

Creating a Culture of Honor and Encouragement in our Homes

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June 26, 2009

As parents, we are to create an environment of honor and demonstrate encouragement in our homes. There is power in encouragement. As we give of ourselves, prime the pump, and fill the buckets of those around us, our buckets too shall be filled. However, when we fail to fill the buckets of those around us or deprive them, we also deprive ourselves. In Luke 6:38, Jesus said "Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye give to others, it shall be measured to you again."

Parents to honor their children and encourage them, just as children are to honor their parents. In creating a culture of honor, parents are to demonstrate a culture of honor in their homes by honoring their own parents, and priming/encouraging their children.

The fifth commandment, *Honor your Father and your mother that your days may be long and it may go well with you*, is restated in Ephesians 6:1 by the apostle Paul. Here the word *honor* is derived from the Greek word, *kabad*. *Kabad* means honor in the context of reverence, respect and regard. We are commanded by the Lord to honor our parents, continual/lifelong honoring of our parents even when we get older and have our own families.

Parents serve as a model of relationship between man and God, as well as with others. Children come to understand relationship with others and with God through the model of relationship that their parents provided for them at home. Parenting is a role of crucial stewardship of lives, it is partnering with God in raising His children and launching them out to fulfill His purposes for their lives. Psalm 127:4 says, "Like arrows in the hands of a warrior, so are children born in one's youth."

Honor for one's parents should not be mistaken for mere obedience to them. Some of the differences between honor and obedience are as follows:

Honor	Obedience
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outward
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attitude in the heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action or Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wholehearted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Half hearted / going through the motions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires esteem and regard for other person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not require esteem or regard for the other person

God is our heavenly Father. His relationship with us as His children demonstrates the relationship that parents should have with their children. Likewise, the relationship we have with our children should reflect God's relationship with us to the world. What are some of the things we can learn about being a parent from God, our Father?

1. **Unconditional Love:** This is love that gives good things to a child and is committed to the wellbeing of the child. It is love that still is, regardless of mistakes and shortcomings.
2. **Commitment & Devotion:** God is committed to His relationship with His children as well as His covenant with us.
3. **Kindness**
4. **Patience**
5. **Mercy**
6. **Forgiveness**
7. **Generosity/Giving**

Teach your children to honor God and to honor you as parents. To your children, you are a representation of God. When your children look at you, they get a glimpse of the heart of God their Father. Thus, parents are called to demonstrate God's love to their children.

Family is the basic building block for proper functioning in society (law and order, responsibilities) and for future family units of their children (marriage, procreation). Parents teach children lessons for life and for functioning in the society. For example, a child who doesn't understand authority in the home will not understand it in school, government, nor in leadership.

~How to Prime the Pump ~

1. **Spiritual Experience/Foundation:** Pray with your children regularly, worship with them, teach them God's word and His application, show them and encourage them to pray and listen for the voice of God
2. **Set Boundaries:** Set boundaries for your children and stick to them. For example, maintain consistency in rules and expectations, and remain objective. We have a unique responsibility in setting rules, boundaries and standards for our home. Beyond setting them, we need to make them plain and visible to all, and ensure that we keep the boundaries we have set. It is extremely important to say what you will do and do what you say you will do. This enforces a sense of responsibility, accountability and integrity with your children. According to Habakkuk 2:2, "Write down the vision and make it plain on tablets," *write out the roadmap and vision for your life, your family and for your children, and stick to them.*
3. **Proper Correction & Discipline**
Be careful not to tear down your child while trying to correct them.
 - a. **Proper Discipline:** discipline your children with a gentle spirit, not out of anger and frustration. When you discipline out of anger, it pushes your child further and further away. Discipline is about correcting undesired behaviors and coaching/teaching/pointing out desired behaviors. Discipline is not merely punishing a child for doing wrong.
 - b. **Proper Correction:** Consider account in Mark 4:35 – 41 of Jesus calming the storm. From that account, we know that Jesus rebuked the wind and spoke to/quieted the

waves. Then, the wind died down and it was completely calm. From this account, we see that the wind was behind the turbulence and the chaos. Jesus rebuked the wind first, and then he spoke to the waves. Similarly, we must rebuke the wind first (spirit behind the behavior), and then speak to the waves (the behavior itself).

4. **Use the gifts of the Spirit:** Activate the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your parenting. They are important for us to use in our home and in our daily lives. According to Galatians 5:22 – 23: “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” As you display the fruits of the Spirit in your home, you will demonstrate to your children how to live out the gifts of the Spirit.
5. **Exemplify Honor & be a role model:** Be a good example of honor and a role model to your children. Teach them by showing them honorable behaviors. Demonstrate to your children the principles of God so they can live it out.
6. **Show Respect to your children**
Our children translate our respect and love for them from our availability and how we relate to them.
 - a. Do I spend quality time with my children? *Children associate your love for them with the amount of time you spend with them.*
 - b. Do I stay consistent with my training? Or, am I critical and nagging?
 - c. Do I listen to my children?
 - d. Do I follow through with what I say I’ll do? *Don’t make vain promises nor idle threats to your children... this causes you to lose your credibility with them.*
 - e. Do I know my child’s love languages? *It’s important to know your child’s love languages: words of affirmation, receiving gifts, acts of service, affection, etc.*
7. **Be affectionate towards your children:** Speak Life into them and over them, encourage them, bless them, inspire and affirm them. Do not curse them, tear them down or undermine them. *Remember that what we say to our children, about them, and over them is huge! The power and effects of our words should never be taken for granted.* Ephesians 4:29 says “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

In closing, we have been given living water that comes from God, as well as the ability to fill the bucket of others around us, particularly our children and those in our family. What will you do with your supply of living water? Will you allow it to flow through you and reach those around you, or will you hoard it/keep it to yourself? *When water is flowing, it stays fresh and more water is supplied from the source for continued outflow. However, when water stops flowing, it becomes stagnant and ineffective. When the flow of water is halted, more water cannot flow through it since it has stopped serving its purpose.*

We all ought to open up the valve, prime the pump, and let living water flow out of us, so that our buckets might in turn be full.