

# Biblical Childrearing

## Scriptural Moorings

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### .. Introduction

Naturally, any discussion of biblical covenant marriage necessitates instruction on childrearing. We learn that at the very heart of God's purposes for creating the institution of marriage is His expectation of rendering godly children unto Him. The primary function of the leadership of the church is to equip the saints for Godly living and the work of ministry. It is only fitting then that the most important teachings of Scripture should be taught thoroughly and repeatedly. This is especially true given the general demographics of EEF. We are a church filled with many young children and therefore it should be obvious that we place an emphasis on understanding the Bible's instruction on families, marriage and childrearing.

### .. Outline

#### ❖ Children are a gracious gift of God Psalm 127 & Psalm 128

- .. We are living in a society where our affections for children are becoming sentimental at best and at worst, murdering our unborn children is protected by the rule of law. We must fight against this culture by declaring our thanks to our Lord for the gracious gift of our children. We demonstrate our thanks by pouring ourselves out for them through nurture, training and admonition.
- .. This is not a numbers game where whoever has the most children wins. A father who renders his only son unto the Lord through faith is blessed by the presence of his son at the city gate. A father with a dozen foolish sons finds that his sons only stand to condemn his faithlessness.

#### ❖ Children are to be taught *what* to believe. Deuteronomy 6:4-9

<sup>4</sup>*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!* <sup>5</sup>*"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."*

<sup>6</sup>*And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.* <sup>7</sup>*"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."* <sup>8</sup>*"You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes."* <sup>9</sup>*"You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."* NKJV

- .. The first thing to consider when determining what the Biblical motivations for childrearing are, is that God has told us to teach our children. We are commanded to teach them. If we don't, we haven't just made a personal choice we have disobeyed our Creator. The irony though is that we are always teaching our children. Even when we neglect to attend to instruction we are teaching them in our neglect.
- .. The second thing to notice is that we are told to teach our children what to believe. We are not instructed to give them the decision-making skills and then hope that they use them correctly. We are to teach our children *what to believe*. It is this set of beliefs that constitute a Biblical worldview and it is this worldview that will shape their decision-making. For example, do we simply teach our children the merits of looking both ways before crossing the road? No of course not, we command them to do so whether or not it seems prudent to the child at the time and we would not tolerate "poor, independent decisions".

#### ❖ Childrearing has eternal consequences Proverbs 23:13-14

<sup>13</sup>*Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.* <sup>14</sup>*You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell."* NKJV

#### Malachi 2:13-15

<sup>13</sup>*And this is the second thing you do: You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, With weeping and crying; So He does not regard the offering anymore, Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.* <sup>14</sup>*Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the Lord has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant.* <sup>15</sup>*But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth."* NKJV

- “ God has built the world in such a way that children are rendered unto married adults. But it is not enough to simply have found lodging for them, God intends that faithful parents supply all provision. This includes their food, shelter, nurture, clothing and instruction. The important thing to follow here is that these things are temporal in *nature* but eternal in *effect*. The things we do for our children do have eternal consequences and this is an unmanageable task. The only possible way of doing this with a successful outcome is to trust Christ to satisfy the requirement and do what you do by faith.

#### ❖ **There is a season for childrearing**

**Proverbs 19:18**

*<sup>18</sup> Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.* NKJV

- “ As we look around us, we are able to see with our eyes that which the Bible teaches even more plainly, there is a window of opportunity in rearing children. Although, if you have older children you still have influence upon them, clearly your greatest opportunity to teach them what to believe and what to think, exists while they are young and under your roof.

#### ❖ **Faithless childrearing bears faithless fruit**

**Proverbs 10:1**

*<sup>1</sup> A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.* NKJV

- “ It is not a question of whether your actions with your children will bear fruit or not; the question is what kind of fruit will the tree bear? The world and even many within the Church hate this kind of instruction. We don't want to think that our actions have such dramatic effect upon our children. But if parents were not responsible for rearing their children, then why would a father have grounds for rejoicing over a wise son and why would a foolish son bring grief or shame to his mother? The answer is that parents are responsible!

#### ❖ **Faithful childrearing bears faithful fruit**

**Psalms 103:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup> But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,<sup>18</sup> To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.* NKJV

- “ Rearing children is something we do *covenantally*. God has made a covenant with us and we are unable to keep it on our own. This covenant has curses and blessings. What are we to do? We keep covenants with God *in Christ*. How do we do that? *By faith*. We never keep covenant with God through our works rather His covenants are fulfilled in Christ and His obedience is imputed to us by faith. We receive grace from God through faith and this faith also produces works. This is not just a clever use of words but is exactly how we are to understand faith and works.
- “ Dwell on the promise of God on this verse. We must believe that God has promised His righteousness to our children and their children. Clearly this is a blessing of this covenant. Notice however, that the blessings are given to those who are faithful to the covenant.

#### ❖ **Principles and methods are not the same things**

**Romans 14:1-4**

*<sup>1</sup> Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. <sup>2</sup> For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. <sup>3</sup> Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. <sup>4</sup> Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.* NKJV

- “ As we evaluate the commands, promises and doctrines of the Scriptures, we must keep in mind that in many cases our obedience and faithful practice will look differently from family to family. Yes, there are many times when it is apparent that there is disobedience to a command of God. But in many other cases, God has imparted wisdom to parents to obey the command in certain methods. It is our duty to *know the difference*. If God has given us a principle and a method for obeying the command, the decision is easy. But in many cases there may be more than one valid way to obey a command and in these cases Christian charity and judgment must be exercised.