

A Child's Greatest Heritage

Eph. 6:1-4

Intro: a heritage is that which is handed down from one generation to another - from parents to children.

Another interesting definition is that it is a birthright.

Do children have any birthrights?

Considered as sinners - No!

But as children of parents - YES! Just as the Lord established marriage, so He has ordained that every child has two people whose responsibility it is to care for that child.

ANY CHILD WHO IS NOT GETTING THE KIND OF CARE THAT GOD INTENDED HE SHOULD HAVE IS BEING ROBBED OF HIS BIRTHRIGHT, HIS HERITAGE.

The basic problem today in our society is not delinquent children (although they can be terrible), but it is DELINQUENT PARENTS.

But parents have a heritage too. Cf. Psa. 127:3. See also Gen. 33:5 - Jacob's answer to Esau's question,

"Who are these with thee?"

He answered,

"The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant."

So, the Bible teaches that we receive our children from the Lord, and the Lord directs us as to how our children should be raised.

Our purpose tonight is to find out what the word says.

The greatest heritage, or inheritance,
that any child has is HIS PARENTS. It
is not money,
not property,
not a business,
not anything like this.
IT IS HIS PARENTS!

What does the scriptures teach us that
parents should be to their children? Or, to
state it another way, how can parents pass
on the greatest heritage to their children?

Let's begin with Eph. 6:1-4.

Using the whole book of Ephesians as a background,

I. Children can be thankful if they have
parents who:

A. Know ^{and love} the Lord as Savior.

B. Walk with the Lord in daily fellowship.
Cf. Gen. 5:22 - Enoch.

This means that the parents will give
priority to (1) the Word, (2) prayer, (3) obedience.

II. Children can be thankful if they have
parents who love each other.

Cf. Eph. 5:22-33.

This follows very closely behind our first
point. No amount of teaching, of discipline,
or anything else will prove sufficient if the
parents are having trouble with each other.

There will obviously be differences, but
these should be kept from the children.

The point is: as a whole, the home life
should be described as Paul describes it in
Eph. 5 and Col. 3.

III. Children can be thankful if they ~~are~~ have a father who is the leader.

Cf. Eph. 6:4. ^{many times the mother leads (perhaps out of necessity), and some times the children lead}

The problem with our homes is that we are inclined to give the training of the children to the mother. The mother has a part, but God gives it to the father as the one chiefly responsible.

IV. Children can be thankful if they have a father (and mother) who is:

A. Reasonable and loving (Eph. 6:4a).

B. Diligent and consistent: "bring them up" conveys the idea that everything is included, from birth to maturity. It is a process which is moving the child toward a God-appointed goal.

C. A teacher - who teaches:

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| 1. Respect for ^{Obedience to} parents } (Eph. 6:1) | } These carry over to the school teacher, the police officer, and all other adults - men and women |
| 2. ^{+ love} Respect for parents } (Eph. 6:2) | |
| (See I and II.) | |
3. The nurture of the Lord. This includes doctrine, practical living, and punishment for wrongdoing.

Proverbs is a good family book. Parents ^{will} get a lot of help from it. Two verses:

1) Prov. 22:15 - "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

2) Prov. 13:24 "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him early."

Isaac Paxe: Bad children are cake, but it is only for such a short time - not worth it.

4. The admonition of the Lord - encouraging, warning, punishing.

A father must be firm, uncompromising with right and wrong.

Two examples - one wrong, and the other right:

1) Eli - his ~~failure~~^{failure} as a father and as a man is stated in 1 Sam 3:13. See xv. 11-14. This was what God interrupted Samuel to tell him.

2) Abraham - his uncompromising position even though messianic promises were involved. See Gen 24:1-9.

Concl: The greatest, most important job in the world is the task of being parents.

It is the greatest need in our country today.

The home preceded nations
the church
and schools.

It came first - and none of these others can take the place of the home.