

# Ephesians 6:1-4

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 21 June 2026

Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[ 0 : 00 ] Amen. Good morning. And I haven't said it to you already. Happy Father's Day. I don't exercise very much authority in the life of our church.

We are an elder led congregational church. We think this is a good and biblical polity. But from time to time, I have a little bit of power that I like to exercise to call an audible on a Sunday morning.

And I have put in your bulletin a text to address the very end of John chapter 10. But instead, we're going to look at some verses in Ephesians chapter six on this Father's Day.

So we're going to read six, one through four. I'm going to spare you the details of why. And we're going to get right into it together. But first, before delivering any exhortation from this text, Dads, I want you to know that you are seen.

I see the hard work that you are doing. And I am generally, and I mean that with charity, I'm generally very proud of you. Being a father is not easy.

[ 1 : 13 ] And I notice your efforts and the fruits of your labor. You're doing a good work. Do not grow weary of doing good. We, of course, all have improving to do in our parenting if we're in that stage.

So I also do not want you to stop growing in your fathering. But please take today's brief exhortation as an encouragement to do well and not in any form as condemnation.

Second, the Greek word rendered in verse four, fathers, can also mean parents.

I appreciate the translation of the word into our English word fathers as dads are to be the heads of our households and not to be giving leadership and the raising of children with mothers as helpers in this most precious, important of responsibilities.

So I'm okay with the fact that they've used fathers in this place. But the point is, moms, don't let the teaching of this text be lost on you this morning.

[ 2 : 21 ] Further, if you are not a dad and not a mom, so you're not a parent or perhaps your children are already out of your home, I hope this morning that you will be encouraged, perhaps helped in being grateful for your earthly father.

And I hope we will all remember the loving care of our heavenly father. So Ephesians 6, 1 through 4, we're going to give particular attention to verse 4 and the first half of verse 4 most especially.

But I want to set the stage just to begin as we'll begin reading in verse 1. Let me pray that God will bless our time in his word. Father, we do ask humbly as we take up your word together this morning that you would help us to rightly understand it.

We are grateful for fathers. We all have them in varying measure. We have been benefited by them. We praise you this morning especially for you, our heavenly father. If we've been justified and therefore adopted in Christ, you care for us with perfection.

[ 3 : 39 ] Never fail to care for us as a father loves a son. Help us to hear the exhortation of this text, to give it good and right application in our lives for the glory of Christ.

And in his name we pray. Amen. Ephesians 6 beginning in verse 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right.

Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

So, children, let me first have your attention. The apostle Paul is speaking to you in verses 1 through 3.

And he tells you that it is good for you to obey your parents. Your parents are not perfect. But they were given to you as a gift from God to help you follow him so that your life will go well.

[ 4 : 51 ] Ultimately, they want to see you repent and believe in the gospel. They want your spiritual well-being. But even before that and after that, they want you to live well in the world that God has

made.

So, you ought to listen to the godly discipline of your parents. And you need to extend forgiveness to your parents when they mess it up.

Because they have and they inevitably will not do this perfectly. But they've been given to you by God to help you to follow him.

But, as I said, our attention is going to be on verse 4. And particularly the first part of verse 4. So, let's turn our attention there.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger. Fathers, and by extension mothers, we are exhorted to not anger our children.

[ 5 : 51 ] But is this possible? We have experienced anger from our children when our discipline is careful and gentle and fair.

When we've done everything as we should do it, sometimes our children do not respond the way we might hope they would. Thank you, Dad, for loving me so much and correcting my error.

Rarely the response that you receive. Are we being told here to tiptoe around our children's feelings in such a way that we ensure they will never get angry?

After all, anger is a condition of the fallen heart. So, is it even possible to not anger a child? Votie Bauckham, you may remember.

I hope you know who I'm referring to. A late, great Votie once said in a conference that I attended, do you know why babies are so small? Because if they weren't, they would kill you the first time you didn't give them something they want.

[ 6 : 56 ] Experience the rage, the fury of an infant as soon as they are hungry or tired. Even when you've done everything you need to do for that child, sometimes they are just furious about life in a fallen world.

Surely Paul doesn't want us to center all of our child training on our children's feelings in such a way that they always get their way. May it never be.

So, what does he mean? So then, what's he talking about here? Now, two details are going to help us to understand this meaning. Number one, the word provoke in the Greek is in the present tense, which means that it speaks to a state of being.

Paul is saying, do not make your children provoked with anger. They are angry. So, it would seem that this is a deep-rooted type of anger.

There's a bitterness that's set in in the child that's provoked. An anger that is set against the father and the father's leadership.

[ 8 : 09 ] It started to turn away from the father's leadership in the home. Secondly, the parallel passage to this one uses the same word provoke, but with a different qualifier.

This is Colossians 3 in verse 21. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. It puts a bit of a different flavor on this exhortation.

So, when we take these two details together, I think it becomes obvious that Paul is not exhorting fathers to avoid our children ever becoming angry with us, for it's inevitable that they will.

But rather, to parent them in a way that they do not turn against our good parenting in an angry kind of discouragement. That kind of throw your hands in the air.

I can't possibly ever please my parents. I might as well just cast them off. Now, the last half of the verse gives us the adverse of this, the opposite of this.

[ 9 : 15 ] It begins, but bring them up. Instead of this provoking them to anger, bring them up, which helps us to understand more of what the initial part of the verse means.

In the discipline and instruction of the Lord. When we see the word discipline, most people, I think, we automatically think of kind of punitive action discipline.

We think immediately of the spanking, perhaps. But that is not what Paul has in mind. The word discipline means to train.

So when a top athlete is referred to as disciplined, we don't think of them as receiving daily spankings. This is not where our minds go at all. But of carefully training their bodies for whatever task they have set themselves to.

Right? They have worked and worked and worked to be the best at whatever the exercise may be. Our children need the same. And they need it in two ways, two types of discipline.

[ 10 : 27 ] They need instructive discipline. They need to be told and shown how they are to act. And this should be the lion's share of the work that's going on in your home.

Modeled for them in the way that you live your life. Telling them why you live the way you live. Playing games to show them the way they ought to act. Anytime our two oldest weren't sharing well, we sat down on the floor and we played the sharing game. To be an example of that. It kind of became a bit of a punishment for them. But we go through the process of asking, making responses. Sharing toys. Asking for forgiveness. What does it really look like to ask for forgiveness? Most adults don't know really how to ask for and grant forgiveness. Instructive discipline. Major part of what we're doing in our homes. Do not assume that your children will arrive at the right conclusions. They will not. They will arrive at very poor conclusions. [11:36] If you don't train them how they are to go. They also need corrective discipline. Being told and shown how they are not to act.

Beloved parents, we will not do this well. If we do not know how our children are to act and how they are not to act. Some of us may not have been trained well. May not have grown up in homes that were godly. And we were assisted in seeing how it is we are to live. But we have a book. It's an inspired book. It's authored by God himself to show us how it is that we are to live in this world. So we should be in the word. And we should be understanding what characterizes the person oriented to God who's going to thrive in the world in which he's made. How to act and how not to act. There is some latitude in this, of course. Different people have different rules for things. Maybe your children are allowed to climb up on the back of your couch and jump off.

[12:47] I have no problem with that. But maybe not at my house. There should be some standards for the way we interact in society. Certainly God's word sets for us the ultimate, the black and white, off the pages standards for what we're looking for from our children.

Instructive discipline and corrective discipline. Then why does he go on to use the word instruction? Doesn't it feel like the word discipline is the negative part, the corrective part, and instructive is the positive part?

In fact, I use the word instructive in talking about the positive part of discipline. But in the Greek, the word instruction means warning.

It means warning. Our children need to know what the eternal consequence is for their not obeying God. They need to understand that the temporal, instructive discipline and corrective discipline of their parents is not ultimately aimed at their external behavior.

We're not trying to train moralists. But that it is ultimately aimed at their hearts. Trying to show them there's a standard to which they are to live, that they will struggle to live too.

[14:10] And there's a gospel that comes in, a good news that comes in and brings to them a freedom from condemnation. We want our children to fear and love God.

This is the great end of all godly parenting. And we're modeling for them something of God's authority in the home. It will not be perfect, but we also want our children to fear and love us. This is why we must discipline and instruct our children by God's word. And why we must discipline and instruct our children according to God's ways.

So when you think, okay, how am I to parent? Parents, do not go to the internet and look for all of the tips on how you are to parent. Packed into the last part of verse 4, we're to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Of course, this means the scripture. Of course, this means the moral realities laid out for the ethics of the Bible. But it also means to do it in a way that's consistent with the way that God parents us.

[15:30] Patient. Loving kind. Consistent. Always seeking our highest good. Never failing at any point to do these things to apply the truth for our great good.

We're to bring up our kids in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So there's the positive side of that. But as I said, we're going to focus on the first part of the verse.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger. Let's make sure that we don't build in them a rebellious bitterness toward us.

Now, may our children develop that apart from us? I think so. I think it's altogether possible that our children may reject the ways of the Lord, may become embittered towards us, and perhaps we had nothing to do with it.

But if one of my boys were able to do this, I would really want to stop and go, am I at all culpable here? What might I need to repent of? Ask their forgiveness for?

[16:42] How might I need to improve in the way that I parent? Even in that rebellious moment, I want to think carefully and I want to think really clearly about this.

And I'm sure that you also do as well. Now, at this point, I want to commend to you a book. There's more that could be said about this that we could possibly cover in the allotted time for this morning. But I really want you to pick up a book if you feel like your children are provoked or just you're finding there's a heart of anger within them. And you don't know how to wrap your mind around it and you don't know how to address it.

And perhaps for some of you, your kids are so young, this may not be a reality, but log this away and think of it in the future if you find this to be the case. And it's a book written by a man named Lou Priolo, and it's called The Heart of Anger.

It's got one of the worst covers of any book I've ever seen. It's terrible. You'll see if you ever look it up. But the contents of it are rich and really helpful, and he's unpacking ways that we could perhaps provoke our children to anger.

[17:53] He has 25 of them. If you ask me nicely, I'll be happy to post this later on. I want to go through them, though, and I'm going to go through them all, but I'm going to go through them quickly. I'm going to make some comments about a couple of them, but I think it's worth mentioning.

Perhaps you could take a pen in hand and jot down some of these. Be thoughtful about these. Preventative work. We want to don't even find our kids in a situation where they may be provoked. What might we be doing to be the healthiest possible parents we can be for the good of our kids to the glory of God? So here we go. 25 ways to provoke your children to anger with some occasional comments from me.

Number one, lack of marital harmony. If your house is in turmoil, your kids will not feel it as a place of peace and will not be able to hear your instruction.

You will not be applying God's truth to your own life. Lack of marital harmony. Number two, establishing and maintaining a child-centered home.

[19:02] We've talked a bit about this already. It's not good for your kids for them to think that the world revolves around them. From time to time, I will joke, not with any of your children, but sometimes a kid just needs to get pushed down.

And I'll be happy to do that. If you ever want me to come over and just knock your kid down, tell them that the world's not about them. Number three, modeling sinful anger.

Blowing up in your own home. I'm going to teach your kids that this is an acceptable way to act. It's appropriate. We cannot expect our children to not have hearts of anger if we have hearts of anger. James chapter 4, verse 1 and part of 2. What causes quarrels? What causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

You desire and do not have, so you murder. You hate people in your home when you explode angrily. Praise God for repentance in our home.

[20:11] We can ask for forgiveness when we're angry. Number four, and related, many of these are habitually disciplining.

In anger. You're disqualified from disciplining if you're angry. But sometimes it happens. The discipline is important, but it should not come. It should not be arising from anger at your children. Number five, scolding. The children don't need to be dressed up and down. They need to be told that they're wrong, disciplined appropriately, corrected, restored. Moving on.

Number six, being inconsistent with discipline. This one hits me probably the closest. Our children will never learn to obey if the expectations that we set for them are not clear.

If the consequences are not clear. And if that corrective discipline is not consistent. Don't ever, don't ever count to three.

[21:15] I've never heard any of you count to three. Praise the Lord. Don't count to three. What you're teaching your kids is that you're not serious until you count to three. Tell them when I say come here that they're to come to you for their temporal and eternal good.

So just as a minor thought experiment, I wonder how many of you prepared your children for today. Perhaps before you left the house or on the car ride on the way here.

A little chat before everybody jumped out, tried to grab everything together. What were the expectations coming in to this building together? Did you talk to them?

Did you make it really clear what you expect from them? Are those expectations reasonable? What you expect and your children's understanding of it is important.

Say, this is what I expect of you. Do you understand? Yes, sir. Okay. Do you understand what the consequence will be if you don't meet the expectation? Yes, sir. All right. Now whose fault is it if you're being spanked because you didn't meet the expectation?

[ 22 : 24 ] You may be surprised what your children can accomplish when you set clear expectations with clear consequences and when you consistently follow through. Again and again, for Sam and I, when ours were young, we had to say to each other, boy, we're dropping out of the inconsistency.

Because it's hard work. It is hard work. To ask one of my boys to come to me just because I wanted to give him a hug. And they don't do it and I go, oh, I just created a whole discipline issue in the house.

I could have just said nothing and gone on with the evening. But here we go. It's easy just to not do it. But, ah, maybe they didn't hear me. They heard me and I've got to follow through with them. There's been a trend. I think it'll probably be a trend that loops round and round and round called parenting with grace. It tends to have some tinge of the gospel to try to say to our children, well, God forgives our sin in Christ.

And so I'm going to overlook this particular infraction to try to teach you something about the gospel. But that's not how the gospel works at all. Not even sort of. If I was to be consistent in that line of reasoning, if I wanted to teach my son something of the gospel, when one of them disobeyed, I would have grabbed another and punished him instead.

[ 23 : 49 ] See, this is the gospel. God doesn't punish your sin. He punished your sin in somebody else. In Christ. God, because he's holy and he's just, he must maintain that.

God is always who God is at all times. So every sin will be punished. Will be. Every single one. Those things we know. Those things we don't know.

All of the weird inclinations of our heart. All of it will be punished. The only way for us to have forgiveness. The only way for us to not be eternally punished was for our sin to be punished in Christ.

He takes the punishment away for us. You're not teaching our kids anything about the gospel. If you just go, uh, not this time. You're teaching them that disobedience can be taken lightly when you feel like it.

It's not a picture, not a picture of grace. Rather, if I'm to parent with grace, I'm going, I'm going to be clear and I'm going to be consistent with my children.

[ 25 : 03 ] The grace is that they get to remain my children when they act like they're not my children. And they disobey the good commands of their father who's looking out for them, who loves them dearly, who's providing everything that they need.

Trying to train them that they might follow the Lord and live well in the society in which the Lord's put them. And they disobey me. They're saying, you, you aren't doing all of those things.

You're a bad parent. I don't want to be your child. That's what these little rebellious things are doing when they're not listening to us. Parenting with grace means I keep them in my house.

And I say, even though you're being rebellious, I love you so much that I'm going to keep pressing. I'm going to keep working with you. I'm going to keep trying to show you the way that you should go. And I'm going to correct your errors.

And the alternative would be to put a free kid sign around their neck and set them out on the curb. This one apparently is not mine. I will put them out on the curb. So should you parent with grace?

[ 26 : 03 ] Should you display the gospel in your parents? Of course, of course you should. But that movement and the way it's framed is not a biblical way to parent your children. You want to do it in a way that's consistent with the way the Lord deals with us.

There are temporal and there are eternal consequences for our sin. Always, we experience this as well. If you're in Christ, the eternal consequences have been paid for by him.

But there are still temporal consequences because God loves us. Hebrews 12. Do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. He's treating you as sons.

He's bringing to you the correction that you need because he loves you. Right. So Romans 8.

There's therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Right. Eternal consequences. Hebrews 12. Seven. It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

[ 27 : 11 ] Right. So being inconsistent can provoke anger in your kids. Your kids can be confused about what it is that you want from them. Right. Eight. Never feel like I can make you happy.

Right. I don't understand the rules because you're inconsistent. Seven. Having double standards.

Right. Expecting one thing of one child and not from another.

And that's a complicated thing to work out because all of our kids are unique and they're in different developmental stages. It's a labor. Right. Get with your spouse. Talk about what's going on. Are we applying the rules of our home consistently amongst our kids at their stage of development?

Number eight. Being legalistic. Here, loo means the children earning your favor in your home by very careful, tight obedience.

Right. They're not in your good favor unless they're performing well. Right. This is legalism. It's adding things to the gospel. Our acceptance before God is based on our performance. Doing that very thing with your kids can provoke them to anger.

[ 28 : 15 ] Oh. My boys are mine. That's why they're accepted. Right. That's why they belong.

Because they're mine. Right. I get the great honor of being their father. Now, I want them.

I want to see them perform in certain ways. But for them. Not for me. Right. For their good. Not for mine. Number nine. Not admitting you're wrong and not asking for forgiveness.

Parents, if we ever get anything right, it is by grace alone. So we have all the reason in the world to be humble in our parenting and no reason to be proud.

If we ever do any of this right, it's because God's been kind to us. He's given us the grace to know his word, to read good books, to be part of a church that cares about good parenting.

We will make mistakes. And the parent who is striving to not provoke their child to anger will be willing to admit their wrongs and ask their child for forgiveness.

[ 29 : 20 ] It upholds the beauty of the gospel when we're forgiven in Christ. We don't walk around acting like we're perfect, like we've got it all figured out.

Your kids see through that. They know. But oh, to apologize. And to say, I needed to correct the thing you did, the attitude, the disobedience, but I did it poorly.

I should not have done it this way. You can ask my children. I have issued countless apologies to them. Like a couple of them stick out in my mind, but I have apologized and apologized for not parenting well.

Sometimes that correction, the inconsistency correction, took us sitting down with our children and saying, Hey, we have not loved you well because we've been inconsistent. We're going to tighten everything up here, but we want you to know first that it's our fault.

It's our fault. We haven't been consistent with you, and we're going to work at being consistent because we love you. So I can tell you, there's almost nothing more humbling than to ask for the forgiveness of a two-year-old and have them say, It's okay, Daddy.

[ 30 : 30 ] And then to go, Actually, that's not how we grant forgiveness. You have to actually say, It's okay, Dad. I forgive you. Right? Here comes the tragedy. As tears roll down your face.

Dads, it is good for your soul and it is good for your family to ask for forgiveness when you have been wrong. None of you have done it perfectly. There's not a single one of you that's done it perfectly.

I hope you've already repented and asked for forgiveness. Perhaps there's a space in which you need to do that. Matthew chapter 7, the Sermon on the Mount.

You may be familiar with the text. I'm going to replace the word brother with the word child to see how it hits. Beginning in verse 3. Why do you see the speck that is in your child's eye?

Let me take the speck out of your eye when there is the log in your own eye. You hypocrite. First take the log out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your child's eye.

[ 31 : 36 ] Must it be done? Yes. But there's a way that we ought to go about doing it. So we should admit when we're wrong. And we should ask for forgiveness. Number 10.

Constantly finding fault. Right? Always wrong. Nothing's going well. Much of this is motivated by the way that you're being perceived by others.

Constantly coming down on them. Our children do so much well. There's so much to be praised.

And you should mount up the praise on your kids and then find those little places where they need

to be corrected.

Number 11. Parents reversing God-given roles. Men. You should be the primary disciplinarians in your home. Ladies. You are with your children more. Especially young children. Throughout the day. But your children should understand that the moms are carrying out the decision that mom and dad have come to.

And dad is ultimately in charge of discipline in the home. I've got some theories. But there's certainly the discipline of a dad just hits different.

[ 32 : 43 ] And I don't mean hit. Because it's hard. Lands different. Than the discipline of a mom. And sometimes it is that. Sometimes dad just knows how to meter out that spanking a little better than mom does.

There's a tone of voice. Don't flip these roles. Men. Do not let your wife be the primary disciplinarian in your home. It's not fun. I know when you get home you're tired.

Engage. Be full on. Lead the charge. Dads are the greatest agent of change in our society.

Children. Families. All of the institutions that are made up by them. I'm speaking temporarily. Dads are at the center of that.

Take up that charge. By grace. Lead in your home. Don't let the roles reverse. Number 12. Not listening to your child's opinion.

[ 33 : 39 ] Or taking his or her side of the story seriously. Obviously if you've witnessed something happen. It's one thing. But sometimes you're trying to deal with things that you didn't see happen.

Perhaps you heard it happen in another room. It's important to hear your children. Try to understand what truly took place. Number 13. Comparing them to others.

Always saying why can't you be like. Right. Their children aren't behaved like you. Number 14. Not making time. Just to talk.

Just to spend time with your children. Getting to know them. Understand them. Right. Everything you're doing is this constant transaction between. That's all aimed at obedience.

Get to know your kids. And take time to appreciate them. Number 15. Not praising or encouraging your child. Our children need to know that we delight in them.

[ 34 : 42 ] Parents if you find yourself in a stage of life where you're having a difficulty delighting in your kids. Pray that God would help you to do so. To genuinely love your kids.

And love being around your kids. Not because of anything particular they have done. But just because they are. Just because they are. Fathers we have so much opportunity to build relational equity with our children.

By constantly telling them. That we love them. That we're proud of them. That they make us happy. Pointing out the things they're doing so well. It deposits into them.

Man. This guy is for me. He thinks I'm great. It makes the correction sting a little less.

Pun intended. If you've built into them a lot of praise. Our children should have no doubt. Zero doubt.

[ 35 : 46 ] That they bring us joy. So that when we have to exercise corrective discipline. They have no doubt. That we're doing so. For their good. Your children shouldn't feel like they're an annoyance to you.

They should feel like. They bring you a lot of pleasure in life. So that that corrective discipline.

Lands the way it should. I used a phrase with my boys when they were young.

When I was correcting them. That they could quote for you. Because I have said it so many times.

Insert. Kate. Judah. Silas. You are my son. And I love you.

And because I love you. I want you to obey. This is the way the father deals with us. You belong to me. And I have your greatest good in mind.

He's an encourager to us. He deals with us in this way. Zephaniah 3.17. The Lord your God is in your midst.

[ 36 : 48 ] A mighty one who will save. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you by his love. He will exult over you with loud singing.

Praise your kids. Encourage your kids. Make their little victories big in your home. Number 16.

Failing to keep your promises.

Don't write checks that can't be deposited. If you say to your children you're going to do something. Do it. And when you don't. And it will happen. Make sure that you apologize. 17.

Chastening them in front of others. Try to make the correction private. When it's appropriate to do that. Obviously sometimes it can't be. But you ought to be pulling your kids aside. As much as possible.

18. Not allowing them enough freedom. Right? As your children are getting older. They need to be able to stretch their wings. At some point they have to fly. And we don't want to cripple them.

[ 37 : 47 ] And keep them from being able to do that. A lot of wisdom required. In walking out those years. I think that's where we find ourselves right now. I'll let you know how it goes.

Number 19. Adversely. Allowing them too much freedom. Right? Setting them free into the world. And not being careful and caring. And giving them warnings. Things that they are not aware are going to hurt them.

Trying to get out ahead of them. And help them to understand that. 20. Mocking your child. Making fun of them. 21. I hope this goes without saying.

But abusing them physically. Physical correction should be appropriate. 22. Ridiculing them or name calling.

23. Unrealistic or unclear expectations. I mentioned the unclear part previously. But what about unrealistic expectations?

[ 38 : 47 ] Some of us set expectations for our children. Based on how we want others to perceive us. Rather than on what should actually be expected of them. Right? Remember all of your kids are unique.

Right? Knit together in the womb. Image bearers. Right? We want to press them on. We want to press them forward. But we want to make sure we're not doing this in a way that becomes frustrating. To them.

That said. Some of us set our expectations too low. And I think that's kind of the societal norm. Visit a playground.

My word. Children. These days. I want to take over the whole playground and start correcting kids. Surely though we don't want our children to become frustrated. Because they are simply incapable of rising to our expectations.

We're asking too much of them. So briefly two quick practices that helped Sam and I when our boys were little. We played a lot of games. Which is just a thing to do that's fun.

[ 39 : 44 ] It's just fun to do that. But push them in games. It's a game. If they can't achieve the thing that they've been instructed to do. That's okay. Because it's a game. It's in that realm. They know that.

They're not being disobedient. If you tell them to go hide. And they don't know what that means. Or they go hide. And they stand behind the door and giggle the entire time.

Right? This is not good hide and seek play. You're breaking the rules of hide and seek. You're supposed to be quiet when you play hide and seek. Obviously. Right? It's okay that they don't do that.

You find them and it's fun. And you realize. Yeah. Telling them to go and be quiet. A little out of the realm. At the moment. Right? Give them steps. See if they can accomplish things.

And it'd be okay if they don't. Right? How many things can they do. Hold in their minds. And go get done. Say to get ready for bed. Right? Try to do it.

[ 40 : 38 ] Let's try to see. Three things. Let's try to remember. And see how far their little minds get. And be right there to remind them. Help them. Along the way. Secondly. We talked a lot to others.

Where are your kids at? What do you expect of them? What's reasonable for us to expect? How do you think we're doing? Could we push our kids more? Should we be pulling back? Have lots of conversations with people who are walking life out with you.

God is so very kind to us in this way. Teaching us how to walk. How to obey. Expecting us to be obedient to the things that we know to be true.

He doesn't give us some unrealistic expectations that we're unsure of and we don't know. And then he's displeased with us. Just a small example. Mark chapter 9 verse 21 and following.

And Jesus asked his father. This was a boy that had been crippled. How long has this been happening to him? I'm sorry. He was having seizures. And he said from childhood and has often cast him into fire and into water to destroy him.

[ 41 : 44 ] But if you could do anything, have compassion on us and help us. And Jesus said to him, if you can, all things are possible for one who believes. Immediately the father of the child cried out

and said, the boy.

Imperfect but sufficient faith. Number 24. Practicing favoritism. Your children. I mean, you probably have a favorite. But your children should have no idea who it is.

Maybe they should all think it's them. I don't know. 25. And lastly. Child training with worldly methodologies inconsistent with God's word.

Looking out there. The Instagram Bible. What are people saying out there? What seems to be happening in their house that's going well, that's not consistent with God's word.

Our children need to be brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Parents, especially fathers. This means that we will need to be keenly aware of what the training and warning of the Lord is for us and for our children.

[ 42 : 56 ] We are to get to the careful work of raising our children to fear and to love God. Now, once again, let me commend you broadly and generally.

I think there's a lot of good work going on in the life of our church. I am primarily encouraged by our church. But I want to keep talking about this. I think we need to. I perhaps bring up some points that might spark a little thing in you.

A conviction that you need to work through. Let's keep at this. Let's not assume that we have arrived. We have some long roads ahead of us. Loving on all of these littles.

We'll close with a quote and then a prayer. John Bunyan once said, He that is the master of a family, he has as under that relation a work to do for God.

The right governing of his own family. And this work is twofold. First, he means most important. First, touching the spiritual state of it.

[ 43 : 56 ] Second, touching the outward state of it. Let's pray.