

Fathers' Day 2017
Ephesians 6:4

❖ **The *negative* command.**

The word "fathers" could be translated as "parents." Paul used a different word in (1). Both father and mother are responsible before God in the raising of children. Paul's emphasis here is on the fathers.

➤ The Apostle Paul's focus is upon **anger**.

He could have listed the things which cause anger in them. Instead Paul is concerned that we understand the underlying cause. In the original language the command is one compound word, *parorgizo* (par-org-id-zo) "provoke to wrath" meaning becoming exasperated.

➤ If you are parenting biblically your children at times **will respond** with anger.

Proverbs 29:17, "Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul." Jesus angered many people yet He was sinless. Two year old temper tantrums and teenager outbursts are to be expected. Young people you can't use this verse to restrict your parents. Our culture believes that my emotions are the measure of your love for me. So if you make me angry by your rules and restrictions you don't love me.

➤ God has never given us a **legitimate** reason for us to be angry with Him, Romans 8:28.

As God's children we often don't understand what God is doing or why certain things are happening.

▪ **Fathers we must first deal with our own anger.**

Scripture can only be understood within its context, Ephesians 4:31-32. Paul instructs us to put anger away from us so we do not pass it on to our children. God Who is angry with the wicked provided forgiveness through the sacrifice of His Son. God's forgiveness of us is the basis for our forgiving our wives, our children and others, Ephesians 5:1.

❖ **The *positive* commands.**

"...but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

➤ We are to **provide** for our children ("bring them up").

This is the same word that Paul uses in reference to the husband's care of his wife, Ephesians 5:29. This includes taking care of their physical needs but so much more. The idea is to rear them up to maturity. This went completely against 1st Century Roman culture. They practiced *patria potestas* "power of a father". Newborn children were placed at the feet of their father to determine their fate. The Bible places great value upon children, Psalm 127:3. 21st Century culture is more like 1st Century culture as children are discarded through abortion, abuse, neglect and abandonment. The nourishing of children by the parents, and fathers in particular, establishes the foundation for what follows.

➤ We are to **parent** our children ("in the training").

The word "training" *paideia* is translated "instruction" in

2 Timothy 3:16 and "chastening" in Hebrews 12. Newer translations use the word "discipline". It refers to the systematic training of children. Children come into this world with a sinful nature, Psalm 51:5. Children arrive as selfish, sinful, and self-centered. Every child's soul is bent toward sin. It is in their nature as it is in ours.

The first task of a Christian father is to evangelize his children.

Children need to be taught the truth about God, sin, judgment and salvation through Jesus Christ, Proverbs 22:6.

This is a general truth not an ironclad guarantee. Our goal is to help our children make the transition from obedience to parental authority to submission to

God's authority. This is why Paul dealt first with anger.

▪ **Anger is the automatic response of the sinful nature to authority.**

Children must be taught that our parental authority is an extension of God's authority over their lives, Proverbs 22:15.

The *Rod* - Ages 2 to 6

Spanking for rebellion is biblical. Parents must differentiate between childhood irresponsibility and willful rebellion. Never discipline in anger. Never cause physical injury, Proverbs 13:24. When compassion overcomes conviction you are damaging your children.

Reproof - Ages 6 to 12

This is strong, intense, in your face verbal chastisement, Proverbs 29:15. Never use belittling or degrading language. Consistently tie behavior to consequences such as loss of privileges and time outs. The younger the child is greater emphasis needs to be upon the power of authority.

Removal of *Freedom* - Age 10 plus

We are allowing them more freedom to make their own choices.

But we must teach them that bad choices bring bad consequences, Proverbs 5:22. God's laws of sowing and reaping are universal.

When God says no He means don't hurt yourself. Teach them early that when you choose to sin you choose to suffer.

➤ We are to **instruct** our children ("and admonition").

The word "admonition" *nouthesia* means "putting in mind".

It is training by words as is the purpose of scripture, 1 Corinthians 10:11. This will involve encouragement, teaching, correcting and warning. The book of Proverbs is a good example of this type of instruction. Paul uses this same word in 1 Corinthians 4:14. Note that there is warmth to Paul's admonishing. It comes from his heart of love as should ours.

➤ We are to **disciple** our children ("of the Lord").

Our providing, parenting, and admonishing is all for the purpose of helping our children to become committed disciples of Jesus Christ.

▪ **This will certainly involve the content which is centered in the Word of God.**

Timothy is an example of this even though sadly it did not involve his father. 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15.

▪ **This will also involve the method of Jesus.**

Jesus reveals a pattern for discipleship that he modeled. Mark 3:14, "Then He appointed twelve, **that they might be with Him...**"

▪ **This will also involve the attitude modeled by Jesus.**

Matthew 20:28, "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but **to serve**, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Jesus displayed an attitude of servanthship and humility.

Fathers are to be loving servant leaders of their families.

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