

God's Expectations for The Home

Great Expectations (4) Introduction

- I. The photographer for a national magazine was assigned to get photos of a great forest fire. Smoke at the scene hampered him, and he frantically called his home office to hire a plane. "It will be waiting for you at the airport!" he was assured by his editor. As soon as he got to the small, rural airport, sure enough, a plane was warming up near the runway. He jumped in with his equipment and yelled, "Let's go! Let's go!" and the pilot swung the plane into the wind and into the air. The photographer said, "Fly over the north side of the fire and make 3 or 4 low passes." "Why" the pilot asked. "Because I'm going to take pictures. Photographers take pictures!" After a long pause the pilot said, "You mean, you're not the instructor."
 - a. That would be a scary place to be, guiding a plane without an instructor to guide you safely through the air and back to the ground.
 - b. In the same way, those who try to lead and build up a home without the instruction of the Lord – they are in a difficult place.
 - i. Ps. 127:1 – unless the Lord builds the home, they labor in vain. Unless we build, raise and lead our homes in the way that God has prepared or expected, our homes will not succeed.
 - ii. This is what we're going to spend our time together looking at this morning – building our homes by God's blueprint, considering God's expectation's for the home:
- II. We've been studying this month the subject of "Great Expectations" – looking to the Bible at what God expects from us.
 - a. We've looked at what God expects of us, His special people. We looked at what God expects from His church, specifically this church. Last week we looked at what God expects from marriage.
 - b. This morning we're going to look at what God expects from the home – what God expects from parents and children.

Children

I. Honor and Obey

- a. I'd like to begin talking with you! Everyone in here is a child to someone.
- b. Eph. 6:1-3 – this familiar passage reminds us of our responsibility as children.
- c. Paul is quoting from the 10 commandments, that children must honor their father and their mother.
 - i. This commandment is a pivotal commandment because we learn to honor, obey, and respect the Lord when we honor, obey and respect our parents.
 - ii. Obeying this command prepares us for the other important relationships we encounter.
- d. You see, if children don't show respect to moms and dads, what makes you think they will respect their teachers, their bosses, or other people in authority?
 - i. If children don't honor and obey their parents, what makes us think they will honor and obey the Lord?

- e. You'll notice from our passage in Eoh. 6, children are told to honor and obey.
 - i. Did you notice that these commands are not qualified with words like, "Honor your parents if they never make any mistakes" or "obey your parents when you feel like it"
 - ii. No, it says that if you are a child, you are to do as your parents say and to honor them with the words you speak and the things you do. As long as their upbringing keeps with God's commandments.
- f. **Col. 3:20** - we may read passages like this and think, "I know I'm suppose to honor and obey my parents, but how seriously does God take this command?"
 - i. **Rom 1:28-32** – here Paul is defining the Gentile world and their separation from God and how they had committed such wicked and horrible sins that God could not look on them with favor.
 - ii. Found in this list is this list is disobedience to parents. God takes this very seriously.
 - iii. To all children of whatever age, God looks seriously upon the way you treat your parents.

II. For Those Under Your Parents Roof:

- a. One of the greatest things you can learn is to put into immediate action the words of Eph. 6 – honor and obey your parents.
 - i. It is easy to complain when they ask you to do things. It is easy to put it off – to wait for them to ask, ask, and ask.
 - ii. It is easy to do things half heartedly, not giving your best – when they ask you to clean your room and you stuff everything under the bed – is that your best.
- b. You are to honor your parents – this means that it matters how you talk to your parents.
 - i. You may not always agree with their decisions, but remember who you are, who they are, and what God expects of you.
 - ii. Don't back talk, shout or yell. They are your parents who love you and are trying to help you be the best that you can be, to be who God wants you to be. You need to respect them. Learn to disagree without dishonoring your parents.
- c. Listen to your parents. They may seem out of touch, not knowing what texting is, or the latest bands or technology, and you're probably right – they are not up to date on the "latests" of today.
 - i. But listen to your parents. Believe it or not, your parents have been 10, 15, 20, 25 before. They know what it is like. They know the temptations young people face. They know what is best for you and your young soul.
 - ii. Notice what the Proverbs say about this: 1:8; 4:20-22; 23:22
 - iii. Listen to them and take to heart what they have to say.
- d. Know that good Godly parents will want to talk to you about what is going on in your life. They will want to talk especially about:

i. The Habits You're Developing:

1. Deut. 33:25 – what you spend your time doing is what you'll become good at. It will form habits.
2. Parents know this, and understand that it is easier to make a new habit than it is to break an old one. So if they see you developing a habit that is not good for you, your well being, your relationship with God, they will do their best to keep you from doing so.

ii. Your Friends:

1. 1 Cor. 15:33 – they will always care about who you're spending your time around, who your close friends are, because many parents have seen the truth in this passage, that who you spend your time with, is largely who you will become.

iii. Who You'll Marry

1. Mom's and Dad's understand that who you'll marry can make a difference in whether or not you make it to Heaven. The person you choose to date, and eventually marry, can be the greatest asset to your walk with the Lord, or be the one who takes you away from God and heaven.
- e. Honor them, and obey them. Have you told your parents today that you love them, you are thankful for them?

III. Older Children

- a. For those of you who have living parents but are older, maybe have your own family, the Bible still has things to say about your role with your parents.

i. You are to care for your parents:

1. 1 Tim. 5:4; Jn. 19:26-27
 2. I'm amazed that Jesus, in the midst of His suffering, thought of His mother, and sought to ensure she was taken care of.
 3. That is your role. When you think of all that your parents have done for you – the sacrifices they made, early on with the endless diapers, trying to keep up with clothes to fit your growing body, buying books for school, braces retainers, bad instruments and sport equipment.
 4. Remember how your parents were there for you – there when you were sick, by your side when you were hurt, held you in their arms when you were sad, how many of them taught you of the Lord, they never gave up on you.
 5. There may come a day when it will be your parents who now need you, to care for them, provide for them, to be by their side.
 6. Never forget your parents. Without them you wouldn't be here.
- b. You may be here and maybe you grew up in a difficult home, a place where your mom and dad were not there for you, or had your best interest in mind.

- i. Even just talking about parents brings back the pain.
- ii. Maybe trying to reconcile with them is not an option, they may not be willing, or may have passed away.
- iii. My encouragement to you is to pray to God, asking Him to keep you from having a bitter heart, that will take over your life.
- iv. Pray that God will give you a spirit of forgiveness, towards those who hurt you, and that you can be a better parent, one that you didn't have before.
- v. Pray that the pain you've been through can help you draw closer to Him.

Parents

- a. You may be here today and like me, you don't have any kids. When it comes to the subject of parenting, everyone thinks they're an expert, that is until they have kids.
 - a. One preacher before kids said his lesson, "How to raise your children." Then he had a child and changed his title to, "suggestions for struggling parents." Then he had two more kids and changed the title to "hints for hopeless parents". When they became teenagers the title became, "Anyone have any words of wisdom?"
- b. I won't be teaching from experience, rather I'm going to let the words of God remind us of who we ought to be as members of a family/home.
- c. Many of you in here are parents. Being a parent is a precious thing, a blessing from God. That's what the Psalmist calls children – **Ps. 127:3**
- d. For many of you, the children you have are the children you waited for, prayed for, desired and longed for – the ones that God has blessed you with.
- e. I don't have to remind you that your time with your child is precious, and is fleeting.
 - i. You only get one chance to influence and raise the children you have.
 - ii. For many of you, you have from birth to the early 20's and that's it, your child will move out, find a mate and start their own family.
 - iii. You may wish that you had a "heavenly do-over" card to let you have another chance with your kids, but that's not going to happen. You only have one opportunity.
 - iv. So parents would be wise to consider what God has said about parenting in His word.

I. Teach

- a. Paul instructed parents regarding their children in **Eph. 6:4** – that parents are to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- b. I'd like to begin by looking at the idea of "instruction" or teaching.
- c. It is the primary role of parents to teach their children about God and His Word.

- i. Deut. 6:6-9 – instill and impress the knowledge of God into your children.
 1. Speak of them when you sit down in your house
 2. Speak of them when you walk by the way – in all things, in nature, in food, in good times and bad, use them as occasions to talk about God and His word
 3. When you lie down – when you rise up –
 - ii. The point from this passage is that you are to teach your children of God and His word all the time, everywhere.
 - iii. That in every occasion and every place you are with your child, see them as an opportunity to show them God and teach them His Word.
- d. What will happen to the child who's parents only speak of God on Sunday's and Wednesday's? What will happen to the child who's parents only open the Bible or speak of the Bible at the Church building? What will happen to the child who's parents who never pray with their child, or mention the name of Jesus outside of our assemblies?
- i. That child will come to view God as nothing more than a hobby, someone I go to visit and talk about a few times a week – not the Lord of my life, the one whom I love with all my heart.
 - ii. Do you see how this might be confusing to a child? Why worship and obey someone we only see twice a week? Why love someone I don't even know?
- e. Parents it is your God given responsibility to help your children learn about God and His Word.
- i. That's not the responsibility of the church. Yes, we as a church teach truth through our classes and sermons. But in terms of your own spiritual learning and growth, and that of your child's, what we do here as a congregation should seem like reinforcing what has already been established at home.
 - ii. This is not the responsibility of the schools. As wonderful as our schools may be, do you want someone who doesn't know about God or His Word teaching your child what is acceptable in terms of language, modesty, or morals?
 - iii. It is your responsibility.
 1. So open a Bible with your children. Read with them. Talk with them. Sing with them. Pray with them. It is never too early to start; but you can wait till its too late – when they no longer will listen, nor care.
 2. Help them to see God everywhere – at home, at the restaurant, at the park, with friends – see every moment as an opportunity to point to God – His goodness, His power; or see opportunities to teach His word – things we don't do or things we do because He has told us so.
- f. In teaching your children about God, this will include instructing your child about things like priorities:
- i. What comes first – GPA, MVP, or GOD? What is most important to you – that they get the scholarship, that they become captain of the team, or that they be a faithful dedicated Christian?

- ii. Yes, it can happen both ways, but often it is the exception, not the rule. What are you teaching them about priorities – what is most important in their lives. What are they heading towards, what goals?
- iii. Its been 8 years since I've graduated from HS. No one asks me about my GPA. All the medals I won from running, their in a box collecting dust. In the grand scheme of who I am and where I'm going, it really doesn't matter.
- iv. So often we try to balance secular and spiritual, but with so much secular in our lives is it any wonder that for so many the spiritual gets neglected?
- v. This model doesn't work! Instead it ought to be God in all things. As an athlete – honor God on the field and respect your coach. As a student – do your best, don't cheat, work hard. As an employee – work as if you're working for God – and thank Him always for the blessings you have received.
- vi. And realize that if you must choose between one of these and God – compromising your faith, compromising your responsibilities to Christ or His church – the choice is clear. Teach your family to seek first the kingdom! (**Matt. 6:33**)

g. Parents you teach your kids not only in words, but by example.

- i. By your words and by your actions you are teaching your children:
 - 1. You are teaching them what is most important in your life
 - 2. You are teaching them how to love their future mate how you love yours
 - 3. You are teaching them how to handle discouragement and difficult circumstances
 - 4. You teach them how to be honest and admit your fault, to apologize and seek forgiveness instead of lying and trying to cover it up.
 - 5. You are teaching them how to worship, by them seeing you worship.
 - 6. You are teaching them what it means to be a Christian.
 - a. Are you defining for your children what a committed Christian is through the way you live? What would they see?
- h. I think back to what is said of Timothy his faith – **2 Tim. 1:5**
 - i. It was a faith which **first existed** in his mother and grandmother. Do you see the point?
 - 1. You cannot teach what you do not know. You cannot share what you do not have.
 - 2. To teach your child of God, you must know, be learning about God.

II. Train

- a. Eph. 6:4 – the discipline of the Lord – “training” NIV
 - i. That is literally what the word means, “upbringing or training”
- b. We are to train our children, to bring them up in a certain way, to live their lives in a certain way.
- c. Ps. 127:4 helps us understand our role in training our children by calling them arrows.
 - i. *“As I write these words, I'm looking at three arrows on my desk. They differ from one another. Any archer could see that at a glance. Yet in other ways, they are remarkably similar. They are good arrows. But then again, they're not much better than the archer who notches them on the bow. They're not much better than the smoothness of the release. No matter how finely crafted these arrows might be...*

accuracy demands a trained, full draw and a disciplined release. As I write these words, I'm looking at a picture on my desk. It is a picture of my three sons."

- d. You who have children, into your quiver God has placed arrows, each unique and special in their own way.
 - i. While each arrow may be a bit different, and how you train each one may be different, the target your aiming for is the same – God, right and faithful with God.
- e. It is your responsibility to train with them, understand them, and to help send them on the right course when it is time to let them go.
- f. Does this not imply that you as a parent are actively involved in the kind of person your child becomes, and the direction they are heading towards in life?
- g. How are we to train our children? What can help us in our training of our children?

i. Start young

1. Notice how the arrows are called the children of one's youth (127:4)
 2. This passage is similar to Prov. 22:6 – train up a child
 3. Who your child becomes, the habits they form, the way they treat others, they view authority, they view God – all of this is shaped and formed while they are young.
 4. Timothy was to continue and be convinced of the things he learned from young (2 Tim. 3:14-15).
 5. If you wait too long to try and instill godly behavior in your children, it may become too late.
 6. Spend time with them – as much as you can. Listen to them. Dad's – no sports game or newspaper article is more important than taking the time to listen to what your child wants to say to you.
- h. Something to understand from this passage – it is not a blanket statement, nor an absolute truth. Great Godly parents don't automatically have great/godly children.
 - i. There are times that a child does not grow up reflecting the character, faith of their parents.
 - ii. This is not always the fault of the parent. God's own children – Adam and Eve – rebelled against Him.
 - iii. You'll find this in the kings – some will honor God, but their children will not – 2 Kg. 21:2-3;
 - iv. For those who's children are raised, and were raised with a godly example, but have drifted to a different path, apart from God, realize that it is not mean it is your fault. Satan is strong. The pull of this world is strong, and bad company can truly corrupt good morals.

- i. Having said this, there are also times when parents do contribute to the outcome of their children
 - i. When you have fathers like Eli who knew his sons were wicked and disobedient, yet did nothing about it (1 Sam. 3:13).
 - ii. It seemed that he was part of the problem by not being involved as a father.
 - iii. There can be times when we participate in leading our children in the wrong directions – Pv. 19:18 NIV; LB states – *“discipline your son in his early years while there is hope. If you don’t you will ruin his life.”*
 - iv. It shows that part of training involves starting our children down the right track early. This verse also shows the other side of training which is:

v. Discipline

1. Training a child requires proper discipline.
2. The Houston Police Department came up with the **“Twelve Rules for Raising Delinquent Children.”**
3. We often think of punishment or spanking when we hear discipline, but the word means much more.
 - a. The meaning of the word discipline in Eph. 6:4 is “to practice discipline, to correct, give guidance”
 - b. The word is found in 2 Tim. 2:25 - correcting
 - c. It is also found in 1 Tim. 1:20 – taught
4. What we see is that this discipline is correcting the wrong, instructing what is right.
5. That’s what discipline is, helping shape our children into the people God want them to be.
6. If we fail to provide any kind of discipline, correction and instruction for their behavior, as the Proverb writer says, we become a willing party to their spiritual death.
7. Notice some other proverbs about discipline: 29:15; 13:24; 22:15; 23:15; 3:12
8. Many of these mention the rod, understand that there is more to discipline than physical correction. The point of these passages is that if you love your children, you will not sit back and watch them head down the wrong path in life – you will change their behavior, correct the wrong and instruct them to doing what is right.
9. There is a difference between punishment and discipline. Discipline is more difficult, it requires more time.
 - a. Punishment is quick, it is over and done. Punishment is reacting to a behavior and is communicating that you do not want them to do this

again. The goal is simply to control behavior. It is simply getting a child to be compliant and listen to what you say.

b. Discipline is not just about behavior, but is about the heart. That's where the teaching comes in. Discipline is deeper. It is not only helping our kids understand what they did was wrong, but explaining why what they did was wrong. You're not just stopping them from the bad habits, but you're shaping them into being able to make good ones.

c. Story of the bank (Point man 233-234)

10. God loves us and disciplines us – Heb. 12:10-11 – for our good, our holiness. God is engaged in the very same work. God's discipline is beyond trying to change our behavior. He disciplines us to shape us into the people He wants us to be – shaping and molding our hearts.

j. As it was said of Abraham, may it be said of us – **Gen. 18:19**

There is hope for our families. When we are willing to step up to these responsibilities and face whatever issues have been ignored, there's hope. There may be no more difficult role than that of a father or mother, husband or wife – but nothing more rewarding than helping your family reach the goal of heaven. There's hope. Don't give up. Pray, be the parent or child that God expects you to be.

Invitation; God has chosen to be our perfect Father.