**RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILDREN**

Sunday School Lesson 5

*Building Right Relationships*

Proverbs 22:6

4/2/2023

**Introduction:** In last week’s lesson, we looked at five key thoughts for parents to remember when it comes to their relationship with their children. Firstly, the parent must always remember his chief objective in the relationship. That objective is to train up a child in the way he should go. We are to raise them in the admonition of the Lord. Secondly, the parent must understand the importance of having a right spirit. This thought applies to both the parent and the child. The parent must have a right spirit in dealing with the child, and the parent must teach the child how important it is to have a right spirit. Thirdly, the parent must help to break the will of the child. The Lord Jesus Christ set the example of perfect child to parent relationship. It was not about His will. It was about the will of His Father. Likewise, we must help our children understand that it is not about their will. They must submit to the will of both their parents and the Lord. Fourthly, the parent must expect proper respect from the child. From a young age, the child should be taught that respect/reverence of their parents is expected and required. Fifthly, the parent must be honest and live honestly. If we want our children to truly respect us as they grow, then we must live honestly. We must be consistent and truthful with them in the home. We cannot live one way outside of the home and a different way in the home. Let’s look at a few more thoughts for the parent/child relationship this morning:

1. **THE HUSBAND/FATHER IS EXPECTED TO RULE HIS OWN HOUSE WELL.**

* 1 Timothy 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 1 Timothy 3:12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. This principle is necessary in understanding how to deal with grown children who are still in your home. For some reason, parents act like they have no authority over grown children in their own home. While that child may be an adult, they are still in your household. If the husband is expected to lead his adult wife in the marriage, why do we think that adult children still in the home no longer have to be in subjection to the head of the household? In wisdom, you may handle your approach to that authority differently than when your child was still a child, but you ought not to give up that authority that you are expected to maintain in your house. You cannot allow fear over that childing leaving your home to cause you to ignore your responsibility to the home. I would add that this should apply to anyone that you bring into your home. You ought to have a reasonable expectation that any individual in your house will submit to the leadership in that house. This can be a hard dynamic when the person you bring into your home might be your own aging parent. Nonetheless, God can give you the wisdom and the grace that you need to handle your home appropriately.

1. **THE PARENT MUST BE ATTENTIVE TO THE CHANGING DIET OF THE CHILD.**

* 1 Corinthians 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 1 Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. It is important in your relationship with your child that you are attentive to the changing diet of the child. This is not focused on the physical diet as much as on the spiritual or teachable diet. We ought to assess our child’s development and provide for them what is needed in the manner that it is needed in. Physically, it is the job of the parent to determine when the child transitions from baby foods on to more hearty meals. Every parent goes through the nervous phase of introducing harder foods to their child. Likewise, this assessment must be made regarding the instruction that is provided to the child. If the child is struggling to digest certain lessons, you must show patience and wisdom in order to help them move forward. As much as we would like to rush them into an easier phase, we must resist this temptation to ensure they do not choke. This principle should also be applied in the manner of discipline. You must examine the discipline that is being provided to the child. The discipline that is provided when the child is small should evolve as the child grows. Discipline is a teaching opportunity. It is never to be done for sport or convenience. Thus, you must ensure that the discipline performed is teaching the child.

1. **THE PARENT MUST HAVE A PROPER UNDERSTANDING AND USE OF CHASTENING.**

* **Chastening ought to be done as a result of your love for your child.** Proverbs 13:24 - He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.
* **Chastening is a natural necessity that ought to be present in every home.** Proverbs 22:15 - Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.
* **Chastening is not enjoyable, but the result of it is meant to bring joy and peace.** Hebrews 12:11 - Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Proverbs 29:17 - Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul. Proverbs 23:13-15 - Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.
* **Chastening gives wisdom to the child. He quickly learns what he should and should not do.** Proverbs 29:15 - The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.
* **Chastening is a sign of hope of what could be. There is a limited time to perform it.** Proverbs 19:18 - Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

1. **THE FATHER MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO PROVOKE HIS CHILDREN TO WRATH.**
   * Ephesians 6:4 - And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Colossians 3:21 - Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. 1 Thess. 2:11 In both places that we find this command in the Bible, it is right on the heels of instruction for children to obey their parents. Given the connection, the thought seems to be that we have to be careful in how we handle our children and what our expectations are for them. If we make it impossible for them to obey us and please us, we are setting them up for anger, wrath, and discouragement. If we are always criticizing them and pointing out their shortcomings, then we are making it difficult to have a healthy relationship with them and for them to find happiness and joy in the home. This is the balance of parenting. Consider how longsuffering and merciful the Lord is with us. Is it reasonable to hold them handle them tougher than the Lord has handled us? Don’t you agree that the Lord knows best how to handle His children? If He is our example as a Father, then we ought to follow His lead in parenting. It must be clarified that this verse does not mean that we withhold discipline simply because our children are mad at us. The Lord doesn’t withhold chastening if someone is upset with Him. It means that we ought to consider whether we are causing unnecessary anger/wrath for our children. We ought to seek wisdom from the Lord in this area.
2. **THE PARENT MUST BE AVAILABLE AND APPROACHABLE.**

* Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. Acts 17:27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 1 John 1:3 Our Heavenly Father sets the example for us in this matter of being available and approachable. As adopted children, the Heavenly Father has His throne of grace open for us to come in unto Him. If we go back to the beginning of man, we see the Lord’s desire to fellowship with us. He walked with man in the Garden of Eden. Not only is the Heavenly Father available for us to come to, but He actually commands us to come to Him often. We are to pray without ceasing. That means that the Lord wants us constantly communicating with Him. This ought to be the same approach that we take with our children. We ought to encourage their communication with us. We ought not to make them feel like we are too busy for them or that we are irritated by their desire to speak with us. Do your children know that they can come to you any time and with any problem? Let’s foster that type of relationship with our children.