**Children and Parents in the Lord**

*Ephesians 6:1-4*

**Introduction**

1. Context:
   1. In Christ – **Ephesians 2:6** – heavenly places (spiritual)
   2. Walking worthy – **Ephesians 4:1, 20-24** – through learning Christ, renewing mind.
   3. Finding the Lord’s will – **Ephesians 5:8, 10, 17-18** – then submitting to it. **(cf. Colossians 3:17** – parallel)
   4. Life “in the Lord,” “in Christ,” as the new man in relationships – **Ephesians 5:21-6:9**
2. The home is not left to decide for itself how to function any more than the church is. Families have no right to pick and choose which scriptural principles to implement and adhere to, and which to ignore.
3. These inspired commands concerning children and parents are as much a “salvation issue” as the unity of Spirit in the church (**4:1-16**), putting off the old man and putting on the new (**4:17-32**), walking in love (**5:1-7**), walking in light (**5:8-14**), walking in wisdom (**5:15-21**).
4. As with all of God’s word, submitting to and applying these matters will lead to immense blessing – flourishing homes, which will lead to a flourishing church.
5. Children
6. The Command **(v. 1)**
   1. ***“in the Lord”*** modifies ***“obey”*** (not “parents”) – this a part of your obligation to Christ (**cf. Colossians 3:17, 20**). (Sphere in which this command is observed to the Lord.)
      1. Children old enough to be Christians.
      2. In the home – **cf. 1 Timothy 3:4-5** (elders’ qualifications)
   2. ***“for this is right”*** – i.e. what righteousness dictates – not merely fitting, but righteous, obligatory, required by God’s law.
      1. Your obedience or disobedience to parents cannot be separated from the same to God.
      2. When you obey or disobey, you do it “to the Lord.”
   3. ***“obey”*** – *hypakouō* – *hypo* (under), *akouō* (to hear) – “It speaks of the one hearing as being under the authority of someone else. Thus, the verb comes to mean, ‘to hearken to a command, to obey, to be obedient to, submit to.’" (Wuest Word Studies, Ephesians 6:1-4)
      1. Intentional hearing for the carrying out and adhering to a command.
      2. **Proverbs 1:8** – hear and not forsake.
      3. **Proverbs 6:20** – keep and not forsake.
   4. The gravity of the command:
      1. **Deuteronomy 21:18-21** – God’s commands concerning rebellious children manifests His disgust for such behavior.
      2. **Proverbs 30:17** – Graphic imagery notes the severity of the offense.
7. The Disposition **(v. 2)**
   1. Obedience is the command, and so is honor, but the latter represents the deeper significance of the obedience – the disposition which leads naturally to it.
   2. Quoting **Exodus 20:12** – 5th commandment.
   3. *“honor”* – *timaō* – “to estimate, to fix the value” (Thayer); “to show high regard for” (BDAG)
      1. Not obedience with reservation and irritated complaint, but through reverence and regarded value for parents, their wisdom, and the position they have been given by God.
      2. **Proverbs 1:8-9** – speaks of value, and help they are in life.
      3. **Proverbs 6:20-23** – shows value held, and practical benefit.
   4. Continues through life (manifests in different ways) – **1 Timothy 5:3-4; Matthew 15:4-6** – illustrative of gratitude in reflection and increased sense of value.
      1. Key – recognize it in childhood to reap God’s intended benefits rather than look back with regret knowing what could have been avoided, and what could have been gained by giving them their due honor.
8. The Promise **(v. 3)**
   1. ***“the first commandment with promise”***
      1. 2nd have promise attached? – **Exodus 20:4, 6**
      2. ***“the”*** – would narrow to one specifically, namely, the 5th
         1. Definite article not there.
         2. ***“which is A first commandment with promise”***
      3. First – **Matthew 22:36, 38** – not in order, but “foremost”
      4. ***“which is A FOREMOST commandment with promise”*** – stressing its importance and beneficial value for children.
   2. Wellness and long life – **Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16**
      1. Note: “land” to “earth” adaptation from specific circumstances with Israel to a generic application.
      2. A general rule – exceptions to rules exist always (**cf. Psalm 73:1-3** – as Asaph learned).
      3. Certainly, immediate and specific considerations – **Proverbs 1:10-19** (consenting with sinners in avarice and bloodshed); **Proverbs 23:31-32; 31:4-5** (alcohol)
      4. General wisdom to take, keep, and apply in all circumstances – **Proverbs 3:13-18; 7:1-5**
         1. **Cultivates self-control, sacrifice, self-respect, respect for others, diligence, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, godliness, etc.**
         2. Ultimately, the fear of the Lord – **Proverbs 1:7; 1 Timothy 4:8** (profitable)
   3. NOTE: The consideration of the original context of the promise, and that same promise linked with faithfulness to God manifests the gravity of the parents’ role, and the transition from the child’s faithfulness to parents to faithfulness to God.
      1. **Exodus 20:12** – ***“days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you”*** – promised land of Canaan.
      2. **Deuteronomy 5:16, 33** – honor parents, obey God – live long and prosper in the land.
         1. 10 Commandments common division – 1-4 (vertical, w/ God), 5-10 (horizontal, w/ man)
         2. 5th – bridges the two – parents being representatives of God to children from earliest moments.
         3. **Cf. Leviticus 19:1-3** – holy as God, revere parents, keep Sabbaths (and thus, honor God).
9. Parents
10. That the parents play an important role is evident in the fact that they are the channel through which God is made known to the children – **Deuteronomy 6:4-7**
11. The Deterrent **(v. 4a)**
    1. Where there are positions of authority there is potential for abuse of said authority, thus, deterrents against it – husbands (**cf. 1 Peter 3:7**), masters (**cf. Ephesians 6:9**), elders (**cf. 1 Peter 5:2-3**).
    2. Provoke to wrath – **cf. Colossians 3:21** – lest they lose heart – *athymeōs* – *a*, negative, *thumos,* “spirit, courage,” (VINE); “to become disheartened to the extent of losing motivation” (BDAG)
       1. Arbitrary and/or inconsistent commands and consequences.
       2. Unreasonably harsh and severe treatment.
       3. Rash reacting from emotions.
       4. Unrealistic expectations.
       5. Lacking praise and tenderness.
       6. Poor communication.
       7. Saying but not doing – no example; hypocrisy.
    3. Authority as a parent is for the child’s good:
       1. ***“but bring them up” – “but nurture them” (ASV)***
       2. *ektrephō* (2x) – **Ephesians 5:29** – husband “nourishes” wife as his own flesh.
          1. Provides and caress for her to aid her in living to full potential of role.
       3. Commands, discipline, etc. out of love to provide for their success in following God.
       4. Encouragement – “Luther used to say: ‘Spare the rod and spoil the child – that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple to give him when he has done well.’” (New Daily Study Bible, Barclay, William, Ephesians 6:1-4)
12. The Command **(v. 4b)**
    1. ***“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6).***
    2. **What liberty does a parent have with this?** Some take more than is allotted (“We don’t believe in parenting in that way…,” “We have adapted a different, more modern philosophy of parenting…”)
       1. ***“of the Lord”*** – i.e. that which is dictated by His authority.
       2. **Language here is specific, and outlines the Divine and immutable standard of rearing children.**
    3. Translations – *“chastening and admonition” (ASV); “discipline and instruction” (ESV, NASB); “nurture and admonition” (KJV); “instruction and admonition” (YLT)*
    4. **Training** – paideia
       1. “So Plato: “Education (παιδεία) is the constraining and directing of youth toward that right reason which the law affirms, and which the experience of the best of our elders has agreed to be truly right” (“Laws,” 659)” (Vincent’s Word Studies)
       2. “Παιδεία [paideia] is one among the many words, into which revealed religion has put a deeper meaning than it knew of, till this took possession of it; the new wine by a wondrous process making new even the old vessel into which it was poured.” (Synonyms of the New Testament, R.C. Trench)
          1. By Biblical principles – **Proverbs 22:15** – not only education, but the reinforcementorporal discipline.
          2. “all effectual instruction…includes and implies chastening, or, as we are accustomed to say, out of a sense of the same truth, ‘correction.’” (ibid.)
       3. **Paideia** – **Hebrews 12:5-7, 11** – chastening, scourges, painful – parallels God’s with ***“human fathers” (v. 9***) in a positive way – God sanctioned/appointed.
       4. Not just education, but corresponding corporal corrective punishment. (Spanking)
          1. Vital in training – education without this correction is not training.
          2. **Cf. Judges 8:16** (Gideon) – whatever could this mean if such is not so? (Thorns and briers contained information to teach them with? NO.)
    5. **Admonition** – nouthesia – lit., “a putting in mind” (nous, “mind,” tithemi, “to put”). (VINE)
       1. “it is the training by word—by the word of encouragement, when this is sufficient, but also by that of remonstrance, of reproof, of blame, where these may be required; as set over against the training by act and by discipline, which is παιδεία [paideia].” (Synonyms of the New Testament, R.C. Trench)
       2. Not like Eli – **1 Samuel 2:24; 3:13**
          1. ***“he did not restrain them”*** (NKJV fn, “rebuke”)
          2. LXX – *noutheteō* – from same root as *nouthesia*.
    6. Training and admonition of the Lord? (not culture, opinion, pop-psychology, etc.)
       1. Teaching – **Deuteronomy 6:6-9**
       2. **Proverbs 13:24** – physical discipline out of love.
       3. **Proverbs 19:18** – physical discipline while there is time, and for their future.
       4. **Proverbs 22:15** – physical discipline to purge foolishness.
       5. **Proverbs 23:13-14** – physical discipline with the understanding that it will not ruin the child but save the child.
       6. **Proverbs 29:15** – physical discipline lest the child be abandoned (left to himself) leading to shame.

**Conclusion**

1. “In the Lord” are specific patterns for each aspect of our lives. We must hold them fast (**cf. 2 Timothy 1:13**)
2. **It is not given to us to decide how the home is to function, but only whether we will obey.**
3. If we choose God’s way, we will only be blessed.