

# Blessings: The Pathway to Obedience

Most of you probably know by now that parenting is a difficult task. Not only do you have to make sacrifices to ensure that your children have all their physical needs met, but there is a concern about the final product. Why aren't my kids turning out right? Why can't I get them to behave? This lesson addresses the **MOST IMPORTANT** ingredient to obedience in your children. We are going to take some principles from Scripture and spend some time developing and discussing these ideas and then talking about how to practically implement them. We will begin by talking about the motivation for obedience. The best model for parenting is our relationship with Christ. In fact, our goal in parenting should be that they learn to rightly relate to God. We must model this relationship in our parenting to be successful.

## The Motivation for Obedience

Read **John 14:15** and discuss what motivates your obedience to Christ and your children's obedience to you.

Love is the best motivation for sincere obedience. God doesn't hold hell under our feet as a motivator for obedience. We are secure in our salvation. We are saved by grace and should serve Him out of love. Likewise, our goal should be for our children to listen to what we say and obey based on their love and respect for us.

Read **1 John 4:19** and discuss what motivates you to love Christ and what will motivate your children to love you.

We desire the end result of obedience and respect, but it only comes with the sowing of love! In our relationship with God, He is the initiator of love! Likewise, with our children, we should expect to be the initiator of love.

Over the course of these lessons, we will talk about a lot of Scriptural commands regarding child rearing. If you learn all of these techniques and practice them, will everything turn out right? Read **1 Corinthians 13:1-3** and discuss the answer.

No form of discipline will work effectively unless it is surrounded by a relationship of love between the parent and the child. Love is the MOST important thing (1 Corinthians 13:3).

Read **John 15:10-14** and **Psalms 51:10-13** and discuss how love brings about obedience.

When we are disobedient to God, we lose the joy of our salvation and fall out of the warmth and intimacy of His love. He still loves us, but we aren't abiding in His love. This absence of intimacy should draw us back to Him as we miss the sweetness of His embrace. Likewise, cultivating a loving relationship with our children will motivate them to obedience when they miss the blessing of our approval after disobeying.

Does the lack of closeness with God draw you back to Him after a time of sin and carnality?

## How to Be a Blessing to your Children

Let's go through some different aspects of God's love toward us and then discuss how we can render this type of love to our children.

**Hebrews 4:15** – “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

- Show an interest in what is important to them.
- Show them understanding and provide direction from what the Lord has taught you.

**Hebrews 13:5** – “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

- Love is spelled “T-I-M-E”
  - Time is NOT just being in the same room with your children. It involves interaction
  - Sometimes “strong-willed” children just need more time. - Peter, James, & John were strong willed and they were in the inner circle, spending the most time with Christ
  - Note how God is always available when we need Him. How would you feel if God said “not now” when you came to Him with your cares? How would you feel if He always told you to wait because He was talking to someone else?
    - Make sure you are obeying your priority pyramid – God, Spouse, Children, Church, etc...

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**Hebrews 12:6** – “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

- We need to be ready and willing to lovingly discipline our children at times
- Unfortunately this doesn't fit in most people's definition of love.

**Matthew 25:21** – “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

- He grants us responsibilities and rewards us for being good stewards by giving us greater responsibilities. We should also treat our children this way.
  - There should be a progression of responsibility with the ultimate goal of independence.
- He praises our accomplishments and places us in a position of blessing with Him

**1 John 4:7-11** – “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

- Love is sacrifice. Christ gave all for us.
- We must sacrifice for our children, not just to put food on the table but to make sure our love is in their hearts. We will have to sacrifice our agendas, our entertainment, etc... to make sure they have the most important thing – love.

**Psalms 145:9** – “The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.”

- The Lord has great affection toward us and constantly demonstrates it.
- Demonstrate your affection to your children
  - Wrestle with them on the floor
  - Let them sit on your lap and read them stories
  - Let them help you with household tasks and encourage their participation
  - Take them along with you on errands and make a big deal about it. It can be special time for you and them.
  - Hold their hand when you walk

**Deuteronomy 6:1-2** – “Now these [are] the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do [them] in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.”

- God teaches us many things that are profitable to our lives.
- Ask the question: How does God teach us?
  - The application of this passage to parenting is found in verses 4-7 – Live a Learning Lifestyle

**Romans 8:28-29** – “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate [to be] conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

- God doesn't always give us what we want, but what we need. He has a long-term goal for us and everything moves us closer to that goal.
- Likewise, we should make sure our children always and only get what they need that moves them closer to the long-term goal of godliness.

What are some other aspects of God's love that you appreciate? How can you mirror these to your children?

Name 2 things you can do with each child (separately) to build the bonds of love.