

IT BEGINS AT HOME

- I. This study addresses family matters.
- A. It will treat of husband/wife relationships.
 - B. It will treat of the parent/child relationships and the solemn duty of training children.
 - C. It will treat of children's responsibility to honor and obey parents.
 - D. It will treat of God's order for the home in general, including immediate and extended family.
 - E. It will have a direct relevance to married couples.
 - F. It will have an indirect relevance to singles who can thus:
 - 1. be better prepared for marriage, should God grant it.
 - 2. better relate to their own parents, siblings and extended families.
 - 3. be able to witness to others of God's order for the home.
 - G. It will of necessity address submission to authority: children to parents, wives to husbands, the whole family to Jesus Christ.
 - H. It will prove to be a challenge of your faith: to what degree will you yield to God's word?
- II. Consider the theme, "It begins at home."
- A. Marriage (and family): the first human institution. **Mat.19:4-6.**
 - B. Family is the first form of society and government to which children are normally exposed.
 - C. Parents are the first educators of the sons of men. What is or is not learned in the home has incredible consequences for future development.
 - 1. Home is where a child should first learn of God, His love, His will.
 - 2. Home is where a child should first learn language skills.
 - 3. Home is where a child should first learn basic health and hygiene.
 - 4. Home is where a child should first learn of submission to authority: by the example his parents set and by the boundaries his parents impose upon him. God Himself in the incarnation was subject to His earthly parents. **Luk.2:51.**
 - 5. Home is where a child should first learn that his will is not preeminent.
 - 6. Home is where a child should first learn of discipline, i.e., the need to restrict and focus ambition.
 - 7. Home is where a child should first learn of the painful consequences of lawbreaking.
 - 8. Home is where a child should first learn responsibility: being responsible for assigned tasks and accepting responsibility for incompleteness.
 - 9. Home is where a child should first learn cooperation and social skills.
 - 10. Home is where a child should first learn of nurturing and giving.
 - 11. Home is where a child should first learn economics.
 - 12. Home is where a child should first learn dietary nutrition.
 - 13. Home is where a child should first learn about physical exercise.
 - 14. Home is where a child should first learn about "the birds and the bees" (from parents, not the television or internet).
 - 15. Home is where a child will first learn to prioritize. But what?
 - 16. Home is where a child WILL learn. The question is "What?"
 - D. Piety begins at home. **1 Ti.5:4.**
 - E. Provision begins at home. **1 Ti.5:8 c/w Jdg.6:11.**
 - F. The office of the ministry is qualified by home life. **1 Ti.3:4-5.**
 - G. Abraham is the prototypical man of faith. He was singled out for blessing because of faithfulness in family matters. **Gen.18:19.**

- H. Many personal and societal ills can be traced back to some form of dysfunction in the home: spousal abuse, child abuse, self-indulgent parents, absentee fathers, unsubmitive wives, sexual impurity in a parent, rejection of God and religion, lack of child restraint, lack of instilled respect and reverence for authority, etc., etc., etc.
1. Research and experience show that homosexuality and lesbianism tendencies too often develop as a backlash to poor parental role models, particularly in fathers.
 2. Child abuse is often the result of the lack of timely, measured discipline of children which results in a powder-keg reaction when children are out of control.
 3. Lack of respect for leadership or submission to authority in public arenas (school, workplace, before the law) starts with the lack of the same in the home.
 4. Lack of self-discipline in adult life is often the continuation of a behavior developed and tolerated in the home.
 5. Unrestrained behavior in public is usually because of the same in the home.
 6. Healthy family life = healthy public life and healthy adult life.
- I. Consider Eli and David.
1. Eli was God's priest to Israel. But Eli did not restrain his own appetites, nor did he restrain his sons which debauched the priesthood. **1 Sa.2:24; 3:13; 4:18.**
 2. David was a good king. But David's lack of Vitamin "N" (NO!) bred trouble in his children and trouble for Israel. **1 Ki.1:6.**

III. The family is bedrock to many spiritual things.

- A. The relationship of God to His redeemed bears many marks of family. **Eph.3:14-15.**
1. God is Father.
 2. The heavenly Jerusalem is Mother. **Gal.4:26.**
 3. Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom. **Joh.3:29.**
 4. The church is His bride/wife. **Rev.21:2; 19:7.**
 5. The union of Christ to His church is a marriage. **Rev.19:7.**
 6. The redeemed are God's children: sons and daughters. **Rom.8:16; 2 Co.6:18.**
 7. There is child discipline. **Heb.12:5-6.**
 8. There are family meals. **1 Co.10:16; Rev.19:9.**
 9. There are family get-togethers. **Heb.10:25; 12:22-24.**
 10. There is a family reunion. **1 Th.4:15-17.**
- B. Marriage pictures Christ's love for, union to, and Headship of the church. **Eph.5:22-33.**
1. Christ's love for His bride was effective by His cross. **Gal.2:20; Heb.9:15.**
 2. The cross was the undoing of the devil. **Heb.2:14.**
 3. Biblical marriage, therefore, is a reminder of Satan's defeat.
 4. Is it any wonder that the Biblical order of marriage comes under such heavy attack by "shack-ups," infidelity, divorce, unsubmitive wives, same-sex unions, etc.?
- C. Children are a gift of God to (married) parents. **Psa.127:3-5.**
1. Parents are expected to bring children up for God. **Deu.6:5-7; Psa.78:5-7; Eph.6:4.**
 2. Parents are, in essence, "tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father" (**Gal.4:2**).
 3. Parents, not the State, are God's appointed guardians and trainers of children.
 - a. Parents thus endowed by God should take command of the education of children.
 - b. It is very much because of the unwillingness of parents to shoulder this responsibility that a god-like State has arisen which usurps parental authority.

- c. Parents are at liberty as to how their children should be educated but they should carefully consider the ramifications of "public" (State) education.
 - d. As a youth, Jesus Christ, under parental authority and tutelage, "increased in wisdom [intellect] and stature [physical], and in favour with God [spiritual] and man [social]" (**Luk.2:51-52**).
4. Couples who have no intention of raising children in God's ways for Him should consider having none. God desires a godly seed. **Psa.144:11-12.**

IV. The relevance of authority authored, authority given, authority exercised and authority submitted to is not to be trivialized.

- A. We are living in a wicked time when respect for authority is under assault.
- 1. Police powers no longer command the respect they once did.
 - 2. Biblical ministers who rule God's house (**Heb.13:7, 17**) are slandered as tyrants.
 - 3. Children are corrupted by social forces and delinquent parents to defy parental authority.
 - 4. The headship of husbands over wives, of men over women in general is considered prehistoric patriarchy.
 - a. As an affront to Jesus Christ, there is a rise in neopagan feminist spirituality which advocates the abandonment of "archaic and artificial" morality which a father-god patriarchal system needs in order to dominate women.
 - b. A return to ancient goddess-worship with its moral code is deemed to be the hope of saving earth and humanity from aggressive, belligerent males who are empowered by a father-god patriarchy.
 - c. "Stone concludes that the mature Goddess cultures saw ceremonial sex as an especially potent way to celebrate and share in the life-giving powers of the Goddess. In addition, promiscuous sexual activity was encouraged for the specific reason of confusing the lines of paternity, and thus reinforcing matrilineal inheritance of property and power---fathers could not bequeath power and property to their sons if they did not know who their sons were. Patrilineal monogamy, she says, is just another aspect of the later oppression of women, and hence sexual liberation today is an essential component of the liberation of women." (Philip G. Davis, Goddess Unmasked, p.45).
 - 5. It is the sign of a nation under judgment and in great peril when children are out of control and women rule men. **Isa.3:12.**
 - 6. It may be observed that those who reject the concept of submission to authority only do so until they are in control.
- B. All authority is derived from and subject to the Lord Jesus Christ. **Col.1:16-20; 1 Pe.3:22.**
- 1. He is the "blessed and ONLY Potentate" (**1 Ti.6:15**), i.e., one endowed with independent power.
 - 2. All other powers are by His decree. **Rom.13:1.**
 - 3. Therefore, resisting His designated authority without cause is rejecting God. **Num.16:11 c/w 1 Sa.8:7 c/w Rom.13:2.**
- C. All have a problem with submitting to authority.
- 1. All have sinned (**Rom.3:23**) and have sin. To deny this is to call God a liar. **1 Jo.1:8, 10.**
 - 2. Sin is the transgression of the law. **1 Jo.3:4.**
 - 3. Law is "a rule of conduct imposed by authority." Therefore to say that one does not have a problem with authority is to call God a liar.

4. An unwillingness to recognize and submit to God-appointed authority is what nailed Jesus Christ to a cross. **Psa.2:1-3 c/w Luk.19:14.**
- D. Jesus Christ has ordained the authority structure of the home.
1. Children are by His decree to be in submission to parents.
 2. Wives are by His decree to be in submission to husbands.
 3. A holy respect and reverence for His designated authorities in the home must be cultivated.
 - a. Wives: if you scorn or undermine your husband's authority, what lesson are you teaching your children?
 - b. Parents: if you permit your children to rebel against you or rule you, what are the chances of your children respecting other God-ordained authority such as pastors, teachers, magistrates, etc.?
 - c. It really does begin at home!
- V. A word to the wise: Do not be cast down because you don't seem to be able to work out a perfect family life. Be satisfied that you might perfect a working family life for which you can give God glory and thanks!
- VI. Attitude counts! To follow is the Biblical mandate which sets the man as the head of the woman and of the household. How you receive this information and respond to it will say a lot about your spiritual makeup.
- A. Attitude counts! Men: what follows is not a license for domestic tyranny. Adjust your heart beforehand to think not, "HA! I get to run the home," but rather, "Lord, I have got to run the home---for you."
1. Authority/rule is given for the building, not the destruction of the ruled. **2 Co.13:10.**
 2. Rule not for ego, but for God. **2 Sa.23:3 c/w Neh.5:15.**
- B. Attitude counts! Women: Adjust your hearts beforehand to think not (grudgingly), "Great. I've got to submit to my husband's rule," but rather, "I get to live under my husband's, my head's, my lord's rule."
1. Your will and agenda are to be given consideration but they are not preeminent.
 2. Do not despise your husband for doing what God has required of him in the rule of the home.
 3. No husband can rule a wife who has a defiant spirit, who will not be ruled.
 4. Women, if you will not submit to God-ordained marital rule, it is not your husband with whom you are at odds. It is God. **Eph.5:22.**
 5. Wives with children had better consider what message their submission (or lack thereof) to the husband is sending to the children.
- VII. As one reads through the New Testament instructions for marital relationship, one sees a general pattern which deserves consideration.
- A. Men are particularly exhorted to love their wives, to nourish them, not be bitter against them, etc.
 - B. Women are particularly exhorted to submit to their husbands.
 - C. So, who goes first? Heed the priority of mention in Scripture. **Eph.5:22, 25; Col.3:18-19; 1 Pe.3:1, 7.**
- VIII. The headship of the man over the woman is a world-scorned but Biblical doctrine.
- A. Scripture describes marriage in terms of a union: two are made one flesh. **Gen.2:24.**

1. In essence, marriage is a creature: a new entity formed by God.
 2. A creature with two heads is not a committee. It is a monster.
- B. The subordination of woman to man was established before sin entered this world. **1 Ti.2:11-13 c/w 1 Co.11:7-10.**
1. God created Adam (man) first.
 2. God made Eve (woman) out of man, second.
 3. Woman was specifically created, not for herself, not for her career, not for her children, but for man---to be an "help meet (suitable, appropriate) FOR HIM" (**Gen.2:18**).
 4. This pre-fall decree dispels the false notion that woman is only under man's authority as a penalty for being deceived (**1 Ti.2:14; 2 Co.11:3**) to eat the fruit.
 5. Thus, in a perfect, sin-free world God ordained male authority.
- C. The rule of husband over wife was, after the fall, reinforced. **Gen.3:16.**
1. "...thy desire shall be TO thy husband...."
 2. This is not desire FOR the husband, nor desire OF the husband.
 3. It is implied here that woman's desire is subject to the husband, per the marginal rendering.
 4. Desire: "The fact or condition of desiring; that feeling or emotion which is directed to the attainment or possession of some object from which pleasure or satisfaction is expected; longing, craving; a particular instance of this feeling, a wish."
 5. There are times when a God-fearing husband will have to trump his wife's desire, particularly when principle or conscience is at stake.
 - a. For a husband to yield to his wife's desire when it would sacrifice principle is a dereliction of duty and a repetition of Adam's fault.
 - b. For a wife to despise the subjugation of her desire(s) when leadership decisions demand it is to set a home up for division.
 - c. A "house divided against itself shall not stand..." (**Mat.12:25**).
 6. The subjection of even a wife's desires to her husband's is reinforced by other Scripture.
 - a. Wives are to be subject to their husbands "in every thing." **Eph.5:24 c/w 1 Pe.3:1, 5.**
 - b. Subjected: "Placed or set underneath; underlying, subjacent. 2. Reduced to a state of subjection; under the dominion or authority of another. Hence, submissive, obedient."
 - c. The "every thing" would, of necessity, exclude subjection to a husband's demands or wishes that would be an occasion to sin. In this case, God trumps the husband's desire and justifies the wife's non-subjection.
- D. Men of faith *command* their household. **Gen.18:19.**
1. Command: "To order, enjoin, bid with authority or influence."
 2. Household: "The inmates of a house collectively; an organized family, including servants or attendants, dwelling in a house; a domestic establishment."
 3. A wife is part of "an organized family" and is therefore subject to the commands of her husband.
 4. This is reinforced by the fact that the husband is the *head* of the wife (**Eph.5:23**) and a *head* is "a person to whom others are subordinate; a chief, captain, COMMANDER, ruler, leader, principal person, head man."
 5. The one to whom a household rule is given is under a solemn responsibility to do his job wisely, selflessly, and to not be cowed into not doing what he is supposed

to do. **1 Ti.3:15 c/w 1 Ti.4:12; Tit.2:15.**

- E. Some may object, "This sounds like you're advocating that husbands are to control their wives," or "You're just a control-freak."
1. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture?
 2. Wives are to *submit* to their husbands (**Eph.5:22**), i.e., "To place oneself under the CONTROL of a person in authority or power; to become subject, surrender oneself or yield to a person, or his rule, etc."
 3. Husbands are to *rule* over their wives (**Gen.3:16; Eph.5:23**), i.e., "To CONTROL, guide, direct, exercise sway or influence over (a person, his actions, life, etc)."
 4. Control: "To check or verify, and hence to regulate....To exercise restraint or direction upon the free action of; to hold sway over, exercise power or authority over: to dominate, command."
 - a. Men, think not, "She is my slave, my puppet, my push-button automaton to satisfy my every whim."
 - b. Men, think, "She is my beloved wife, my flesh whom I nourish and cherish. Therefore my rule/control will be reasonable, benevolent and with due consideration of her needs. I will be firm where household order or vital principle is at stake. I will establish guidelines and boundaries within which she may freely operate and exercise considerable power. I will not relinquish my headship, but neither will I be a heartless tyrant. I will remember my Savior's love for me; His tender, compassionate rule over me, and make this my pattern."
 - c. Women, do not perversely interpret your husbands' attempts at the latter as being the former.
 - d. Husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. **Eph.5:28-29.**
 - i. He who loves his body must check and regulate (control) its desires for its own good. **1 Co.9:27.**
 - ii. He who loves his wife thus will, for her good, have to sometimes do likewise.
 - iii. It is not an act of nourishing, cherishing love to give into every desire of either one's body or one's wife.
 5. The definitions of the terms of the husband's headship show clearly his responsibility to command his wife as well as his children. He is a commander.
 - a. A wise commander will not "overdrive the flock" (**Gen.33:13**), i.e., be so demanding and burdensome as to make it impossible for his wife to submit.
 - i. Overtaxing breeds futility and rebellion. **1 Ki.12:14-16.**
 - ii. It is not overdriving or overtaxing to expect of a wife what God Himself expects of a wife. **1 Ti.5:14; Tit.2:4-5; Pro.31:11-12.**
 - iii. Husbands, be advised: superabundance of stuff and fluff which require so much time and energy to care for can overburden your wife, family and yourself.
 - iv. "Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit" (**Ecc.4:6**).
 - b. A wise commander will not demand his way at all times but will consider the counsel and needs of those under him. **1 Sa.25:32-33; 1 Ch.13:1-4.**
- IX. **1 Pe.3:1-6** sets forth the Biblical model for a faithful woman's relationship to her husband.
- A. Her submission is not conditioned upon her husband's faith or obedience.
v.1 c/w 1 Pe.2:18.

- B. She is to submit to him "with fear" (v.2), fearing God whom she would offend by rebellion or usurpation.
- C. Her godly submission may have more influence in his life than Scripture.
- D. She is to have a chaste conversation (manner of living).
1. Chaste: "Pure from unlawful sexual intercourse, continent, virtuous (of persons, their lives, conduct, etc.)."
 2. Continent: "Self-restraining, or marked by self-restraint, *esp.* in relation to bodily passions, appetites or indulgences; temperate."
- E. Attitude counts!
1. She is not like the harlot, loud and stubborn. **Pro.7:11.**
 2. She is not a brawler with whom there is no living. **Pro.21:9.**
 3. She is not a contentious member of NAG (National Association of Gals). **Pro.21:19.**
 4. She has a meek and quiet spirit.
- F. Attitude counts!
1. If her heart is right, in her heart she deems her husband to be her lord. **v.6 c/w Gen.18:12.**
 2. She will reverence her husband. **Eph.5:33.**
 - a. Reverence: "Deep or due respect felt or shown towards a person on account of his or her position or relationship; deference."
 - b. She will reverence her husband whether he is a professor or a poor farmer, a gold mine or a coal miner, a white collar professional or a dirty colored iron worker.
 - c. That kind of reverence pleases God and works wonders to move her husband to give "honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel..." (**v.7 c/w Pro.12:4**).
- G. Attitude counts! Wives, what does submissiveness mean in your heart?
1. Does it mean that you will submit only when he does or decides what you wanted?
 2. Does it mean that you will grudgingly submit when he does or decides contrary to your wishes?
 3. Does it mean that you will feign submissiveness but pursue your own agenda anyway?
 4. Does it mean that you will hide from him something that you don't want to have him make a decision on, lest your agenda gets trumped?
 5. It should mean that you will submit willingly to his headship, his policies and his decisions in good conscience and trust God to honor your submission.
 6. This does not mean that a wife can never disagree with her husband's decision but such disagreement should not become an occasion for resentment or underhanded revenge tactics or a bad example for a daughter. **Pro.14:1.**
- H. A wife's fearful submission does not imply that she is forbidden to think for herself, take a stand for a righteous principle or abandon instincts of self-preservation.
1. She is to be "not afraid with any *amazement*" (v.6), which is "the condition of being mentally paralyzed, mental stupefaction, frenzy."
 2. Sarah, the model of a godly wife, based upon God's word, resisted Abraham when he was wrong and God upheld her in the matter. **Gen.17:15-21 c/w 21:9-12.**
 3. Abigail wisely worked contrary to her husband's wishes to the saving of her life, his life and their household. **1 Sa.25:4-35.**
 4. A sensible, intelligent, godly wife is a complement, not an impediment to her husband's successful headship and goals. **Acts 18:26.**

5. A sensible husband will not feel threatened by such; he will cultivate her graces and wisdom for the betterment of all.
- I. A wife who will not submit to her husband's headship disqualifies an otherwise qualified man from church offices. **1 Ti.3:11.**
- X. Reverence of a spouse is not the sole responsibility of the wife.
 - A. Husbands are to be "giving HONOUR unto the wife..." (**1 Pe.3:7**).
 - B. Honour: "High respect, esteem or REVERENCE, accorded to exalted worth or rank; deferential admiration or approbation."
 - C. There is therefore to be a mutual reverence and respect within marriage and without this a marriage is in trouble.
 1. The wife reverences her husband as her head, strength and savior.
 2. The husband is to give honour unto (reverence) his wife "as unto the weaker vessel" (**1 Pe.3:7**).
 - a. He should not require her to bear burdens that were not meant for her to bear.
 - b. He should shield her from harmful influences, including his own.
 - c. He should accept that her physical, emotional and mental make-up may very well make it difficult for her to do, feel or think as he does.
 - d. He should realize that her defensiveness may very well be because she knows she is the weaker vessel.
 - e. Instead of despising her for those weaknesses, he should love her and be not bitter against her. **Col.3:19.**
 - f. To be bitter against a wife for being as God made her is to fault God for making her that way.
 - g. She is to be nourished (brought up, reared, nurtured) AND cherished (held dear, treated with tenderness and affection; made much of). **Eph.5:29.**
 - h. She thrives on praise and reward and should receive it. **Pro.31:28-31.**
 - i. She is poetically a garden (**Son.4:12**) and a garden that is not well-cared for yields little pleasure.
 - j. Let us pray for a national repentance from the perverted values which would deny women their natural tenderness and femininity and send them into armed combat.
 - i. Fathers, teach your sons by Scripture and example to bear manly burdens themselves and to treat women as ladies.
 - ii. Mothers, teach your daughters by Scripture and example to be content with how God made them. Cultivate femininity and ladylike attitudes in them.
 - iii. There will never be a national return to such dignity unless it begins at home.
 3. The very effectiveness of a couple's prayer life hinges on the respect that the husband renders unto the wife: "...that your prayers be not hindered" (**1 Pe.3:7**).
 - a. Conduct should accord with prayer's desire if prayer is to be effectual.
 - b. Praying for your children to grow up into godly adults with healthy marriages while dishonouring one another in front of them is an appropriate example of hindering prayer.
 - D. People are much more willing to accept criticism from those whom they know respect them and have their best interests at heart.
 - E. Men: she needs to know that your headship is for her good and the family's good, not

merely for your self-will or ego.

F. Women: you need to know that he will have much less trouble giving you the care, attention and affection that you desire when he senses you respect his headship and leadership.

G. Learn to practice **1 Pe.3:8-11** in marriage.

1. Be pitiful and courteous to your spouse.
2. Make efforts to understand each other's problems and feelings.
3. Strive to understand instead of pressing to be understood.
4. Guard the tongue. c/w **Pro.18:21-22**.

H. Remember: it begins at home.

1. Children will first learn how a wife relates to her husband in their own home.
2. Children will first learn how a husband relates to his wife in their own home.
3. What will your children learn from your relationship?

XI. Making sense out of a disordered world must start by proper order in the home.

A. Here is where the woman is blessed to honor God and exercise considerable authority and influence. **Tit.2:3-5**.

1. Keeper: "One who has charge, care, or oversight of any person or thing; a guardian, warden, custodian." c/w **1 Ti.5:14; Pro.31:27**.
 - a. She is not just a Sweeper, she is a Keeper: a guide of the house.
 - b. Keeping house requires great organizational skills, culinary skills, financial sense, etc., even WITHOUT children in the picture!
 - c. With children in the household, the responsibility is even greater and more solemn. This is no meager undertaking!
 - d. A woman with children has a great sphere of influence for good or bad. **Eph.6:1 c/w Pro.1:8; 2 Ch.22:1-3**.
2. A woman exercises authority over the home under her husband.
 - a. Thus, the headship of the husband does not imply that the woman has no authority to wield.
 - b. A wise husband will delegate authority and a wise woman will faithfully exercise it.
3. Consider the phrase, "keepers at home" (**Tit.2:5**).
 - a. This does not forbid a wife from leaving the confines of the home. **1 Sa.25:18; Pro.31:16**.
 - b. It should, though, warn against the opposite extreme of being a gadabout.
 - i. Godly women are to be "discreet, chaste, keepers at home..."
 - ii. Dinah was not *discreet* (showing discernment or judgement in the guidance of one's own speech and action; judicious, prudent, circumspect, cautious...), didn't keep at home, and lost her chastity. **Gen.34:1-2**.
4. Believers: Let not this humanistic, Bible-rejecting society cow you into thinking that a woman who is domestically oriented is somehow cheapened or deprived by that!

B. The virtuous woman of **Pro.31:10-31** is clearly not an incarcerated baby-making machine forced to stifle any talent, sense or creativity.

1. This passage acknowledges the right of a wife and mother to be involved in business dealings beyond domestic responsibilities.
2. Clearly, the guidance of her house is not surrendered because of this.
3. Though industrious, she honors her husband's headship.

4. Women who contribute to household finances must be cautious to not usurp the husband's authority.
5. The healthy balance of submissiveness and industry in the virtuous woman can be attributed to her fear of God. **Pro.31:30.**
6. Ruth is good example of a principled, industrious, meek and quiet spirit who was not afraid with amazement. She is appropriately identified as a virtuous woman. **Ruth 3:11.**

- C. The day to day order of the household rests very much on the shoulders of the woman.
1. Men, it is our responsibility to support our wife's efforts to keep an ordered home, not frustrate them by our own bad habits.
 2. Men, do not complicate your wives' efforts at keeping an ordered home by allowing excessive "stuff" to overwhelm the place.
 3. Men, do not impose unreasonable expectations of perfection and cleanliness upon your wives, particularly if you are not willing to lend a hand with household chores.
 4. A proverb to live by: Let your house be clean enough to be healthy and dirty enough to be happy.
 - a. An unkept house is one where valuables tend to get lost. **Luk.15:8.**
 - b. On the other hand, a fastidiously clean house may be a home of a devil. **Mat.12:44.**
 - c. "Be not righteous over much.....why shouldst thou destroy thyself" (**Ecc.7:16**)?
 - d. Be cautious to not be so caught up in the quest for perfect order in the home that you cannot have contentment in sub-perfection.
 5. Men, be mindful that guiding the house (**1 Ti.5:14**) embraces much more than cleaning and cooking, especially when children enter the picture.
 6. Women, be mindful not to get wrapped up in false responsibilities, burdens or even opportunities which rob you of the time and energy you need to attend to the things God expects of you.

XII. Learning to get along with one another in the home sets the stage for getting along with others in the church and in the world in general.

- A. How parents get along with each other sets the tone for children in the home doing likewise.
- B. A married couple's relationship will teach either fidelity or futility to children.
 1. If Dad and Mom can be faithful to God and each other in how they relate, the prospect of positive interaction with others is seen as an attainable goal by children.
 2. If Dad and Mom just can't seem to get along and home life is one of dark clouds and acrimony, positive interaction with others may seem unattainable to children.
- C. Following is a reminder of how to make marriage work.

XIII. Marriage is bondage (the good kind).

- A. Scripture teaches that charity is "the bond of perfectness" (**Col.3:14**).
- B. A healthy marriage will develop in direct proportion to the partners' practice of charity's characteristics. Hatred divides; love binds.
- C. Consider your marriage relationship in light of **1 Co.13:4-8**.
- D. Charity "suffereth long."
 1. Man, what was/is your reaction to the following?
 - a. She couldn't/can't cook as well as Mother.

- b. After 5 years of marriage, she still sometimes signs her maiden name.
 - c. She regularly reminds you of "the way Daddy used to do it."
 - d. Intimately, she is a crock-pot; you are a microwave oven.
 - e. She hasn't figured out how to read your mind yet, thus necessitating much wasted time in explaining things.
 - f. She disagrees with you.
 - g. She is mystified by those clever gauges on the instrument panel of the car.
2. Woman, what was/is your reaction to the following?
- a. He frequently reminds you of how well Mom used to cook.
 - b. He hasn't made a big success out of himself yet, occupationally.
 - c. He isn't providing the same standard of living that you were used to.
 - d. He seems to be ignorant of what makes you happy or turns you on.
 - e. His leadership isn't flawless.
 - f. He doesn't see things your way, even though you may have a point.
 - g. He can't seem to get the hang of the toilet seat/lid, towel rack, clothes closet or laundry hamper.
3. We are to love as Christ loved us. **Joh.15:12.**
- a. God is longsuffering towards us. **2 Pe.3:9; 1 Ti.1:16.**
 - b. If God were as impatient with us as spouses often are to one another, where would we be?
4. Longsuffering is kin to forbearance. **Rom.2:4; Eph.4:2.**
- a. Sometimes we may simply have to put up with or overlook a spouse's mistakes. **Pro.19:11; 17:9.**
 - b. Any relationship is doomed to failure without forbearance.
- E. Charity "is kind."
1. Man, do you:
- a. take her for granted?
 - b. treat her like a soldier in boot camp preferring to dictate orders to her, or would you consider a more subtle, gentle approach? **Phm.8-9.**
 - c. snap at her in a manner that you wouldn't do to a friend or business acquaintance?
 - d. think she is little more than a maid? a cheap chef? a janitor?
 - e. take out your workday frustrations on her?
 - f. belittle her in front of others?
 - g. make disparaging comments about her looks or sensuality?
 - h. look and hope for her mistakes, so you can use them against her?
Consider **Luk.11:54.**
 - i. advertise her faults when she does err? See **Mat.1:19.**
 - j. only bring up her bad points when criticizing? See **Rev.2:1-7.**
2. Woman, do you:
- a. snipe at him for overruling your wishes?
 - b. henpeck or nag consistently?
 - c. gossip about his faults? **Rom.1:30 ct/w Pro.31:26.**
 - d. withhold affection or intimacy as a punishment or to get your way?
See **1 Co.7:3-5.**
 - e. make yourself more attractive to other men than you do for him?
3. Kindness embraces tenderheartedness and due consideration of the other's interests.
Eph.4:32; Rom.12:10.
- F. Charity "envieth not."

1. Man, do you envy:
 - a. your wife's family for their achievements or stability?
 - b. your single friends for their unfettered freedom?
 - c. other men whose wives are more vivacious? level-headed? adept at household duties?
 2. Woman, do you envy:
 - a. other women whose husbands are more gallant? successful? virile?
 - b. other women with careers while you are stuck with children?
 - c. other women who have children? **Gen.30:1.**
 3. Anger and wrath can be destructive, but at least they are generally external emotions which can be dealt with. Envy is much more sinister, rotting within. **Pro.27:4.**
- G. Charity "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."
1. This is the "me first" self-will complex.
 2. Sometimes in marriages this is manifested by a partner always rushing to claim the moral high ground on an issue, as if they are immune to mistakes.
 3. This is basically pride, which God despises and only leads to grave disappointments. **Pro.11:2; 16:18.**
- H. Charity "doth not behave itself unseemly."
1. Unseemly: "Unbecoming, unfitting, indecent."
 2. This would censure men for:
 - a. effeminacy. **1 Co.6:9.**
 - b. slovenly dress or grooming.
 - c. coarse vulgarity, especially in public. **Eph.5:4; Col.4:6.**
 - d. ogling other women. **Job 31:1.**
 3. This would censure women for:
 - a. immodest dress in public. **1 Ti.2:9.**
 - b. flirting with other men. **Gen.20:16.**
 - c. cropping her hair too short. **1 Co.11:6, 15.**
- I. Charity "seeketh not her own."
1. This is what true love is all about: preferring the welfare of others.
 2. Christ's sacrificial love is our example. **1 Jo.3:16.**
- J. Charity "is not easily provoked."
1. **Jam.1:19; Pro.15:1; 25:15** speak against "knee-jerk" reactions to a spouse's provocations.
 2. Spouses need to be tolerant of each other's faults as much as possible. Forbearance does go a long way to promote peace in the home and this is a goal worthy of our pursuit. **Rom.12:18; 14:19.**
 3. Avoid forcing mistakes and provocations into strifes. **Pro.30:33; 17:14.**
 4. Don't "strain at a gnat." **Mat.23:24.**
- K. Charity "thinketh no evil."
1. Avoid colored speculations about your spouse in the absence of valid proof. **1 Ti.6:4.**
 2. Crush daydream fantasies about others in their infancy and avoid seed-beds for the same. **2 Ti.2:22; Rom.13:14.**
- L. Charity "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."
1. These words emphasize the importance of spouses being sold out to the doctrine of Christ.
 2. Remember that married saints are "heirs TOGETHER of the grace of life"

(1 **Pe.3:7**). There are few things in this world as precious as a spouse who shares your faith and is your partner in Christian witness. **Acts 18:26**.

- M. Charity "beareth all things." This includes bearing each other's burdens. **Gal.5:2**.
- N. Charity "believeth all things." It believes that God's word which reveals the love of Christ should govern conduct in marriage.
- O. Charity "hopeth all things." It hopes that patient application of Biblical principles will result in an improved marriage.
- P. Charity "endureth all things." This means that the marriage should not become full of strife or fall apart because:
 - 1. it isn't the utopian existence that was expected.
 - 2. financial troubles set in.
 - 3. tragedy or sickness take their toll.
- Q. Charity "never faileth." You can never go wrong by charity.

XIV. The training of children is a solemn responsibility of parents. **Pro.22:6 c/w Pro.1:8; Eph.6:1**.

- A. The successful training of children is very dependent upon the parents' presuppositions about their children.
 - 1. Here is an "A - Z" list of unhealthy presuppositions about children.
 - a. Children are naturally pure, innocent and without innate capacity to sin.
 - b. Children will naturally develop good character without guidance.
 - c. Children's development is thwarted by imposed boundaries and limitations.
 - d. Children do not develop properly unless smothered with stuff.
 - e. Children's psyches will be irreparably damaged by spanking.
 - f. Children's psyches are so fragile that any parental error could ruin them.
 - g. Children need to be always sheltered from discomfort or disappointment.
 - h. Children do not need love and affection, only rules and orders.
 - i. Children are unwanted obstacles to personal goals and desires.
 - j. Children are the property of the State to be molded to its preferences.
 - k. Children are the property of the parents to be molded to their preferences.
 - l. Children are all born with like personalities.
 - m. Children are all born with differing personalities which cannot be affected.
 - n. Children will not be adversely affected by ungodly entertainment.
 - o. Children will naturally make good choices about food, clothes and pleasure.
 - p. Children will naturally make good choices about friends.
 - q. Children are a parent's pets.
 - r. Children must be harshly disciplined for every infraction.
 - s. Children always need negative reinforcement.
 - t. Children always need positive reinforcement.
 - u. Children do not need praise.
 - v. Children need constant praise.
 - w. Children's interests are foremost in the home.
 - x. Children's interests should be given no consideration in the home.
 - y. Children should be spared doctrinal teaching and preaching.
 - z. Children do not need God, His knowledge, His fear, His Bible or His church.
 - 2. None of the above presuppositions accord with Scripture. It is imperative that a Biblical presuppositional view of children be cultivated.
- B. As noted earlier in this study, children are the heritage of the Lord given to parents to train up in the ways of the Lord for Him (**Psa.127:3 c/w Deu.6:4-7**), human parents essentially

being trustees for God.

1. The goal of parenting is to bring children to maturity, to the fulness of human potential according to God's design.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the supreme model of human maturity and fulness.
Eph.4:13.
 - b. The more one conforms to the character of Christ, the more he is full and mature.
 - i. Christ's character speaks of faithfulness, reliability, truthfulness, holiness, righteousness, justice, principle, boldness, candor, submissiveness, honor, duty, patience, etc.
 - ii. An individual in whom such attributes have been cultivated would be a welcome part of a family, the workplace and society, generally.
 - c. Full, mature human potential is unattainable without Christ in the picture.
2. Children are conceived in and born with a sin nature. **Psa.51:5; 58:3; Pro.22:15.**
 - a. Left to himself, a child will develop bad opinions and habits.
Pro.29:15; 17:25.
 - b. Left to himself, a child will become oppressive. **Isa.3:12.**
 - c. Good opinions and habits must be trained into children. **Pro.22:6.**
 - i. They are not to be trained in a way they want to go.
 - ii. They are not to be trained in a way you want them to go.
 - iii. They are not to be trained in a way others want them to go.
 - iv. They are to be trained in THE way that they SHOULD go, and God is the determiner of that way.
 - d. Parents must strive to reverse and restrain the effects of the fall by training the child.
 - i. Train: "III. 5. To treat or manipulate so as to bring to the proper or desired form; spec. in Gardening, to manage (a plant or a branch) so as to cause it to grow in some desired form or direction....6. To subject to discipline and instruction for the purpose of forming character and developing the powers of, or of making proficient in some occupation...."
 - ii. Healthy, productive gardens require good soil, light, water and weeding.
 - iii. Even the best of gardens must be dressed (made straight or right, brought into proper order) and kept (had regard or paid attention to) according to **Gen.2:15**. Let not the parent of the "good" child, therefore, think his/her training is unnecessary.
 - iv. The definition of *train* underscores the importance of starting the process early in life. It is much easier to train a sapling to grow in a specific direction than a fourteen-year-old oak.
 - e. It is very important for parents to be united in purpose in the training.
 - i. A direction and method for child-training should be discussed by parents and the father deciding what should be stressed and making sure such is implemented.
 - ii. Unless a clear, present danger to the child's well-being is at stake, a wife should back up her husband's decision by honoring and enforcing it. **Pro.31:11.**
 - iii. Children will seek to "divide and conquer" if there is not a strong, united front in parents, exploiting the breach for their own advantage

by playing one parent against the other.

- iv. How can children please God and obey their parents in the Lord (**Eph.6:1**) if the parents have contradictory directives?

- XV. The primary responsibility in child training is that of the father. **Deu.6:6-7; Isa.38:19; Eph.6:4.**
- A. The man of the house is also the head of the house. **Eph.6:1 c/w Eph.5:23.**
- B. A father's position is comparable to a king which in Scripture is called a head (**1 Sa.15:17**), a master (**1 Sa.24:6**) and a pastor (**Jer.10:21 c/w Isa.44:28**).
- C. A king is also called a "leader and commander" (**Isa.55:4**).
1. Effective fathering is an exercise in effective leadership.
 2. A faithful father will not simply hope for, purchase, or negotiate good conduct with his children. He will command it. **Gen.18:19 c/w 1 Th.5:11.**
 3. Leadership is realized in two ways:
 1. A positive aspect of bringing children to maturity and full potential through good example and instruction.
 2. A negative aspect of enforcing order when there is unwillingness to cooperate with parental rule.
 4. As a leader, the father sets the pace for a child's performance.
 1. Good examples of effective fathers would be Abraham (**Ge.18:19**) or Mordecai. **Est.2:7, 20.**
 2. Bad examples of effective fathers would be David or Eli.
1 Ki.1:6; 1 Sa.3:13.
 - a. David was a success as a magistrate, but in many ways a failure as a father. God forbid that a career should be more important to a man than the training of his children.
 - b. Mark the emphasis on "restraint" and "displeasing." A crucial attribute of the building of a child's character is by limiting his conduct and making him unhappy by saying "NO" to his misdirected desires.
 5. Three types of ineffective fathers are:
 1. the sultan whose time is his own and must ever be waited on.
 2. the tyrant who can never admit error and rules by brute force. He will have his children's fear but not their devotion. **Pro.28:16.**
 3. the pacifistic coward who gives up and leaves the training of the child totally in the mother's hand because he can't bring himself to bear the responsibility or discomfort of that job. He abdicates to his wife and then wonders why she is dominating. Children learn to play mother against father.
- D. There are some obvious obstacles to effective fathering.
1. There is a battle for the mind of the child.
 - a. This is witnessed as a child comes into contact with neighborhood friends, school, the media and society.
 - b. The situation is much more pronounced now than in earlier generations due to a general deterioration of society's morals, the superabundance of distracting media, and the reduction of people who share Biblical values.
 2. Complete isolation from the world is an imperfect answer. **1 Co.5:9-10.**
 - a. At some point a child is going to have to exercise his senses to discern between good and evil in society. This is where training comes in.
Isa.7:16.

- b. Forbidding a child to have any exposure at all to negative or competitive influences is to ill prepare him for the real world.
 - c. Conversely, overexposing a child to negative or competitive influences is to virtually guarantee his moral pollution. **1 Co.15:33; Rom.16:19.**
 - d. Somewhere between the extremes of overprotection and over-permissiveness is a reasonable approach.
 - e. A noble goal is to strive to make home-life such a positive thing that the aberrant behavior of the world holds out nothing alluring to a child.
3. The structure of modern society poses handicaps to successful fathering.
- a. Contrasted with an agrarian society where children saw their father in his productive role, today's working father is separated from his children. Home-life has been separated from work-life and home-life has accordingly become more leisure-oriented.
 - b. Schools with extracurricular activity dominate the time.
 - c. Age groups are isolated for large blocks of time creating a peer culture. Strong horizontal relationships tend to weaken vertical relationships.
 - d. The increase of material goods tends to lessen the need for human relationships.
- E. The Biblical ideal for effective fathering and wholesome family life is **Deu.6:4-9**.
- 1. Normal life is to be saturated with the plan, presence and love of God.
 - 2. Life at home should be so appealing that all else is eclipsed by comparison.
 - 3. This exhortation was timely in view of what would be encountered in Canaan:
 - a. Affluence. **Deu.8:6-18.**
 - b. Competitive religions. **Deu.12:1-3, 29-31.**
 - c. Seductive women. **Deu.7:3-4.**
 - d. Alternate commandment-free lifestyles (deathstyles?). **Lev.18.**
 - 4. Our society is "slouching toward Gomorrah" (as one author put it) and is a modern day rival to old Canaan.
 - 5. God's preparatory directives for Israel are as relevant today as then.
 - 6. Fathers: Prepare your children against their impending entrance to Canaan!
- F. There are costs to effective fathering.
- 1. Evaluate children in a long-term perspective. It is easy to reckon other demands of time more important when children are small.
 - 2. The rich young ruler would not make needed adjustments in his lifestyle. **Mar.10:13-27.**
 - 3. Personal freedoms such as leisure time, habits, words and phrases and evaluations made in the presence of children may have to go.
 - 4. Because of a lack of time due to numerous involvements, a father may handle problems in the home with haste and force when patience and understanding would prove more effective.
 - 5. An effective father must have a definition of success which differs from that of the world. Submission to God's claims relative to fatherhood may be painful and costly.
- G. The effective father will lead first of all by example.
- 1. You want to teach a child diligence. Does your work ethic agree with what you want the child to embrace?
 - 2. You want the child to prioritize spiritual things.
 - a. Is your day so overwhelmed with work and the cares of life that Scripture is choked out? **Luk.8:14.**

- b. Is your faith little or great when it comes to matters of everyday needs?
Mat.6:25-34.
 - c. Does your child have any doubts that prayer is a vital part of your life?
 - d. Does your reverence for and attendance to God's house leave the child with the impression that you value it very highly?
 - 3. You want the child to learn patience. Are you patient with others? with your child? Are you patient in the matter of acquisitions or are you impulsive?
 - 4. You want the child to learn endurance. Do you just quit that household or yard task at the first hint of sweat or fatigue?
 - 5. You want the child to learn to handle frustration and disappointment with dignity and patience. Do you "lose it" when a planned outing is cancelled or if something breaks down or if you see someone driving foolishly?
 - 6. You want the child to learn that life is not defined by material acquisitions.
Luk.12:15.
 - a. Do you have any room left in your garage or closet?
 - b. Do you smother the child with stuff as if you think by that to buy the child's affection or obedience?
 - c. It is much more important to give children something to live for, not things to live with.
- H. The effective father will also lead through verbal communication.
 - 1. Words may build or destroy. **Pro.18:21.**
 - 2. Fathers are to be managers initiating productivity and creativity. Instruction should be:
 - a. *clear.* Is the instruction expressed as a wish or a command? As a child develops positive patterns, less instruction should be needed.
 - b. *well-defined and within the child's comprehension and ability to perform.*
 - i. Time limits may be helpful because time passes slowly for a child.
 - ii. A timer or a suitable sweep-hand kitchen clock can help even little children gain a perspective on time ("...when the big hand points to ---, you should be all done.").
 - c. *certain.* Do not train your child to respond only to increased volume of command. Delayed obedience should be considered disobedience.
 - 3. Here are four types of fathers that fail in verbal leadership.
 - a. The dishonest father. This one doesn't check for results when a command is given. He doesn't mean what he says. Responsible leaders will check for results. **Luk.19:15; 2 Co.9:2-3.**
 - b. The threatening father. This one is really offering choices. Is not sitting still for an hour worth more than what Dad threatened would happen, particularly since Dad tends to forget or not carry through with the threat?
 - c. The exploding father. This one merely throws tantrums, causing the child to focus more on the father's reaction than on the ethic of his own behavior.
 - i. This father is merely causing the child an inconvenience.
 - ii. His message is basically, "Do as you wish if you can stand the heat."
 - d. The disinterested or silent father. "Do what you want, just don't bother me." This father is in essence telling the child that he doesn't really care about him.
- I. The effective father strives to teach abilities to his children.
 - 1. A father will teach every day whether by design or neglect.
 - 2. Abilities are taught through planning family experiences.

3. Take advantage of opportunities to have a child assist in responsibility.
 - a. A child should feel that he has a role to play in the family's success and survival.
 - b. Adjust the responsibility level according to age and ability. **Joh.16:12.**
 - c. An example of a chance to share responsibility might be something like repairing a bicycle.
 - i. A lazy father would postpone or ignore the job.
 - ii. A busy father might just quickly do it himself.
 - iii. A wise father would take time to demonstrate how the repair is done and seek assistance from his child. This is an opportunity to teach diagnosis, proper tool selection and maintenance.
 4. Expose the child to skills other than your own and provide opportunities for cultivation if interest in an area is sensed.
 5. Take time to interrogate so as to stimulate and challenge the child's mind.
- J. The effective father strives to teach values to his children.
1. Values are taught through lifestyle as well as words. Know the value of exposure to your manners of response, evaluation and overall conduct.
 - a. A bad example would be Lot. **Gen.19:14, 30-36.**
 - b. A good example is Paul. **2 Ti.1:2; 3:10-11.**
 2. Through mass media and public education, children today are exposed to many rival models of behavior. Be forewarned and guard accordingly!
 3. Create experiences to jam the family together for learning such as games, quizzes, trips or picnics.
 4. Conduct in the house is a great area for modeling. How is your marriage and how do you handle stress and disagreement?
- K. The effective father will strive to be approachable.
1. How do you respond to repeated busy signals (answering machine, voicemail, etc.) on the phone or to unreturned calls?
 2. Are you open, responsive and concerned with your child? Or do you frequently respond with: "Wait until later," "Ask Mom," "I'm tired," or "I don't care what you do." How do children feel about THESE "busy signals?"
 3. Consider how important you figure in a child's world.
 - a. Don't try to buy off kids with money and stuff.
 - b. Giving money instead of time can warp a child's values.
 - c. It is really you that your child needs and desires, not your wallet.
 4. David was comforted with the approachableness of God his heavenly Father. **Psa.4:3.**
 5. Consider why some fathers do not listen well.
 - a. They would rather speak because they deem their information more important.
 - b. They have trained themselves to listen to only what they deem important.
 - c. They do not know how to listen.
 - i. They do not know how to interpret gestures, facial expressions, word choices, posture, timing, etc.
 - ii. The average father can reflect upon his own childhood to gain insights into the expressive techniques of children.
 6. Consider some things to listen for.
 - a. *Questions*, which are not only a child's way of getting information, but also to see whether or not Dad can be relied upon and whether or not Dad is

- interested in the child.
 - b. *Mood changes*, which may indicate a need for affection because the child feels unloved or alone.
 - c. *Downgrading remarks about self*, which may indicate that the child is struggling with guilt issues or burdened about failure. This child needs affirmation.
 - d. *Looks of disappointment*, which may simply mean a trumped will or may indicate some healthy intention has been frustrated.
 - i. The disappointed look of a trumped will may need a lesson in humility and submissiveness.
 - ii. The disappointed look of frustrated good intention needs to be assured that the thought and effort are more valuable than the outcome.
7. Consider some important times to listen.
- a. *Bedtime*, which may be the child's closing efforts to make right the wrongs of the day or to seek reassurance of love and security.
 - b. *Moments of exhilaration or creativity*, which are a child's expression of personal delight and satisfaction, and also a way of saying, "See Dad, I'm trying....," or "See Dad, this is what motivates me..."
 - c. *Moments of penitence*, during which a child is needing to "unload" something and to gain assurance of a parent's continued love.
 - d. *Moments of fear or failure*, which need a father's undivided attention.
 - e. *Moments when alone together*, because every child needs prime time with Dad alone. Our model is set by our interaction with God. **Mat.6:6.**
8. Do not wall off large areas of conversation by obstinate refusal to listen, which may encourage a child to tell you nothing or only tell you what you want to hear to pacify you.
- a. Try to distinguish independent thought from rebellion.
 - i. Rebellion is not when a child is trying to accomplish or express something in his own manner.
 - ii. Rebellion is when a specific, no-option expectation is defied.
 - b. By overreacting to any deviation from Dad's standards, Dad may teach a child that it is unwise to tell him everything.
9. Explosive raging at moral failure can provoke excuses whereas understanding may inspire confession.
- a. God is forgiving and approachable when we err. **1 Jo.1:9; 2:1-2.**
 - b. Approachability reduces the number of defense mechanisms.
- L. The effective father will be vigilant (wakeful, watchful, keeping steadily on the alert; attentively or closely observant).
- 1. Be foresightful rather than impulsive. An impulsive father loses contact with circumstances, then overreacts or underreacts.
 - 2. Know the child in terms of the situation and his ability. Know what to expect and know the ultimate objective of the growth process. **Psa.144:12; Luk.2:52.**
 - 3. Be sensitive to:
 - a. *youthful fatigue*. Children need more hours of sleep when young and it is virtually guaranteed that irritability will indicate needed nap-time.
 - i. Overdriving little children is unfair and unhealthy. **Gen.33:13.**
 - ii. On the other hand, never letting a child experience the need to "keep on keepin' on" when tired is to shield the child from rising

above his own expectations and from appreciating the nobility of "hangin' in there" when the easy thing to do would be to quit.

Jdg.8:4; 2 Sa.23:10.

- b. *inner struggles*. Everyone has a bad day from time to time. Mercy is to be remembered in the home as much as anywhere. **Mat.5:7; Jam.2:13.**
 - c. *trends of opinion in informal conversation*. This is a clue as to what is going on in a child's heart. **Mat.12:34.**
 - d. *performance in critical situations*.
 - i. The child who struggles with critical situations may be hampered by fear, feelings of inadequacy or plain old laziness.
 - ii. The child who handles critical situations well is showing character sufficient to move up the ladder of responsibilities.
 - e. *behavior after being with friends*. Is the child influential or influenced?
 - i. Cultivate from early age in the child the superiority of principles over popularity.
 - ii. Encourage your child that he/she can be a positive influence on peers instead of going along with the crowd.
 - iii. Encourage friendships for your child with youth of good character and shared values.
 - iv. Sometimes the only way to save a child from being negatively influenced by friends is to discourage or even forbid such friends.
Note **2 Pe.2:7-9 c/w Gen.19:16.**
 - f. *evaluations of self, others or events*. Is the child rationalizing bad behavior, bitter, belittling others or exaggerating?
 - g. *potential situations of conflict*. Diffuse the potential for conflict instead of reacting with anger and frustration when the crisis breaks out. **Pro.22:3.**
 - i. Example: A long family car trip has the potential for all kinds of conflict as weariness, boredom and cramped confines set the stage for irritability. Plan travel time to allow for stops. Encourage constructive activity while in the car to "eat up the miles."
 - ii. Example: The drudgery of household chores can be softened by limiting excess "stuff" and rotating jobs amongst siblings.
4. Consider three principles of vigilance.
- a. Know the stress-limits of the child. A child has three high points of emotional pressure:
 - i. *Insecurity*, or not knowing what to depend on.
 - aa. Insecurity may be manifested by babyishness, aggressiveness, stomach ache, etc. A child may be wondering if he is really cared for.
 - bb. Consistency in the home helps to meet the need for security. If a disruption in the routine of the home is foreseen, take extra pains to reassure the child.
 - cc. Knowing that he has a secure home environment goes a long way to the positive development of a child.
 - ii. *Puberty*, a time when powerful hormonal changes can cause considerable emotional fluctuations.
 - aa. A vigilant father would forewarn a child as to what to expect and would respond with understanding.
 - bb. A vigilant father would also make it clear that the

emotional changes that attend puberty do not excuse the child from respect and duty in the home.

- iii. *Youthful competition and pride*, which are two sides of the same coin.
 - aa. The extremes are the overachiever who must always win or the apathetic underachiever who is reluctant to try.
 - bb. A father may have to deflate destructive pride or encourage a crushed spirit.
 - cc. Pride may be an issue in both cases. Sometimes underachieving is due to one being too proud of self to submit to the possibility of not measuring up to or besting others.
 - dd. Children need to be encouraged that the victory is in the trying, not the winning.
- b. Establish rules of conduct.
 - i. Clearly define rules in terms that the child can understand and check to see if there was comprehension.
 - ii. Avoid impromptu, unpredictable rules that are made on the strength of force alone.
 - iii. Establish godly behavioral laws which admit to no exceptions and rigidly enforce them, such as: truthfulness, respect for those in authority, respect for other's property, respect for God and His name, etc.
 - iv. Establish convictions: things judged right or wrong in view of what is deemed best. Examples: church loyalty, diet, arrival times, rising early, orderliness, etc.
- c. Establish a process of decision-making.
 - i. Consider the personal history and situation of the child rather than basing the decision on incomplete information. Example: Is an oversight an obvious rebellion or an unintentional projection of human infirmity.
 - ii. A thorough knowledge of the child's demeanor should provide the answer to the above question and should bear upon your response.
 - iii. In dealing with transgression, consider the temptation and ask yourself if you provoked it. **Eph.6:4.**
 - iv. What is the long-term growth effect of a decision?
 - v. Determine where exceptions can be made. Exceptions can be made on convictions, not on laws.

XVI. By virtue of the principle of **Pro.22:6**, parents are to shape the lives of their children.

- A. Most of a child's personality is molded before the age of 9, which emphasizes the importance of getting things started early on the right track.
- B. Parents are to create the atmosphere conducive to children making sound judgments.
 - 1. This creation of this atmosphere **MUST BEGIN AT HOME!** Children cannot be expected to make sound judgments in venues outside of the home if they have not been trained to do so in the home.
 - a. Let the prevailing tone of this atmosphere be that of nurturing, cherishing love which leaves no doubt in a child's mind that parents have the child's best interests at heart. **1 Th.2:7-8.**

- b. Childhood development and performance (adults, too!) is best where love is the byword, not fear or malice. **1 Jo.4:18.**
 - c. Sometimes love will be tough and not be perceived for what it is.
Psa.141:5 c/w 2 Co.2:4.
 - 2. There comes a time when the final product of what a child is depends upon himself. Parents must gradually allow children the liberty to stand or fall upon the merits of their own decisions.
 - 3. Dad and Mom's shortcomings as role models or trainers cannot be forever used as an excuse to make unsound judgments.
- C. The book of Proverbs is eminently important in training children. Refer to it regularly!
 - 1. The O.T. portrays the highest level of development as wisdom whereas the N.T. portrays it as Christlikeness.
 - 2. To attain unto Christ is to attain unto wisdom, for in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (**Col.2:3**).
 - 3. It has been said that wisdom is the "capacity of judgment which grows in the spiritual depths of a human being permitting him to use his knowledge, abilities and opportunities in a way designed by God to be fulfilling and satisfying." (Gordon Macdonald, *The Effective Father*, p.185).
- D. Training involves repeated exposure to instruction and experiences until they become ingrained and automatic.
 - 1. In a word, this is the development of habits.
 - 2. Children are trained to develop habits like orderliness or rising early and reflexes such as vindictiveness or peaceableness.
 - 3. Good values need to be trained into a child and blessings should be evaluated in spiritual and relational terms rather than simply material terms.
- E. An important area of child training is that of discipline, i.e., making oneself do or endure something tedious or difficult.
 - 1. Discipline enlarges a child's capacity to endure or produce.
 - 2. Discipline is deliberate stress introduced to stretch the capacity for performance. An example of this might be encouraging a child to run a few extra minutes after exhaustion.
 - 3. Children should be exposed to fatigue, inconvenience and frustration.
 - a. Life is not always a convenient or painless experience.
 - b. Children should learn that feelings do not govern life. If permitted, feelings will limit an individual to subpar performance.
 - c. Examples of such exposure: walk in the cold, don't procrastinate, do chores even if feeling sickly.
- F. Remember, you will train your children one way or another. But will you train them in the way they *should* go, as **Pro.22:6** commands?
 - 1. For example, consider training a small child not to touch something.
 - a. You can keep it within his reach and train him not to touch it by punishing him if he touches it.
 - i. This teaches him to obey the command not to touch.
 - ii. This teaches him to restrain himself even in the presence of a forbidden object that is accessible.
 - iii. This prepares him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise it prepares the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 - b. You can put it beyond his reach.

- i. This teaches him that it is off limits only if it is out of reach.
 - ii. This does not teach him to respect your command not to touch.
 - iii. This does not prepare him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise, it does not prepare the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 - 2. Consider how you are training when you allow a child to get his way by persistent begging and whining.
 - a. You are training the child that persistent begging and whining pay off.
 - b. The way to end persistent begging and whining is not by rewarding it, nor by ignoring it, but by punishing it.
 - 3. Or, what lesson is a child learning who is given everything he wants when he wants it? Do not be surprised if such a child grows up to be overweight and floundering in debt.
 - 4. Or how are you training a child when you do everything for him? Do not be surprised if he grows up shirking responsibility. You trained him that way.
- G. There is a time and place for verbal rebuke in the love-driven program. **Rev.3:19.**
 - 1. Verbal rebuke stands between a wrong done and a painful consequence. It faces the effects of the wrong, points out the dangers and consequences of the present trend and cites an alternative. **Gen.4:6-7.**
 - 2. Steer between the extremes of **1 Ki.1:6** and **Eph.6:4.**
 - 3. Correction must rebuild rather than ruin. Don't let situations go unattended until they become critical and then explode.
 - 4. Weigh the contents, circumstances and consequences of a rebuke.
 - a. A rebuke should not be an adult temper tantrum. Even Jesus' treatment of the moneychangers was a meditated one. **Joh.2:15.**
 - b. A rebuke should not threaten a child's standing, dignity or right to try again. **Col.3:21.**

XVII. A most important and solemn facet of child training is that of punishment, which is the painful consequence of a misdeed.

- A. Punishment comes in two forms: natural and artificial.
 - 1. Natural punishment is the obvious consequence of wrongdoing such as loss or injury.
 - a. Example: A child through wilful neglect or a foul mood ruins his favorite possession. Parents do well to not haste to replace the object.
 - b. Example: A child insists on playing with "verboden" dangerous things and ends up with an injury.
 - c. Parents do wrong to shield children from all potentials for consequential punishment. Where there is not an obviously debilitating consequence to a misdeed, sometimes it is wise to let the child feel the sting of his own actions.
 - 2. Artificial punishment is a devised means of punishment to help a child associate pain, disappointment or hardship with wrongdoing.
 - a. This may take the form of lost privileges or imposed duty.
 - b. This may take the form of beating, i.e., spanking: a Biblical directive for the shaping of a child's character.
 - c. Every misdeed need not be dealt with by beating/spanking.
 - i. Rebellion is clearly to be met with the rod of correction.
 - ii. Children will NOT outgrow rebellion! **Pro.22:15; 19:18.**

- iii. A home cannot survive healthfully if one member is set on rebellion. A parting of ways must come.
 - aa. The Law dealt severely with the stubborn, rebellious child who had been properly trained. **Deu.21:18.**
 - bb. Sometimes the parting of ways will cause circumstances which prompt repentance. **Luk.15:11-32; Phm.1:15.**
- B. When the time comes for artificial punishment, particularly beating, consider:
 - 1. Is the punishment for the good of the child or is it just the volcanic reaction of a parent frustrated by his/her own irresponsibility, irritability, etc.?
 - 2. Is it taking frustrations with your spouse out on the child?
 - 3. Is it taking frustrations out on someone too small to retaliate YET?
- C.. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child. **Pro.22:15.**
 - 1. Foolishness: "The quality or condition of being foolish."
 - 2. Foolish: "Fool-like; wanting in sense or judgment."
 - 3. Fool (noun): "One deficient in judgement or sense, one who acts or behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton. (In Biblical use applied to vicious or impious persons)."
 - 4. Children are deficient in reason, understanding, intellect, wisdom and judgment; these things need to be instilled in the child by his parents.
 - a. Children do not need to be taught to be fools who make bad choices. This is one area in which a child is pre-programmed to NOT be deficient!
 - b. The ability to make good choices is a learned one. **Isa.7:16.**
 - 5. Foolishness is not just *found* in the heart of a child, it is *bound* there. **Pro.22:15.**
 - a. Bound: "Made fast by a tie, confined; fastened down; bandaged."
 - b. Foolishness cannot escape on its own. It is confined to the child's heart, but the rod of correction will *drive* it far from him. **Pro.22:15.**
 - i. When you think of *driving* in this context, think not of driving in the sense of *piloting*.
 - ii. Think of *driving* in the sense of man's expulsion from Eden: driving away that which is unsuitable. **Gen.3:24.**
 - iii. Think of *driving* in the sense of the Canaanites' expulsion: driving away that which is a threat to well-being. **Exo.34:11.**
 - iv. Think of *driving* in the sense of the moneychangers' expulsion from the temple: painfully stopping that which is an affront to God. **Joh.2:15.**
 - v. Think of yourselves as noble liberators loosing the confined natural folly from a child's character and shoo-ing it away!
 - c. Parents must actively drive foolishness from children or they will graduate from latent foolishness to being potent fools and parents will be put to shame. **Pro.17:21, 29:15.**
 - d. The parent who cannot bring himself to spank a child for folly or disobedience because he loves the child too much actually loves himself too much and hates the child. **Pro.13:24.**
 - e. Every parent must decide if the household is going to be ruled by the parent or the child. Whose will is preeminent in your household?
 - 6. Driving the foolishness from a child involves instilling in the child those things that are deficient: reason, understanding, intellect, wisdom and judgment.
 - a. It starts with the fear of the LORD. **Pro.1:7, 9:10.**
 - i. Parents must fear God enough to do what must be done.

- ii. Children from early in life should be taught that the mighty God rules over all and that disobedience is transgression against Him.
 - b. The rod and reproof give wisdom. **Pro.29:15.**
 - i. Wisdom must be taught (**Job 33:33**) and punishment is a form of teaching. **Jdg.8:16.**
 - ii. Rod: "A straight, slender shoot or wand, growing upon or cut from a tree, bush, etc. 2. An instrument of punishment...."
 - iii. Reprove: "To reject; to express disapproval of (conduct, actions, beliefs, etc.); to censure, condemn; to reprehend, rebuke, blame, chide, or find fault with (a person)."
 - aa. Chide: "To give or loud or impassioned utterance to anger, displeasure, disapprobation, reproof."
 - bb. It is NOT necessarily wrong to raise one's voice in accord with anger as long as the vocalizing is not injurious or a substitute for the rod.
 - c. The rod is an instrument of chastening. **Pro.13:24.**
 - i. Chasten: "To inflict disciplinary or corrective punishment on; to visit with affliction for the purpose of moral improvement; to correct, discipline, chastise."
 - ii. Chastisement is the painful consequence of a misdeed.
 - aa. The purpose for chastening a child is to teach him that irresponsible actions have painful consequences.
 - bb. If a child is always shielded from the consequences of misbehavior, he will not be prepared for adult life.
 - iii. Betimes: "At an early time, period or season; early in the year; early in life... In good time, in due time, before it is too late."
 - iv. Early correction reduces overall spankings. Late starters have their work cut out for them, but better late than never!
 - v. A one-year-old child is generally old enough to start receiving limited correction with the rod to discourage dangerous behavior or defiant moments. This is the time to start establishing boundaries for the child!
 - aa. Very small children will not understand verbal rebuke or reasoning, but they will understand physical pain.
 - bb. Associating pain with dangerous behavior or misbehavior is the best way to help them know what is wrong.
 - cc. Repeat the word "no" during the punishment which reinforces to the child what that word means. In time, then, verbal rebuke can be effective in warning about a wrong.
 - dd. Use action to get action!
7. Breaking the bonds of foolishness from a child's heart demands severity and sternness, not daintiness. **Pro.23:13-14.**
- a. Child beating is scriptural. Do not be cowed by the world into perverting the very language of Scripture to satisfy current social fads.
 - b. It is not cruel to beat a child in a disciplinary manner; rather it is necessary to deliver the child from hell, i.e., from destruction.
 - i. This does not promote or condone the hostile beating of a child by an abusive or drunken parent.
 - ii. The beating here refers to a correctional action taken by a loving

- parent with the intent of saving the child from destruction, not delivering the child to destruction.
- c. The chastening of a child with the rod should produce pain and tears from the child. **Pro.19:18.**
 - i. This is the expected result and the parent should not lament over it.
 - ii. To succumb to the child's tears is to essentially give control to the child and leave his innate foolishness intact.
 - d. Do not train your child that if he cries loud enough the spanking will stop.
 - i. Deliver the rod according to the crime and make sure the message gets across!
 - ii. Do not be fooled by "manufactured" tears and wailing. Common sense will tell you when the tears and wailing are real.
 - e. When God chastens his children, it is sometimes very painful and draws many tears, but it is still necessary and it's always for our betterment. **Heb.12:11.**
 - i. God's rod comforts (strengthens). **Psa.23:4.**
 - ii. Withholding the rod from a disobedient child gives nobody comfort!
 - f. Give consideration to sickness or fatigue when a child's conduct is less than sterling.
 - g. Do not suffer outrage, screaming, whining, stomping, backtalk or disrespect!
8. Remember that the rod should be accompanied with reproof. **Pro.29:15.**
 - a. The rod is not to be applied merely to inflict pain, but rather to impart instruction.
 - b. The rod is to be used to enforce the disapproval of specific misconduct.
 9. Use of the rod is not the only means to discipline a child, but it must be part of the overall package if you intend to train your child as God intends you to do.
 - a. You don't need to beat your child for every wrongdoing.
 - i. A measured slap on the mouth may be an acceptable deterrent to a sassy-face or potty-mouth.
 - ii. There is always the durable old washing out of a child's mouth with soap to discourage unclean lips.
 - iii. Repeal of privileges may be appropriate for lesser infractions.
 - b. Parents should distinguish between childhood ignorance and rebellion.
 - i. Ignorance is something to be corrected with knowledge, which is sometimes best applied with the rod and reproof, but not always.
 - ii. Rebellion is a clear-cut case for the rod.
- D. Be clear in the instructions you give.
1. If you expect your child to do or not do something, tell him, do not ask him. **1 Th.2:11.**
 2. Charge: "To lay on or impose, as a task, duty, or trust; to command, instruct, or exhort with authority; to enjoin; to urge earnestly."
 3. Make sure your instructions are clearly defined so that your child knows exactly what is required or forbidden. Example: precisely defining what you mean by cleaning the bedroom or being out too late.
 4. Make sure your instructions are realistic; within the child's ability to perform.
 5. Give instructions in such a way that your children know that you mean *what* you say *when* you say it.
 6. Don't play games like repeating warnings or commands until the child heeds

in order to save yourself the agony of spanking. One clearly understood command is sufficient!

7. Giving clear instructions helps the child understand your expectations and also helps you know when discipline is necessary.
- E. Parents should be consistent in their application of the rod and any other forms of discipline they employ.
1. Children will test you (more than you know) and they are extremely persistent. If you are inconsistent, they will find your weakness and exploit it.
 2. If you tell your child you are going to beat him for something, do it.
 3. If you beat your child for something once, you should beat him again for the same wrongdoing. If it's important enough to warrant a beating the first time, it's important enough to warrant a beating the second time.
 4. Consistent application of the rod is a tried-and-true (and biblical, too) method of correcting children.
 5. Be careful to not allow a child to develop a pattern of always apologizing his way out of punishment. Know your child and be sensitive to trends.
 6. Parents should agree on their punishment policy (the father sets the tone here) and should SHARE that responsibility. Don't spare yourself the anguish of spanking by leaving it to your spouse.
- F. Consider some examples of how NOT to train your children.
1. Do not be a pushover, or your children will ignore what you say. **Gen.19:14.**
 2. Do not honor your children more than you honor God. **1 Sa.2:22-29; 3:13.**
 3. Do not let your children get away with whatever they want. **1Ki.1:6.**
 4. The disciplined child brings rest and delight! **Pro.29:17.**