



Weekly Devotion

“Parent, lead your children - don’t discourage them”

As a pastor, my primary ministry on this earth is my family.

Paul made this clear when he said that any man in the ministry “must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Timothy 3:4-5).

God has commissioned me not just as a pastor, but as also a father, to ensure that my children have submissive hearts that honor the word of God.

Again, this is not just good instruction for pastors. It’s good instruction for parents in general. Every parent should work hard to instill within their children submissive hearts that honor both their parents and God.

At this point, though, I want to caution parents against misunderstanding the biblical concept of “submission.”

When some people hear the word “submission,” they conjure up an image of domination. Admittedly, my first instinct when I think of submission is to imagine a professional wrestler squeezing and twisting his opponent with enough brute force to cause him to tap out in agonizing defeat.

Needless to say, this is not the biblical definition of submission.

When parents teach their children to submit to their authority, they must also help them realize that they are not surrendering to their parents in defeat. Nor are they admitting that they’re inferior to their parents on some basic human level.

Instead, parents should teach their children that through their submission, they are acting in accord with their God-given role as a child who is still dependent upon his or her parents.

We all must understand that fathers, mothers, and children are all equal in value. But we each serve in different roles within the family unit.

For example, my role as a husband is to love my wife as Christ loves the church. That means I am to shepherd her with love and leadership. And I honor my role when I respect her as I would my own body. As bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh—because, by God’s design, that’s what she is (Genesis 2:23-24; Ephesians 5:22-33).

My role as a father is to raise up my children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. But in doing so, I must never provoke my children to anger or discouragement (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21).

That’s my God-given job as a father. And God has called on my children to respond to

my leadership by doing their job—by being “obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord...for this is right” (Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 6:1-2).

If we want to do our jobs well, parents—especially fathers—are instructed to avoid acting in a disrespectful or tyrannical manner toward our children.

God did not put dads and moms in place to be dominating or discouraging. God expects parents to love their children and to exert godly influence over them, more so than any other person or group of people on this planet.

Parents, this means we must never intentionally provoke our children to anger. Nor should we ever abuse our authority in an effort to dishearten them. We should instead treat them with care and respect God has commanded.

Dads and moms, we (rightfully) expect our children to be respectful to us. But if we want to earn their respect, we must likewise be respectful to them.

Because mutual respect—that is, respect both given and received—is mandatory if we want to achieve success in meeting our sacred responsibilities as godly parents.

Bro. Colin Trisler

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Pastor

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