
Biblical Parenting: A Grace and Duty

Introduction

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The Bible is amazingly contemporary.

¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. (2 Timothy 3:1–5, NLT)

People sometimes talk about how children are in this age. You will often hear Americans talking about the rampant disobedience and disrespect. It is easy to observe in grocery stores, banks, schools and on the streets. It is sometimes on display even in our church family, at Flock meetings and our gatherings here. There is a disregard for authority that is the fruit of a disobedience and disrespect of parents.

But we also see many children who are generally obedient. They bend their wills to those in authority. They speak respectfully to their parents. They are still kids and have fun. They still can disobey. But there is an obvious difference in those children's lives. Why?

The difference is that God has done either a common or special work of grace in the heart of the child. Parents may (or may not) have been faithful. But children learn to be obedient and respectful. Hopefully they learn through the discipline and instruction of the Lord by the parents in the home and adults in general in the church.

Parenting is one of the most difficult and most delightful things we do.

It is difficult because we are inclined to serve ourselves.

It is delightful because we can have so much joy in our children.

People want direction on how to rear their children.

Most people want the kind of direction that will produce a certain kind of child. They have an idea of what they want their children to be like. They seek principles and procedures that promise those results.

Many people want the kind of direction that enable them to be a certain kind of parent. They have an idea of what they want to be as a parent. They look for principles and procedures that characterize the kind of person or parent they want to become.

Both of these desires are commendable. We are evil when we have no care how our children turn out. We are foolish if we think that it doesn't matter what kind of parents we are.

There are many, many books available in Christian circles that serve these two wants.

There is much to say about being a parent who is pleasing to the Lord. Much more than we could possibly do in seven sermons in January. However, we can lay a foundation *that is rooted in the direct principles, precepts and patterns* of the Bible. Our series this January will be on *The Grace and Duty of Biblical Parenting*. We will focus on broad principles with applications primarily to younger children. Next January, the Lord willing, we will focus on parenting that prepares and guides young adults.

This morning I wanted to establish the title firmly in your minds. So let's go to the Scriptures to establish:

The Grace of Biblical Parenting

Grace is both God's attitude towards us and God's ability for us.

Grace Comes to Transform Us

Titus 2:11-15

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

¹⁵ Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

The Work of God's Grace

(v. 11-12)

God's grace saves God's people... (v. 11)

God's grace trains God's people... (v. 12)

The Work of God's Son

(v. 13-14)

Redeem us from sinful works...

Redeem us for good works...

Grace Comes to Enable Us

2 Corinthians 9:8-9

⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

All kinds of grace...

Abound to you...

Having all sufficiency...

Able for every good work...

The Duty of Biblical Parenting

We who live in the New Covenant are under grace, not Law. We are not subject to the power and penalty of the Mosaic Law. But this does not mean that we are without commands. The New Testament is filled with *commands*.

The Commands We must Give

Biblical parenting means we must understand and give commands...

Ephesians 6:1-3 —

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”

Colossians 3:20 —

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

The Commands We must Obey

Biblical parenting means we must hear and heed commands...

Ephesians 6:4 —

⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Colossians 3:21 —

²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

We will be unpacking these texts through this series. But notice that there are commands in these texts...

Do not provoke...

Bring them up...

The Training We must Receive

Titus 2:1-8

¹ But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. ² Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. ³ Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴ and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. ⁶ Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. ⁷ Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸ and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

The responsibility of the pastors to the flock... (v. 1)

The marks of the spiritually mature men... (v. 2)

The marks of the spiritually mature women... (v. 3)

The training of the spiritually younger women... (v. 4-5)

The training of the spiritually younger men... (v. 6)

The responsibility of the pastors in themselves... (v. 7-8)

The Pattern of Biblical Parenting

Deuteronomy 8:1-6

¹ “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵ Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. ⁶ So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him.

Be Careful to Obey God’s Word

(v. 1)

Pleasing God with His promises in view...

Be Careful to Observe God’s Ways

(v. 2-4)

In the purposes He is accomplishing...

In the problems He is allowing...

In the provisions He is bestowing...

Be Careful to Understand God’s Pattern

(v. 5)

He is relating to us as Father...

He is dealing with us as children...

Reflect and Respond

There is grace in your parenting. Be its recipient and its conduit...

There is duty in your parenting. Carefully and joyfully fulfill it...

There is a heavenly model for your parenting. Observe and learn from our Father in heaven...

There is an earthly guide for your parenting. Read, study, learn and do God's Word...