

Introduction: Families have always been of primary importance to God. But, when the first married couple succumbed to temptation and rebelled against God, this led the firstborn of two brothers to murder his brother (Genesis 3; 4:1-24). *** With each generation of the three great patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-Israel, we see increasing family dysfunctionality. Jacob-Israel, with two wives, two concubines, and twelve sons by four different women, may have had the most dysfunctional family in the Bible (Genesis 29-35, 37-50)! *** The enemy of God is doing all he can to destroy families. In many ways he is seeking to break down family love. He is using: sexual perversion proudly paraded in public; over-emphasis on individual freedom to the point of selfishness and lonely isolation; consumerism subtly exploiting what is best in humanity by elevating objects through mind-numbing visuals in the palms of hands so people rarely connect face-to-face and in community. I could go on and on. I expect you all would have your own observations about this. It feels as if this may be the greatest assault on the family so that love and faith to God will die, to the enemy's sick delight. The Church of Jesus must do all we can to support and build up the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman who will commit to instruct and train their children in God's word and ways. *** Some four hundred fifty years after Jacob-Israel died, Moses instructed over two million Israelites on the importance of parents telling, showing, and acting out God's words and ways before their children so they may be blessed from generation-to-generation. *** Then, four hundred fifty years after Moses, Solomon spoke some three thousand proverbs (1 Kings 4:32). We will look at five that teach about fathers and sons. We will see the duty of fathers to raise godly sons. *** Let's carefully consider our texts, praying to be given wisdom to fight valiantly for God-pleasing families.

I. Obedient love to God leads to blessing for hearts that choose wisdom; and, parents must internalize God's words to teach their children to seek Him in each generation. (Deuteronomy 11:13-25)

A. Obedient love to Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, will lead to blessings for all who wisely choose to guard their hearts. (Verses 13-17)

1. And it is, if you all fully hear (to obey) my commandments which I am commanding you today, in order to love Yahweh your God, to serve Him with all your heart and soul; I give rain to your land in its time: the early (fall) rain and the latter (spring) rain, and you gather your wheat, new wine and oil. (Verses 13-14)

Blessings of obedient love: Speaking for Yahweh, Moses says obedient love and whole-hearted service to Yahweh will bring His blessings of all the rain they need to live well in the land He is giving them.

2. I give grass in your fields for your cattle; and, you eat and are full to satisfaction. (Verse 15)

Well nourished: Yahweh will provide nourishing food to fill all His people, even the poor (Psalm 132:13-15), with physical food.

3. You must be on your guard that your heart is not deceived and you turn aside and serve other 'gods' and worship them. (Verse 16)

Guard heart: They must guard (keep) their heart (Proverbs 4:23) so they do not in their simple-minded openness fall into idolatry (Proverbs 7:6-27). A strong heart to God protects from deception to idolatry.

4. And be kindled the wrath of Yahweh against you and He shut up heaven and there will be no rain and the land will give no fruit, and you perish quickly from upon the good land Yahweh is giving you. (Verse 17)

God's anger and perish from land: All who break the Great Commandment will suffer consequences.

All God's people must choose wisely to experience the blessings of loving obedience, because earlier Yahweh had given twice as many curses for disobedience including great wrath with famine and exile; but, in His time, He will restore them after they repent in humility (Leviticus 26).

Application: We have a greater responsibility as members of the Church of Jesus to choose wisely by asking God to guard our hearts, so we will choose wisely for the sake of our children.

B. Parents have a responsibility to internalize God's Word and teach their children at every opportunity so they will seek His grace to do what God requires throughout the generations. (Verses 18-25)

1. You must put these words of mine in your heart and soul; and you bind them as a sign on your hand and they are a mark between your eyes. (Verse 18)

Put words in heart and soul: God's people must internalize His words and put physical reminders on their body so they obey Him before men. In the days of Moses, in Egypt, a mark in the middle of the forehead was the sign of a slave. They must serve God from His words in their heart!

2. And you teach them (God's words) to your children (sons), to talk to them when you sit in your house, and when you walk in the path (street), and when you lie down (before bed) and when you rise (before breakfast). (Verse 19)

Teach children at every opportunity: Israel was told before they entered into the land Abraham was told his descendants would inherit, they were all responsible for teaching children, especially sons, all of God's words. In the Church, fathers are commanded to train and exhort their children IN the Lord (Jesus) without frustrating them (Ephesians 6:1-4).

Children must be taught God's words and ways

3. Because your days and the days of your children (sons) will be multiplied in the land Yahweh swore to your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon earth. (Verses 20-21)

Long life from knowing God: Every generation of God's people will experience heaven on earth and have long life, if they obey God in love; and, parents teach their children to follow their example.

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4. Because if you fully keep all this commandment I am giving you to do (it): to love Yahweh, your God; to walk in all His ways; and to cling close to Him; Yahweh drives out (dispossesses) all these nations from before you; and you drive out (dispossess) nations greater and mightier than you. (*Verse 22-23*)
Obey in love: If they keep loving Yahweh with the love of a husband and wife (Genesis 2:24), walk in His ways, and teach their children to do so, their God will give them success against the strongest foes.

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5. Every place on which the sole of your feet walks will be yours; from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the Euphrates River into the western (Mediterranean) Sea; is your territory. (*Verse 24*)
Large land: Yahweh says He will give them the large land inheritance He swore to Abraham (Genesis 15:12-21).
6. No man will stand against you, Yahweh will give the dread of you on all the (people of) the land on which you will walk, as He spoke to you. (*Verse 25*)
Help of Yahweh: Yahweh will do everything for them! He will put great fear in the stronger current inhabitants. He will cause them to fall before His people. He will keep His word to give them the land.

Application: We must learn from this to never forget that what God requires of us, He always provides us what we need by grace through faith so we may succeed and not give up in our human weakness against stronger foes.

II. Parents must teach their children by example and practice; Solomon commands fathers to keep their sons from selfish folly to live in truth by grace. (*Deuteronomy 11:26-28 & Proverbs 22:5-8, 15*)

- A. Parents must teach children by both example and practice. (*Deuteronomy 11:26-28*)
 1. Behold! I (am) giving in your presence this day a blessing and a curse. (*Verse 26*)
Explicit choice: The covenant God 'cuts to the chase': they can choose to be blessed or cursed.
 2. Blessing (for you), which (is) if you listen to obey the commandments of Yahweh, your God, which I (am) commanding you this day. (*Verse 27*)
Blessing: They will be blessed if they always obey Yahweh's commandments. That would be all the adults with Moses that day; and, the blessings will continue with their children if they are taught God's ways and continue to practice them.

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3. And the curse if you (will) not listen to obey the commandments of Yahweh, your God, which I (am) commanding you this day in order to go to other 'gods' which you have not known. (*Verse 28*)
Warning: The consequence if they do not receive the grace of obedient faith from Yahweh, but choose idolatry, is all the covenant curses of Leviticus that Moses will repeat (*Deuteronomy 28:15-68*).

Application: As Christians, we must teach our children God's word and ways by our example and practice – aligning our actions with our words; and, pass our faithful perseverance on to our children by helping them to face temptation by encouraging them in love and, if necessary, rescuing them before they break.

- B. Fathers must help their children, especially their sons, to stay away from selfishness, and by God's grace to live in the truthfulness of Jesus. (*Proverbs 22:5-8, 15*)
 1. Thorns (and) snares in the way of the twisted / (he) keeping his soul will be far from them. (*Verse 5*)
NOT twisted: Fathers must do all they can to protect their children especially their sons, from being twisted in God's eyes by idols and false 'gods', symbolically represented by weeds (*Matthew 13:22*).
 2. Dedicate (a) young man according to his way / and when he will be old, he will not depart from it. (*Verse 6*)
Re-direct: No son should be dedicated to go his way. It will not always be God's way (*Isaiah 55:6-9*)!
 A father must re-direct his son's wrong desires to save him from selfishness. More later!
 3. (The) rich will be master over (those being) poor / and slave (is) the one borrowing to (the one) lending. (*Verse 7*)
NOT enslaved: The teaching here is that the rich always seek to enslave the poor in debt. Do not be enslaved by debt!
 4. (The one) sowing evil, he will reap iniquity / and the rod of his wrath will end. (*Verse 8*)
NOT evil: The father warns his son against seeking riches through the evil of intimidation.
 One who 'breaks legs' to collect on usury loans to the poor will eventually be terminated, even if not in this life.
 5. Folly has been bound up in the heart of (a) young man / the rod of correction will drive it far from him. (*Verse 15*)
Rod of correction: In a chapter of Proverbs emphasizing the necessity of fathers disciplining their sons (*Hebrews 12:5-11*), this verse clarifies the verse about keeping a young man from his (foolish) way.

Application: Christian fathers must seek God to show them how to keep their sons from: twistedness, selfishness, slavish debt, and evil – all manifestations of rebellion against God. They must encourage them to receive the grace of God so they will be saved and live IN Jesus who IS the way, the truth, and the life.

A father disciplines his children so they will not live in folly

Conclusion: People who obey God in love are blessed for their hearts that choose wisdom. Parents must internalize God's words to teach their children to seek Him from generation-to-generation. Parents must teach their children by their example and their practice, guiding them in love that lets them experience failure. Solomon commands fathers to keep their sons from selfish folly to live in truth by grace.

Children must be taught God's words and ways