

16 April 2023 -- Questions to Discuss and Consider at Home or in Small Group

“The Reciprocal Obligations of Parents and Children” – Ephesians 6:1-4

1. What is the great duty children have toward their parents (v. 1)?
2. How does Paul view the children of believers (v. 1a)?
3. Why do children have this duty (v. 1b)?
4. Where is this duty that children have to parents found (v. 2)?
5. What specifically does this commandment say (v. 2a)?
6. What is special about this commandment (v. 2b)?
7. What is the first part of the promise (v. 3a)?
8. What is the second part of the promise (v. 3b)?
9. What are fathers NOT to do in raising their children (v. 4a)?
10. What are fathers to do in raising their children (v. 4b)?
11. Who would be included in Paul’s use of the word “children”?
12. Can children of believers be members of the Church before they have professed faith in Christ? If so, how?
13. What phrase in Paul’s instructions to the children of the congregation indicates he sees them as members of Christ?
14. If children of believers can be members of the Church, are they “in Christ”? In what sense?
15. What Biblical concept explains how children can be members of God’s community of faith?
16. If children are members of the Church, how should they be acknowledged and treated as such? [for some Biblical guidance, see Genesis 17:1-14; Ezekiel 16:20-21; Matthew 19:13-15; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 16:30-34]
17. Does every child who honors and obeys his mom and dad live a long, good life? Why or why not?
18. Why do you think Paul singles out fathers for special instruction?
19. How might a father provoke one of his children to anger? Is it always the father’s fault if a child gets angry at his father?
20. How can a father equip himself to adequately teach and train his children in the ways of the LORD?
21. What are some practical ways that a father can personally teach and train his children in the ways of the LORD? Is there ever a reason for parents to “farm out” the spiritual training of their children?
22. What part do the Church, and Pastors and Elders, play in the training of the children of the congregation?

23. What downside might there be when parents completely entrust the spiritual training of children to the Church?
24. What downside might there be when parents do not want the Church to take any, or else a very small, role in the spiritual training of their children?
25. When is the job of parenting over?
26. When a child is no longer under the authority of his or her parents, how responsible should a parent feel for the way their children turn out?
27. What should a father (or mother) do if he realizes he has fallen terribly short in the spiritual training of his children?
28. What should a father (or mother) do if he believes he did the best he could in raising his children to know and love Christ, but yet one or more of his children do not embrace the faith?
29. Much is often made of the contrasting legacies of Jonathan Edwards and Max Jukes. Is this helpful? Fair? How do you evaluate this? [see <https://lifecoach4god.life/2020/02/04/jonathan-edwards-legacy/>. See also <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/jonathan-edwards-his-life-and-legacy> (the sections “The Uncommon Union: The Edwards Family” and “The Pursuit of Happiness: Edwards’s Legacy”)]
30. Dads, as an example of implementing “bringing up your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord,” dedicate one night this coming week to gather the family together. Read Proverbs 4 and Ephesians 6:1-14. Then, as appropriate according to the ages of your children, identify a positive trait or achievement of each of your children. Also, ask them to think of something they wish to improve or do better. Close the time by praying over each one of your children and invoking the LORD’s blessing upon them.