

“Family Matters Part III - Children”

Col 3:20-21

Scripture Ref: Eph 6:1-4; Ex 20:12; Gen 1:27-28;

1. Perhaps you read that California Supreme Court over-rode the law that banned gay marriage –
 - a. Proposition 22, which strengthened California’s marriage law, had been approved by 61% of the people
 - b. another nail in the coffin as America drifts away from conservative values.
2. California, often the harbinger of what is to come for the rest of the nation, is also the leader in the movement of the “emancipation” of children from their parents...

Are your parents unreasonable? Perhaps they are abusive. Maybe they are emotional, illogical wrecks and you just want them to get out of your life. Perhaps they squander your money. Maybe they interfere with your physical, emotional, mental, financial stability. Emancipation may be for you.

Firstly, what does it mean to become "emancipated?" Well, it's a legal way for minors to become adults before they reach the age of majority, which in California is 18. If you become emancipated, your parents cease to have custody and control of you. You can do things like get medical care, apply for a work permit, sign up for school or college, and live where you want to without your parents' permission. Amazing, I know.

So, reader, you must be itching with desire to know how to become emancipated. (goes on to inform the reader of ways that they can become “emancipated”)

- a. **This is all done in the name of “protecting the rights of children.”**
3. **Fact is – children DO have rights....**
 - a. **They have a right to be born!**
 - b. **They have a right to be born into a loving family – with a mother and father – who will love them, and provide for them**
 - c. **... to be taught right from wrong – given a moral compass**
 - d. **... to have had their gifts and abilities nurtured so that they will have the ability to provide for themselves and become productive members of society.**
 - e. **...to be taught the truth about who God is – so that they have a God-centered world-view, God-centered morals and integrity.**
4. **But along with rights come responsibility – there are two things children are commanded to do:**
 - a. **Obey their parents, and honor their parents**

Col 3:20-21

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

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

Eph 6:1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Ex 20:12

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

5. Ok – that’s what the bible says – but...

- a. Why should kids obey, is it just because the bible says so?
- b. Well, that is a good enough reason – but let’s look further...

Reason #1 - Protection

6. This is a pretty simple reason – children do not yet have the life experience to know what might be dangerous, what might hurt them
- a. As simple as “don’t ride your bike on the freeway”
 - b. I have two boys – they think its fun to shoot their BB guns at each other... or to spray a can of WD40 and light it like a flame thrower... (OK, that was fun!)
 - c. Kids do not understand the inherent danger in the world around them – it’s up to us to teach them...
 - d. And not to show them HOW to make a flamethrower out of a can of WD40. (right now – most of the men here are planning to pick up a can of WD40 on the way home!)

Reason #2 – Order

7. When we looked at God’s command for the wife to submit – we found that it is not because the husband is smarter, or more capable, or more valuable...
- a. No – it is because God has established an ORDER for the home, so that there would not be DISORDER.
 - b. That extends to the children – a child is not less valuable or less capable than the parents (although we would not expect a nine year old to understand how to choose a between a term life policy and a variable annuity...!)

- c. It is not about worth, God has established and order in the home where the parents are to be responsible and accountable for the well-being of the children.
 - d. And they only way that the parents can be responsible and accountable, is if the parents are given authority over the children.
8. Good illustration is at work – if your boss gives you responsibility for a project, but does not give you authority over the people and the budget... it's a recipe for disaster!
- a. You cannot be responsible for the outcome of something if you are not able to guide and give direction – and that requires authority
 - b. In the same way, parents cannot effectively train up and guide their children unless they have authority over them...
 - c. And to ensure this atmosphere, God sets an order for the home, and He calls upon the children to OBEY.

Reason #3 – Learning Submission

9. I think this is crucial - one of the things that I had to learn late in life – around 19 or so – is this: **EVERYONE IS IN SUBMISSION TO SOMEONE**
- a. When I was young, I did not learn the concept of submission. I pretty much rebelled against everything.
 - b. I though I knew best, I could make my own decisions.
 - c. Then joined the military. They picked up really fast that I was deficient in this area, and were only too happy to teach me. Really... they were too happy.
 - d. But – it was a lesson well learned... because...
10. There is no place on this earth, save a deserted island, that we are not under some submission
- a. To the laws of the land we live in, to our employers, to the governmental authorities
 - i. When we were standing in the Customs line at Charlotte coming back into USA – they had a sign – **NO CELL PHONES.**
 - ii. I missed the sign, and had my cell phone in my hand – a guy came out and told me – point blank – **TURN IT OFF** and put it in my pocket
 - iii. I didn't like the way he talked to me – but I submitted. I did **NOT** want to be strip-searched in an empty room for 5 hours just because I mouthed off to a customs agent!

A Sin Nature

11. What's the point? A child does not come out of the womb instinctively willing to submit –
- a. Children are born with a sin nature, and thus they want to do what they want to do, when they want to do it.
 - b. **BUT** - A child that does not learn to submit to their parents will **NOT** submit to teachers, employers – and life will be hard for them.
 - c. We actually hurt them if we do not teach them to properly submit to the authorities in their lives (notice proper – not to be a blind slave)
12. You can see it in some children that are rebellious – the reason they are “trouble-makers” is that they have not been properly taught honor and submission
- a. ...and guess what – these children are not **CREATING** problems, they are **REVEALING** problems.
 - b. **IOW** – they are revealing a home life where the parents are not submitted to the Lord – in that they are not teaching their children biblical honor and submission.
 - c. Fact is - if a mother and father are not under authority themselves, they cannot exercise authority over others.
 - d. **IOW** – if parents are not submitted to the Lord, they will have a hard time raising up kids that know how to properly submit.
13. So we see that a submission **STARTS** with the parents, then must be **MODELED** and **TAUGHT** to the children.

A Success Factor

14. If not learning will hurt the child later in life - the opposite is also true – The child that learns submission early in life will **THRIVE** in any situation
15. **TRUTH** – In **ANY** functioning organization – be it family or church or business – the more responsibility you are given, the **MORE** you must submit.
- a. I found this to be absolutely true in business world – each time I was promoted, the more submission was required of me.
 - b. And...I found that the more I submitted – the more I was entrusted with. Loyalty and submission are highly rewarded.

Measure and Motive

16. There are two parts to this obedience that Paul give us...
17. The Measure – Paul calls the children to obey “in all things”.

- a. “You mean I have to do everything that my parents tell me to?”
YES!
 - b. Remember I said that a child has rights - They have a right to be raised in the Lord by godly parents.
 - c. Godly parents will not treat the child like a slave, or be domineering, or ask the child to disobey the Lord
- 18. The Motive – “for this is well pleasing to the Lord.”**
- a. Children are being obedient to the Lord when they obey their parents.
 - b. Just like we talked about with the wives – this is to be a **VOLUNTARY** submission
 - c. To willingly obey God shows a heart of obedience to the Lord

To the Fathers...

Col 3:21

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

Eph 6:4

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

- 19. Paul makes it clear that this is not a one-sided, “do whatever I say” type of relationship.**
- a. Paul tells the fathers – “Don’t conduct your home in such a way as to frustrate your children”
 - b. If you do, you will discourage them...
 - c. So... if we don’t want to discourage our kids – what do we do?

What Our Kids Need

#1 - Kids need LOVE

- 20. Our kids must know that regardless of what they do or how they act – WE LOVE THEM – because this is a reflection of God’s love to us!**
- a. You have to remember – **FATHERS** – to your kids - you represent their heavenly father
 - b. God never leaves us or casts us aside – God forbid we ever send our kids the message that we don’t want them around.
 - c. If you are dismissing or constantly disappointed or harsh – guess what their mental picture of God will be?
 - d. Remember Moses – Numbers 20 – He misrepresented God to the children of Israel – and God held him accountable for it.

#2 - Kids need Encouragement

21. Parents should encourage their kids, not discourage them

- a. Too often parents will say NO to their kids without really listening to them.
 - i. When your child asks you for something, or to do something, LISTEN and CONSIDER
 - ii. Evaluate what they are asking – there may be something near and dear to their hearts in there – and an automatic “no that’s crazy” can crush their little spirit!
- b. As well, be careful not to dismiss your children and their dreams
 - i. Kids are capable of dreaming – and dreaming BIG.
 - ii. They are not weighed down by the failures and disappointments of life – YET.
 - iii. Don’t hang your failures around their necks – don’t assume that they will fail.
 - iv. Encourage them to try – and try again – encourage them to soar to greater heights than you did
- c. Sometimes parents are threatened by their kids – their ego demands that they stay in a position of superiority to them – so if they begin to do well, the parent will criticize or be negative.
 - i. I tell my kids “I want you do way better than I did” –
 - ii. Matter of fact, I feel that I will have failed if they are not able to – every generation should improve
 - iii. We expect it of companies – increase profits every quarter!
 - iv. Don’t let your ego keep your kids down – rejoice when they succeed!

#3 Kids Need Consistent Boundaries

22. Being lenient on day and strict the next, constantly changing the boundaries of what is allowed – that breeds frustration!

- a. Kids need consistent boundaries!
- b. Being fair – not arbitrarily saying no – or showing preference to one over another – kids are quick to see a double-standard!

#4 Kids Need Role Models - live what you teach

23. you cannot say “do as I say, not as I do”

- a. kids are “hypocrisy meters”, they will know in a minute if you are not living what you teach
- b. And it will frustrate them if you tell them to follow a standard that you yourself do not live.

#5 - Kids need your EAR

24. take time to listen to your kids

- a. **One pastor said “a listening ear and a loving heart always go together”**
- b. **Life can be hard for a child – especially a Christian child**
- c. **Their problems may seem small to us – but they can be huge to them.**
- d. **They deserve for us to give them time to listen, and offer godly counsel when needed.**

#5 - Kids need to grow up

25. as our children get older, we need to give them some rope – let them make decisions – let them try out their wisdom-wings

- a. **I tell my kids – “My objective is not to control your life – my objective is to teach you to make good decisions on your own – and then to release you to live your life!”**
- b. **If we are too lenient – we can hurt our kids by leading them to think that they can do whatever pleases them, regardless of others and the rules.**
- c. **But if we are too protective they will never stand on their own**
- d. **I believe that we must gradually allow them to stand and walk – giving them counsel if they fall and helping them to see where the problem might have been,**
- e. **And see – if we have LISTENED to them throughout their lives – we will already have that relationship with them – they will trust us.**

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