

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Chapter 33

Ephesians 6:1–4

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

evidence that they will be saved; see the note, John 14:15.²

WE observe in this verse that it is both right and proper for children to obey their parents, but this subjection should always be in respect to the concept of their being in the Lord. This is essential not only for harmony in the Christian family, but also for the necessary and even more important spiritual instruction, that children should be taught, that to enter heaven, a similar obedience and subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ must be exercised. Obedience and subjection to divine will, as we shall observe in this study, is the key to both happiness in this life, and entrance into God's heavenly kingdom in the next. Since only those who learn to spiritually obey, which should be introduced to children when they are young, and most impressionable to be taught of God, shall ultimately be saved. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him (Heb. 5:9).

(Barnes Notes on the Bible, Heb. 5:9) He became the author—...“Unto all them that obey him.”¹ It is not to save those who live in sin. Only those who “obey” him have any

To obey one's parents in the Lord, is proof that a child has yielded to God's will for his, or her, life. This parental subjection, is purposed to lay the foundation for the child gaining the needed spiritual introduction, for what shall be necessary for their entrance into heaven. Children, and especially young children, possess an innocence of spirit, and early attributes of humility, which can often be lost and even abandoned the older they get. Consequently it is critical, at the early stages of a child's development, that they are taught the need to both obey and honor, those whom God has given authority over them. There is also a very specific time, which is generally early in their life, when children are most open to being taught the pertinent truths of religion. It is during this early time, that divine love, needful instruction, and proper spiritual correction should be administered. The book of Proverbs speaks of this pivotal, and critical time in a child's life, and the need for parents to perform their parental spiritual duty in hopes of leading them to God's salvation.³ Chasten thy son while

1 Heb. 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

2 John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

3 Prov. 13:24 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes. Prov. 23:13-14 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

⁴Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Prov. 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying (Prov. 19:18).

(*Benson Commentary*, Prov. 19:18) *Chasten thy son while there is hope*—Before custom in sin, and thy indulgence have made him hard-hearted and incorrigible; and *let not thy soul spare for his crying*—Forbear not to give him due and necessary correction, through a foolish and destructive pity, excited by his tears and cries; for it is better he should cry under thy rod, than under the sword of the magistrate, or, which is more to be feared, that of divine vengeance.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Prov. 19:18) *While there is hope*—While he is still young, and capable of being reformed.

Crying—Better, as in the margin, Do not set thy soul on his destruction; words which either counsel forbearance in the act of chastisement (compare Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21⁴); or urge that a false clemency is a real cruelty. The latter sense is preferable. The father is warned that to forbear from chastising is virtually to expose the son who needs it to a far worse penalty.

The reason that parents are instructed by God to chasten their children when they are young, and generally more pliable to accepting higher authority, is because this impressionable time in their life can quickly pass, the more earthly knowledge they acquire. This is especially applicable if children are raised by ungodly and

unholy parents, and are also raised in an evil and corrupt world.⁵ Thus, the more a person is exposed to knowledge, especially if it is mere earthly knowledge, then the quicker they are tempted to believe that they have come to already “know it.” And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know (I Cor. 8:2). Without love also being at the center of a child’s spiritual instruction, first introduced by the parents, fleshly pride, can very easily gain control over their life. This is because knowledge always has the potential to puff a person’s heart up, and so much so that they can foolishly conclude, no more is needed to be learned in their life, especially the need to gain more of a knowledge of, and faith in, God. Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth (I Cor. 8:1).

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, I Cor. 8:1) *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.*—Those who grounded everything on knowledge are reminded parenthetically that knowledge by itself may have a bad effect, and also (1 Corinthians 8:2-3⁶) that there is an element in the consciousness of our knowledge which destroys the truth and purity of that knowledge itself. Knowledge puffs up the man himself. Love builds up the whole Church.

With children, if it is only worldly knowledge that is gained, and they learn not the

Prov. 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Prov. 29:17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

4 Col. 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

5 1 John 5:19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

Jas. 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

1 John 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

6 1 Cor. 8:2-3 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

³But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

importance of divine love,⁷ and growing it in their lives, then pride can easily take the place, where love should have resided. Thus, the very first spiritual principle that every parent should instruct their children in, is obeying Jesus' first two commandments.⁸ That is, to love the Lord thy God, with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love their neighbor, as themselves.

The opposite of being puffed up because of increased knowledge, is maintaining the heart of a little child. This truth Jesus taught His disciples, even after they had for many years, exhibited themselves as faithful followers of Christ.

Matthew 18:1-3 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
² And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,
³ And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(Benson Commentary, Matt. 18:1) At the same time—When Jesus had just foretold his own sufferings, death, and resurrection; came the disciples, saying, Who is greatest

in the kingdom of heaven?—Which of us shall be thy prime minister in the kingdom which thou art about to set up? which they still thought would be a temporal kingdom. That this was their meaning, appears evident from the parallel passages, Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48,⁹ (where see the notes.) So that just after the Lord Jesus had predicted that he should be rejected of the Jewish nation, condemned, and crucified, the apostles were entertaining worldly and ambitious views, striving for wealth, honour, and power, and contending with one another which should be greatest! Such is human nature, blind, unfeeling, selfish, ambitious, covetous, contentious about the little, low, perishable things of this present short-enduring world! It is true, our Lord's late prediction concerning his sufferings (Matthew 17:23¹⁰) had made the disciples at first exceedingly sorry; but their sorrow was of short duration: it soon went off, or their ignorance quickly got the better of it.

It is somewhat striking that Jesus' disciples, even after having spent so much time with their Master, and had both heard His teachings and been exposed to His miracles, that still true conversion had not taken place in their hearts. This is because mere observation of another's spiritual life, even the Son of God's, does not guarantee that we shall imitate what we have perceived, and even recognized

7 Gal. 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I Cor. 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

8 Matt. 22:36-40 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?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.⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

9 Mark 9:33-37 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?³⁴ But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.³⁵ And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.³⁶ And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,³⁷ Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

Luke 9:46-48 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.⁴⁷ And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,⁴⁸ And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

10 Matt. 17:23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceedingly sorry.

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

as both goodness and truth, in others. To therefore just observe and watch someone else doing good, and walking righteously, according to divine will, does not mean that we shall desire to do the same. Just as, to walk with one lowly and meek in heart, as Jesus' entire life exemplified,¹¹ did not guarantee that His disciples would desire to pursue the same lowliness of mind and heart, as their Lord. This is also why though Jesus' closest followers had faithfully walked with the Lord, their close earthly companionship with Him, did not automatically produce in them, possessing the same heart as Christ. This is because ultimately, how all men act, behave, and conduct themselves, is directly linked to, not simply who they have been around, but rather who they themselves have chosen to be. Teaching us the true spirituality is not gained through observing others' godly walks, but must be personally pursued by ourselves. Ultimately every person in their life, are exactly as they have determined themselves to be. Thus, every man is in the end—whatever else he may believe or profess about himself—exactly who he has purposed himself to be. Understanding this, just because someone has heard and been taught about Christ, does not mean that true conversion and salvation, has taken place in them. It is this important and essential truth that Jesus sought to teach His disciples, shortly before His crucifixion and death: that not until true conversion has taken place—which will always be evident by genuine and sincere spiritual humility ruling the heart—then heaven cannot be reached.

(*Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, Matt. 18:3) *except ye be converted or turned*; from that gross notion of a temporal kingdom, and of enjoying great grandeur, and outward felicity in this world; and from all your vain views of honour, wealth, and riches,

and become as little children: the Arabic renders it, “as this child”; that is, unless ye learn to entertain an humble, and modest opinion of yourselves, are not envious at one another, and drop all contentions about primacy and pre-eminence, and all your ambitious views of one being greater than another, in a vainly expected temporal kingdom; things which are not to be found in little children, though not free from sin in other respects,

ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: ye shall be so far from being one greater than another in it, that you shall not enter into it at all;

The topic that Jesus' disciples were previously most concerned about and questioned their Savior concerning, was who should be the greatest among them. At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (Matt. 18:1). Jesus' stern and sharp rebuke of His disciples revealed, that unless they gained the heart of a child, they would not even enter the kingdom of heaven, let alone be accounted as important in it. Our Lord's reproof here, should reveal, as it was purposed to reveal, that it is not simply exposure to Christ that saves man's soul, but the actual soul's transformation of his heart, when true spiritual humility, replaces, where once resided only selfish pride and ambition. This can only occur when true lowliness of mind¹²

¹¹ Matt. 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Phil. 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

II Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that he through his poverty might be rich.

¹² Phil. 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

becomes the dominant characteristic and ruler in a person's heart. It was this much deeper spiritual conversion in the lives of the twelve, that needed to take place, before their entrance into heaven, could be assured. Hence, they needed reminded that it was not simply walking with Jesus, or hearing His words that could save them, but only if Christ's power actually transforms their hearts so fully, that they then begin to live like Christ.

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Matt. 18:3) Ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.—The force of the words as spoken to the Twelve can hardly be exaggerated. They were disputing about precedence in the kingdom, and in that very dispute they were showing that they were not truly in it. It was essentially spiritual, and its first condition was abnegation of self. Even the chief of the Apostles was self-excluded when he gloried in his primacy.

The Greek word for converted is #4762 *strephō* defined by HELPS Word-studies “properly, to turn (transition); (figuratively) to convert by changing (switching) direction, i.e. go the other way (an ‘about-face’); taking an opposite or divergent course. 4762 (*stréphō*) usually has a straightforward meaning (‘turn’), graphically illustrating dynamic change (transitioning). See Mt 18:3 and Jn 12:40.¹³”

The Topical Lexon states “*strephō*, consistently conveys the idea of turning—physically changing direction, mentally redirecting attention, or spiritually converting the heart. Across its twenty-one

New Testament occurrences, the verb underscores decisive reversals that God calls individuals and nations to make, whether in repentance toward Him or in judgment away from Him. ...”

“Metaphorical Turning: Conversion and Childlike Faith: Matthew 18:3 employs *strephō* in Jesus’ demand for radical change: ‘Unless you turn and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.’ Here the verb signifies inner conversion, not mere moral adjustment. True discipleship requires a Spirit-wrought reversal from self-reliance to humble dependence.”

Again, it is so spiritually remarkable that even after years of hearing Jesus’ words, Jesus’ disciples remained, for the most part, exactly as the Lord had first found them. This is also why no man should pride himself on what he has heard of God, until God has truly changed and transformed his heart, through the Son of God, by imparting a new and Holy Spirit into it,¹⁴ which alone can replace the stony heart of the flesh.¹⁵

One of the reasons it is important for us to cover this biblical truth, in the context of the opening verses of Ephesians chapter six, is because if spiritual humility is not learned early in a child’s life, and parental and spiritual obedience is not stressed, then these divine qualities may never be learned by a child at all. To fail to obey one’s parents when we are young, exposes us, to the danger of never desiring to obey

13 Matt. 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

14 Gal. 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

15 Ezek. 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:

Ezek. 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

God, when we become old. Undoubtedly, old habits are hard to break, and proud, stubborn, and willful hearts,¹⁶ are the most difficult hearts to break of all.¹⁷

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 6:1) Obey your parents—This is the first great duty which God has enjoined on children. It is, to do what their parents command them to do. The God of nature indicates that this is duty; for he has impressed it on the minds of all in every age; and the Author of revelation confirms it. . . .

In the Lord—That is, as far as their commandments agree with those of God, and no further. No parent can have a right to require a child to steal, or lie, or cheat, or assist him in committing murder, or in doing any other wrong thing. No parent has a right to forbid a child to pray, to read the Bible, to worship God, or to make a profession of religion. The duties and rights of children in such cases are similar to those of wives (see the notes on Ephesians 5:22¹⁸); and in all cases, God is to be obeyed rather than man. When a parent, however, is opposed to a child; when he expresses an unwillingness that a child should attend a particular church, or make a profession of religion, such opposition should in all cases be a sufficient reason for the child to pause and re-examine the subject. He should pray much, and think much, and inquire much, before, in any case, he acts contrary to the will of a father or mother; and,

when he does do it, he should state to them, with great gentleness and kindness, that he believes he ought to love and serve God.

For this is right—It is right:

(1) because it is so appointed by God as a duty;

(2) because children owe a debt of gratitude to their parents for what they have done for them;

(3) because it will be for the good of the children themselves, and for the welfare of society.

It should never be forgotten that the obedience that the Scripture demands of children to their parents, is always in the biblical context of being in the Lord. This is because there is no natural relationship, especially in the family unit, that should not have God's will at the center of it. Thus, the parents' role to teach subjection to their children, and the child's role to embrace parental subjection, has their genesis in God's will, for each party's life.

Ephesians 6:2–3 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

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

16 Prov. 21:4 An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.

Ps. 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. Jer. 7:24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

17 Rom. 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Heb. 3:8–19 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: ⁹When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. ¹⁰Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. ¹¹So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) ¹²Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. ¹³But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; ¹⁵While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. ¹⁶For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. ¹⁷But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? ¹⁹So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

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

This commandment to honor thy father and mother, the apostle reveals, is the first commandment with promise. That is, if this commandment is obeyed, then the Lord has promised those who do so, a specific blessing to be given to them, by Him. The promise is, that if children honor their father and mother, and obey their parents in the Lord, then two spiritually significant blessings shall be transmitted to them. They are as follows: (1) that it may be well with thee, and (2) that thou mayest live long on the earth.¹⁹ What this teaches us is this, that every child's future life of happiness and blessings, is directly linked to first obeying, and then honoring their parents. Thus, the early years of a child's life, if they pursue God's will in it, through obeying and honoring their parents, shall absolutely result in, a long and blessed life being given to them by God.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 6:2) Which is the first commandment with promise— With a promise annexed to it. The promise was, that their days should be long in the land which the Lord their God would give them. It is not to be supposed that the observance of the four first commandments would not be attended with a blessing, but no particular blessing is promised.

What a man sows, the scripture states, that he shall reap,²⁰ and no more so than if he honors the Lord or not. I Samuel gives us insight into this great and important

biblical truth, that only as men rightly honor God, will God honor, and lift up, them. Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed (I Sam. 2:30).

(Matthew Poole's Commentary, I Sam. 2:30) Them that honour me; that worship and serve me with reverence and godly fear, and according to my will, which I esteem as an honour done to me.

I will honour; I will advance them to honour, and maintain them in it.

What is also apparent in this verse, is that if God is not highly esteemed by men, and instead lightly esteemed, then the Lord will think the very same thing of them, as they think of Him. That is if God is not highly esteemed in a person's heart, then God shall think very little of that same person. And so much so, that disrespect to the Lord, the Lord accounts as actually an abomination to Him.²¹

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I Sam. 2:30) Be it far from me— The phrase so rendered is a favorite one in the Books of Samuel, where it occurs ten or eleven times. It is variously rendered in the King James Version, "God forbid," and "Be it far from me, thee, etc." Literally, "Be it an abomination to me."

¹⁹ Deut. 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.
²⁰ Gal. 6:7–8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

²¹ Rom. 1:24–28 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:²⁵ Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. ²⁶For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. ²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

The Hebrew word for lightly esteemed in First Samuel 2:30 is #7043 qalal. The Topical Lexicon defines as, “The root carries the idea of lightness in weight or status, and from that core meaning develops four dominant nuances: 1) something easy or slight, 2) treating a person or thing with contempt, 3) uttering a curse or imprecation, 4) swiftness or rapid motion. These senses overlap in that whatever is ‘light’ may be regarded as trivial, despised, or quickly passed over. ... When directed toward people the root speaks of belittling or despising. ... Under covenant law, spoken contempt toward parents, rulers (Exodus 22:28),²² or Israel’s elect nation is an offense against God Himself. The seriousness of words anticipates New Testament teaching that blessings and cursings spring from the same tongue (James 3).”

By these verses it is unmistakably clear, that those who lightly esteem God, the Lord will, even more lightly value and fail to esteem as important in His own eyes. To then treat God, and obedience to His divine will as trivial, has no other result, than God viewing the sinner’s life, as even more trivial, and unworthy to be aided. Reminding us again, that for prayers to be heard, obedience, subjection, and submission to God, must precede a man asking for help from God. (John 9:31) Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but

if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

(Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, John 9:31) He assumes as a general truth, which all accepted, that God heareth not sinners. This is based upon numerous passages in the Old Testament Scriptures—e.g., Isaiah 1:11–15; Psalm 66:18; Psalm 109:7; Proverbs 15:8; Proverbs 15:29; Job 27:9; Job 35:13.²³

If for no other reason than this, that God will not hear those who willfully sin against Him, nor come to their aid, when they are in need, then children should be taught very early in their life the importance of fleeing sin, and embracing divine will, lest in spiritual ignorance, they, without knowing the truth of God, unconsciously remove themselves from being helped or heard by Him.

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

The apostle here gives a very spiritually important and specific warning to fathers. It is that they, who have been given the highest authority in the family, should not provoke their children to anger and wrath, which is the ultimate result of any, and all misuse, of parental authority.

²² Exod. 22:28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

²³ Isa. 1:11–15 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.¹² When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

¹³ Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.¹⁴ Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.¹⁵ And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Ps. 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me:

Ps. 109:7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Prov. 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Prov. 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

Job 27:9 Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

Job 35:13 Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, Eph. 6:4) *Provoke not your children to wrath.*—The word is the same as in Ephesians 4:26.²⁴ It denotes the exasperation produced by arbitrary and unsympathetic rule.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 6:4) There is no principle of parental government more important than that a father should command his own temper when he inflicts punishment. He should punish a child not because he is "angry," but because it is "right;" not because it has become a matter of "personal contest," but because God requires that he should do it, and the welfare of the child demands it.

An insensitive father who foolishly and harshly rules his children, instead of provoking them to love,²⁵ shall actually provoke his children to both anger and wrath. The opposite of a father exhibiting this ungodly behavior, is by him raising his children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 6:4) *But bring them up*—Place them under such discipline and instruction that they shall become acquainted with the Lord.

The most important and essential principle governing a child's future success and happiness in this life, is based on his acceptance of divine rule, and will. No

other factor in a young person's life shall prove more significant to receiving future blessings from God, than their being taught, and then believing the importance of becoming fully obedient to divine will, which always begins with their honoring and obeying their parents in the Lord. For this reason, every child should as early as possible, be exposed to the importance of spiritual subjection and obedience, until such time that through faith and obedience to the Son of God, God's salvation can be given to them.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 6:4) *In the nurture*—ἐν παιδείᾳ ἐν παιδείᾳ. The word used here means "training of a child;" hence education, instruction, discipline. Here it means that they are to train up their children in such a manner as the Lord approves; that is, they are to educate them for virtue and religion.

Ultimately all children should be raised with the religious and unalterable belief, that they shall themselves also, like their earthly parents, one day, have to stand before, and give an account to Jesus Christ on the day of judgment.²⁶ Teaching us as parents, that it is also not any earthly judgment of ours that shall determine our children's heavenly fate, but only the heavenly judgment, whom God has given both right and power to judge all men.²⁷ Thus, it makes little difference what a parent's view is of their children, if it is contrary to God's view of them. This is again why all parenting, should be done, in respect

²⁴ Eph. 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

²⁵ Heb. 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

²⁶ II Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

²⁷ John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

II Tim. 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

to the Lord, since He alone can save a child's soul.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 6:4) *And admonition*—The word used here—*νουθεσία* *nouthesia* means literally, “a putting in mind,” then warning, admonition, instruction. The sense here is, that they [parents] were to put them [children] in mind of the Lord—of his existence, perfections, law, and claims on their hearts and lives. This command is positive, and is in accordance with all the requirements of the Bible on the subject. No one can doubt that the Bible enjoins on parents the duty of endeavoring to train up their children in the ways of religion, and of making it the grand purpose of this life to prepare them for heaven. It has been often objected that children should be left on religious subjects to form their own opinions when they are able to judge for themselves. Infidels and irreligious people always oppose or neglect the duty here enjoined; and the plea commonly is, that to teach religion to children is to make them prejudiced; to destroy their independence of mind; and to prevent their judging as impartially on so important a subject as they ought to. In reply to this, and in defense of the requirements of the Bible on the subject, we may remark:

(1) That to suffer a child to grow up without any instruction in religion, is about the same as to suffer a garden to lie without any cul-

ture. Such a garden would soon be overrun with weeds, and briars, and thorns—but not sooner, or more certainly, than the mind of a child would.

(2) people do instruct their children in a great many things, and why should they not in religion? They teach them how to behave in company; the art of farming; the way to make or use tools; how to make money; how to avoid the arts of the cunning seducer. But why should it not be said that all this tends to destroy their independence, and to make them prejudiced? ...

(3) people do inculcate their own sentiments in religion. An infidel is not usually “very” anxious to conceal his views from his children. People teach by example; by incidental remarks; by the “neglect” of that which they regard as of no value. A man who does not pray, is teaching his children not to pray; he who neglects the public worship of God, is teaching his children to neglect it; he who does not read the Bible, is teaching his children not to read it. Such is the constitution of things, that it is impossible for a parent not to inculcate his own religious views on his children. ...

(4) to inculcate the truths of religion is not to make the mind narrow, prejudiced, and indisposed to perceive the truth.