



The Nurturing Home

by Virginia Arnold

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³ so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1-4

1. God created mankind in His image to commune with Him in perfect love, closeness, harmony, and good will. God provided mankind's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs as He nurtured them in the garden.
2. That harmonious relationship was also intended to characterize the relationship between the first husband and wife. It would have also characterized the relationships of the first parents with their children had they been born before the fall.
3. The fall of all mankind turned the harmonious relationships between the Creator and his creatures to hatred, distance, disharmony, and rebellion.
4. God purposed to redeem and recreate individuals and to impact the relationships between believers and those in established family units. A Christian family can glorify God as it portrays and magnifies – to the children and to a watching world – God's relationship with His bride, the church.

I. The Believing Parent is a Prepared Parent

A. The believing parent's POSITION:

He has by faith accepted God's ordained role for himself and his children – he is commanded to rule his family well, to command his children after him, and to see that his children submit themselves in honor and obedience to their parents.

Genesis 18:19 *"For I have chosen him (Abraham) so that he may command his children and his house after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice . . ."*

Matthew 28:19 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (including your children) . . . teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.*

Colossians 3:20 *Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.*

Ephesians 6:1-3 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise).*

I Timothy 3:4-5 *He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?).*

Titus 1:5-7 . . . Appoint elders in every city as I directed you. Namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward. . .

B. The believing parent's PERSPECTIVE:

He has embraced and submitted his will to the One who created and loaned him his children. He has acknowledged that they do not belong to him – they belong to God.

I Samuel 1:27-28 Hannah: *“For this boy I prayed, and the LORD has given me my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the LORD; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the LORD.”*

Job 1:21 Job, after losing all of his children and finding himself stricken with boils: *“Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there: **the LORD** gave, and **the LORD** has taken away; **blessed be the name of the LORD.**”*

C. The believing parent's PURPOSE: to obey and teach his children the Word of God.

He holds to God's Word as his only authority for faith and practice and the only means for instructing his children

II Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*



II. *The Believing Parent is a Nurturing Parent*

Loving, NURTURING homes meet the PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, and SPIRITUAL needs of the children in a way that mirrors the faithful provisions of the Heavenly Father. Examples: Jesus, *And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.* Luke 2:52; Samuel, *Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the LORD and with men.* I Samuel 2:26

A. Physical needs

I Timothy 5:8 *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Proverbs 31:27, 14, 15 *Mother: She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness; She is like merchant ships; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is still night and gives food to her household . . .*

Matthew 7:9-11 *Father: “. . . What man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? . . . If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!”*

B. Emotional needs

Psalms 103:13-14 *Just as a father has compassion (PITIETH , KJV) on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust.*

Isaiah 49:15-16 *Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.*

C. Spiritual needs met by the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up [nurture them] in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

1. **DISCIPLINE and CORRECTION:** God's means of displaying His great love for His children. (Hebrews 12:5-11)

Proverbs 29:15 *The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*

Proverbs 29:17 *Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; He will also delight your soul.*

Hebrews 12:6, 11 *For those whom the LORD loves He **disciplines**, and he scourges every son whom He receives . . . all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful, yet to those who have been **trained by it**, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*

Proverbs 23:13-14 *Do not hold back **discipline** from the child. Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol.*

Proverbs 13:24 *He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

Proverbs 19:18 ***Discipline** your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death.*

2. **INSTRUCTION** – Lovingly nurture your children by the means of “**teaching**” (**indoctrinating them in the Scriptures**) and “**training in righteousness**” (**training them by exercise to repeatedly apply the Scriptures to life**). In both teaching and training the parents model the biblical commands.

II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for **teaching**, for reproof, for correction, for **training in righteousness**; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Profitable for “Training in Righteousness”

II Timothy 3:16

I Timothy 4:7-8 . . . **discipline yourself** for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things.

Hebrews 5:13-14 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who **because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.**

Hebrews 12:11 . . . all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful, yet to those who have been **trained by it**, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Profitable for “Teaching” Indoctrinating II Timothy 3:16

Deuteronomy 4:9-10 *Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen, and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons . . . the LORD said to me, “Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.”*

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 *These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

Deuteronomy 12:28 *Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.*

Deuteronomy 32:46-47 . . . *Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law. For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life.*

D. A loving, biblically-NURTURING home will not provoke children to wrath.

II Timothy 2:24 *The Lord’s bond-servant must **not be quarrelsome**, but be **kind** to all, **able to teach**, **patient** when wronged.*

I Thessalonians 2:7 *But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly **cares** for her own children.*

Ephesians 4:31 *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.***

Galatians 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness.*

James 3:17 *But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.*

I Corinthians 13:4 *Love is **patient**, love is **kind**, and is **not jealous**; love **does not brag and is not arrogant.***

I Thessalonians 5:14 *We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, **encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient** with everyone.*

May God give us nurturing homes that reflect His grace to our children and may we faithfully point them to their only hope, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Book Recommendations

Plowman, Ginger. *Don't Make Me Count to Three*. Shepherds Press, 2003.

Priolo, Lou. *Teach Them Diligently - How to Use the Scriptures in Child Training*. Timeless Texts, 2000.

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