



## ***Session 4 – Father/Instructor/Interpreter***

### **1. “Bring them up in the... instruction of the Lord”**

- a. We are commanded by Paul in Eph. 6:4 to “bring [children] up” through discipline, and through “instruction of the Lord”.
- b. The two main functions of “bringing up” in biblical fatherhood: discipline and instruction. Which, really are the two sides of the same coin.
- c. Greek Word for instruction: *nouthesia*, which can also be translated as “warning”, or “exhortation”.
- d. Instruction is made up of **words**: it is teaching, exhortations and warnings that make up for our counsel to our children, so they might increase in understanding and choosing to live in the good of God’s ways in God’s world.
- e. Discipline is communicated and understood through its “words” of pain and consequence.
- f. Instruction provides the critical teachings that a person needs to hear and understand to grow and mature to a point of *self-discipline*. As our children grow up under loving, firm and clear discipline, instruction will begin to turn up in volume as the prime influence of our parenting (Prov. 1–7)
- g. Everything from the basics of life and responsibility (tie your shoes, poop in toilet, how to save/spend money, etc.) to theological categories that are essential for mankind (God, sin, Christ, obedience, manhood, etc.)

### **2. “Teach them diligently”**

- a. Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:18–21. The rock bed of a righteous people begins in the simplicity of talking to children. Moses repeated these instructions, which only heightens the importance.

- b. If our children are to understand the great commandment (6:5) and HOW they are to love the Lord and walk in all his ways, then we must go about the task in Moses's prescribed manner: "*teach them diligently*" (7).

### **3. Starts with us.**

- a. "*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*" (6:6)
- b. "*You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.*" (11:18)
- c. The prime reason we will be compelled to teach our children diligently is because FIRST we have treasured God's Word to our own hearts and have tasted of the Lord's favor in the gospel and by gospel obedience.
- d. This is the first step of faithful fathering. That we are faithfully under the loving discipline and instruction of our Heavenly Father. We are his obsessed and possessed disciples.
- e. A significant fruit of sincere godliness will be in our conversation and how often we speak of our Savior. We will naturally be drawn to the diligence in conversations that Moses commanded.

### **4. "You shall teach them..."**

- a. Talking about Jesus should become extremely normal. To pray with children, to quote scripture and to talk about the Lord should be as common as anything else.
- b. Fathers, we must be UBER intentional to keep God's Word front and center, constantly, DILIGENTLY.

*The primary task of the home and of the parents is quite clear. What are parents to do? They are to supplement the teaching of the church, and they are to apply the teaching of the church. So little could be done in a sermon. It has to be applied, to be explained, to be extended, to be supplemented. That is where the parents play their part. (Lloyd-Jones, 77)*

- c. Our children learn from their infancy that their parents look to the invisible and Living God and to His grace to provide and protect, to guide and to bless.

- d. Even at the earliest years, we provide containers and categories that will in time be filled with understanding.
- e. And so, Fathers catechize their children.
  - i. We are commanded to be the front lines of training and teaching our children in the Word of God and in God's wonderful ways. This is the point of Moses's commands in Deut. 6 & 11.

## 5. Primary interpreters

- a. Our teaching will provide our children with their primary interpretive grid for themselves, for this world, and most importantly about God and his ways.
- b. *Judgment begins with the household of God. You cannot export what you don't have. You cannot resist if you yourselves are compromised. And so, the crying need of the hour is for us to put our own house in order, to strengthen ourselves, steeling ourselves with soft hearts and hard heads (shrewd as serpents, innocent as doves). Repenting of our own sexual foolishness, and our complicity in that cultural upheaval that we're living through, and then seek to be shaped and formed by the Word of God, training our minds and our imaginations, and the imaginations of our children to run in biblical ruts, not cultural ruts, so that we stop acting as the incubator for generational unfaithfulness. (Joe Rigney, from sermon "Sexual Pharisees" - accessed on "All of Christ, for All of Life" podcast, dated June 6, 2024).*

## 6. Fathers, do not provoke...

- a. The warning Paul sounds in Eph. 6:4 applies not only to our discipline, but also to our manner of talking and instruction:  
***Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*** (Eph. 6:4).
- b. Just as there are ways a father can discipline in provocation to their children, there are ways that our speech and teaching can also provoke.
- c. Love & affection are the basis
  - i. The most necessary aspect of our teaching that is provocation-proof is that we are consistently loving and affectionate towards our children.

d. Make time and be consistent

- i. Anything less than consistent presence and conversations with each of your children will lead to terrible consequences, and provocation.

*ASSIGNMENT: Duties of Parents, J.C. Ryle*

- Read this book through this course – then answer two questions (with some length and specificity, *involving wife*), and then meet with an older, mature Christian father to discuss:
  1. What is the present health and state of my fatherhood?
  2. What are the specific actions the Lord is commanding me to grow as a father?