and to hold fast consistently to them over a lifetime

- VII) **SADLY:** An alarming number of children are being born to parents who are unmarried
 - a) This is producing an epidemic of *fatherless* children: 80% in some communities
 - 1) My heart goes out to the single parents attempting to raise these children without support
 - 2) Pr 30:11-12 There is a generation that curses its father, and does not bless its mother. There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, yet is not washed from its filthiness.
 - 3) I believe we are living in a time when this generation is recognizable

- VIII) **MANY OF THESE CHILDREN:** Are ending up neglected physically and emotionally abandoned
 - a) Some who are bearing them are not raising them, and they are left in unstable circumstances
 - 1) I am completely convinced this is at the root of the rebellion we see in many children today

- IX) **V4 PAUL'S COMMAND:** *Bring them up* in the *training* and *admonition* of the Lord
 - a) **THOUGHT:** A parent is to channel, or to direct: Not break the spirit but direct or to shape it
 - 1) Pr 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it
 - 2) **TRAIN:** Provoke them to go in a direction that is conformed to their temperament and gifts

- X) **HEBREW MIDWIVES:** Applied date honey to the lips of newborns encouraging a nursing reflex
 - a) **IN THE JEWISH HOME:** The mother would minister to her infant while she was nursing
 - 1) She would pray, sing songs, and quote simple bible verses to the baby as she did so

- I) **WHEN:** The child began to speak *the father* took over their training
 - a) The father taught the child prayers, scripture, and basic doctrine
 - 1) Is 38:19 *The father* shall make known Your truth to the children

- II) **KEY:** This produced a Worldview founded on God's Word, establishing clear understanding
 - a) Pr 4:11-13 I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble. Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.

- III) **WHAT CAN WE DO:** To encourage our children to follow the Lord
 - a) Dt 6 contains 4 specific ways to bring your kids to faith in Christ
 - 1) V4: We must have a saving faith in Christ, our unique God
 - 2) V5: We must be openly, and totally committed to Him, and
 - 3) V6-8: We must be committed to evangelizing our kids
 - 4) V9: We must build our homes into a sanctuary

- IV) **V4-9 HEAR O ISRAEL:** The Lord our God the Lord is One. You shall love the Lord *your God* with
 - a) V4-5 **FIRST:** You shall love the Lord *your God*
 - 1) We must be saved, ourselves: Do not fall into the trap of outward religion!
 - 2) We cannot give what we ourselves do not first possess

- V) **FACT:** Our children require effort and prayerful Spiritual guidance: *If not*, they go their own way
 - a) **THE RESULT:** They will never live productive, Christian lives
 - 1) Pr 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

- VI) **KEY:** Parents need to adopt the values of the Kingdom, not the World
 - a) We need to establish proper priorities for our own lives, and live these priorities openly
 - 1) **TRAGICALLY:** Because we think things can make us happy, we try to make kids happy this way
 - 2) Mk 6:33 See first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be...
 - 3) Kids don't want only things: They want us, they want our time and attention

- VII) **V5 SECOND:** We must be openly and sincerely committed to Him
 - a) Heart: Life's priorities
 - b) Soul: Spiritual hunger
 - c) Might: Physical labors, all centered on pleasing God

- VIII) **RESULT:** This zeal produces environment where God is taken seriously, and faith can be nurtured
 - a) We must communicate a personal faith, not just a conceptual belief
 - 1) **DO YOUR CHILDREN BELIEVE YOU REALLY LOVE GOD?** How do they know?

- IX) **KEY:** It is not enough to simply supply physical comfort, food on the table
 - a) **FACT:** We must provide spiritually for our families, our kids
 - 1) Our *lives* are their Bible: Joseph: I'm walking in your footsteps

- X) **V6-8 THIRD:** Be totally committed to evangelizing your kids
 - a) Though I may be used to save others, my family is my first mission field
 - 1) This requires *time, sacrifice, and re-education* in God's ways

- I) **REMEMBER: We display our faith through daily life, not orchestrated moments**
 - a) Do you ever visit with them, laugh with them, cry with them?
 - 1) Walks, bedtime prayers, morning hugs and love, home devotions, prayer, simple conversations that bring life to scripture, and God's purposes for our lives.

- II) **FINALLY, FOURTH: God's word must guard your home**
 - a) Transform your home into a sanctuary: Be careful what you let in through the screen, radio, printed page, or who you let in to your home.
 - 1) Josh 24:15 If it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for *me and my house*, we will serve the LORD

- III) **TIME FLIES QUICKER THAN YOU MAY THINK**

POEM FOR MY GROWN UP SON: Given to me many years ago by a mom in our fellowship

My hands were busy through the day
I didn't have much time to play
The little games you asked me to
I didn't have much time for you

I'd wash your clothes, I'd sew and cook, but when you'd bring your picture book
And ask me please to share your fun I'd say ""a little later, son"

I'd tuck you in all safe at night And hear your prayers, turn out the light
Then tiptoe softly to the door...I wish I'd stayed a minute more

For life is short, the years rush past A little boy grows up so fast

No longer is he at your side, his precious secrets to confide
The picture books are put away, there are no longer games to play
No goodnight kiss, no prayers to hear—that belongs to yesteryear

My hands, once busy now are still The days are long and hard to fill
I wish I could go back and do
The little things you asked me to...