

Study Guide: "Submission through Discipleship"

Carter Sanger, Oct-09

Introduction

Read Ephesians 5:21. This verse gives the context for Paul's instruction to us in our various relationships. What is the implication of this verse for parents to their children?

Read Ephesians 6:4.

I. Fathers have Responsibility...

Consider the statistics of divorce and broken families in our society: Nearly 50% of all first marriages end in divorce. 60+% of second marriages. 70+% of third marriages. Of marriages with children, 40+%. Of marriages without children, 66%.

- What do these statistics tell us about our perspective of the family? What reasons do people have for getting married and starting families?
- Who spends the most interactive time with children today? How do most families plan out their children's development?
- According to Ephesians 6:4 (see also Colossians 3:20) who has responsibility?

II. ...Not to Provoke...

According to verse 4,

- What is Paul's primary concern when it comes to fathers and children? Why do you think Paul instructs first on what *not* to do?
- What kinds of things do you see that provokes children?
- While we may identify many things that parents do to provoke, the one thing that often connects them together is their failure to reveal a clear path along which we want our children to walk. Can you see this with your own children?

III. ...But Aim at a Particular Target.

Read Psalm 127:4-5

- What are children compared to? What is the purpose of an arrow? What must the warrior do to accomplish this purpose?
- What does the Psalmist identify as the target?
- If you are a parent, consider the things you discipline your children for. If someone were trying to figure out your target based on your discipline and instruction, what would he see?
- According to Deuteronomy 6:5, how can a parent and his child (eventually) contend with God's enemy at the gate? What must be his chief characteristic?
- According to Deuteronomy 6:7, how is a parent to train his arrow? What times of day? Is this a part of your life? What must change to make it so?
- God saved Israel and made them His people before He gave them any commands. He made them into a great nation with a great name (not anything they had done). If our greatest hindrance to raising our children as God instructs is because we've given ourselves to building a career (a great name for ourselves), how does God's love and care for you set you free to become a parent able to submit to your children's upbringing?

Wrap-up

- What will you change as a result of God's instruction?