

Audio Transcript of Sermon

October 26, 2019

Turning the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children

Hello. Thank you for joining us on the Sabbath. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. During the recent fall Holy Days, we've been studying the Kingdom of God, the return of Jesus Christ and of God the Father here on earth and looking at this future time as a time of extreme happiness. There's one prophecy that shows there is this very remote possibility that that might not even happen. Will take a look at that verse as the basis for today's sermon. Let's take a look at Malachi four beginning with verse one, Malachi four beginning with verse one.

#### **Malachi 4:1-6**

**1. For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.**

**2. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.**

**3. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.**

And what that tells us is this is very much aligned to the time when Jesus Christ returns, and His Kingdom is established here on earth. But, let's take a look at the next few verses to understand a very significant condition. Verse four.

**4. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.**

**5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:**

**6. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.**

When we think of the word *curse* today, we often think of a cuss word and so, we look at the term *curse* as being something very light that can easily be overcome. The original Hebrew word is transliterated as *cherum*, *c-h-e-r-u-m*, and a

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transliteration is simply taking the Hebrew alphabet and turning the sounds into the English equivalent, and the word means *utter destruction*. Think of the last time you heard the words *utter destruction* used in a news report. For me, it was when a recent hurricane went over and stayed over an island for a few days. Most of the buildings were destroyed. The news reporters did their shots from the island after the storm, looked around, showed broken buildings, downed power lines, cars tossed around like children's toys, and said this was a place of utter destruction. Utter destruction is something we want to avoid. We definitely do not want this entire world struck with utter destruction. I would not want to be here on earth when that would happen. When we think of the term *utter destruction*, we see a possibility where everything we are hoping for in the future can somehow not be there. And, we know there is this prophecy of this Elijah the prophet coming before the great and dreadful day of the LORD who will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers.

So, for today's sermon, we're going to take a look at the concept of what do parents need to do in regards to their children. Our concept today is turning the hearts of the fathers and the mothers to their children. Everything we do as Christians begins with our children by teaching them about God. That was an expectation of the children of Israel, as well. Going back to the book of Deuteronomy chapter six, we'll take a look at verse one. Deuteronomy six verse one.

### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

**1. Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:**

**2. That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.**

**3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.**

By following God's laws, God will bless us. That is a continuing theme throughout the Bible. Let's look at verse four.

**4. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:**

**5. And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.**

**6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:**

**7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**

**8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.**

Verse nine.

**9. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.**

As we are working with children, our own children, children we know in the faith, are we talking about the commandments of God, God's way of life?

As a retired educator, I'm often reminded of the progression of learning from the lowest levels of learning to the higher levels of learning. And, that's something that people who aren't in education sometimes don't think about. For instance, the very first goal when you're teaching somebody a new skill is simply, they have knowledge of what you are teaching them. We begin teaching reading by teaching students the concept of letters and the sounds those letters make, and all that is, is knowledge. Of and by itself, it has very little value; it's a foundation for what will come next. We hope to get the children to a point where when they see a word, they will know how to read the word and clearly pronounce the word. Beyond that we hope they understand, or comprehend, what it is they are reading. After that, we hope that if they are reading something informational or instructional, that they would be able to take what they are looking at and apply it in their own life. We'd also hope that as their knowledge and learning and understanding increases that at some point they would be able to carefully analyze what they are looking at. Analyzing is what a math teacher will do when they are trying to figure out why and how a student got a math problem wrong. When the teacher would ask you to show your work, they understood that sometimes you would get the work and the answer correct, and sometimes you would get the answer wrong. The teachers wanted to understand what it is you understood correctly, and what it is you did not clearly understand. They needed

to analyze any difficulties when you were a student in math class. Synthesizing is a higher form of learning beyond that. That's where you are able to take bits of knowledge from different areas and put them into a new thread altogether. And finally, the final piece, evaluation. At the end of our life when we are resurrected, when we are standing before the judgment seat of Jesus, we will all be judged. We will all be evaluated for what we have done. The ability to evaluate to look at good from bad is considered to be a very high form of analysis and not all situations are equal in life.

As we are teaching our children, and the children in the faith we may know about God's way of life, we have to consider that we are helping them to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, to get them to this point where they not only have knowledge of God's way of life, not only where they have a basic understanding of God's way of life, but they can apply God's principles day in and day out in situations they come through in their own life, that they can determine what is right, what is wrong, in the situations they encounter when they will not be with you, that they are able to take the knowledge that they have of God's way of life, and be able to pull the different elements together to handle the situations that they will see, and in the end they can correctly establish and understand if something is good or bad.

A mistake that is commonly made among people who have faith is they believe that their sole obligation is to teach children about God's way of life. God's way of life is the foundational basis for everything we do as a person, but it isn't everything that we do as a person, or everything that we need to do as a person. Our life has at its foundation, at its core, God's way of life, and so, it's important that principle when we are working with our children. We also need to understand that as we have many parts of our life that go beyond God's way of life, that our children will also have those elements within their own life. And so, a huge mistake that many people make is they simply limit their thought of working with children as it relates to God's way of life and the Bible. Those are all foundational principles that everything we do in our life can be based on.

Let's take a look at proverb that I think is sometimes misunderstood. Proverbs twenty-two, we'll begin reading verse six. Proverbs twenty-two verse six. It says,

## **Proverbs 22:6-16**

### **6. Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**

I've heard many people explain this verse as the basis for teaching the Bible, God's way of life to children. Their concept is if you teach children the truth, when they are old, they will not depart from it. I have been studying the Bible for decades. I've seen people come and go in the faith, and I can tell you, you can train a child about the Bible, you can help them learn, and at the end, children will leave the faith under certain circumstances. Here's the question I've got for you. If you are affiliated with a church, a Bible study group, and maybe there are children or have been children there, do you see these children staying with you, or do you see them leaving you and leaving the faith and doing something later on in life?

If you are training up a child in the way the child should go, when he is old, he will not depart from it. If you are doing what you need to be doing, then the child will not depart from what the child has been taught. That's what this verse means. If you are teaching about God's way of life, and they are leaving, that's an indication that something isn't right in your methodology. That's, I think, a big, overlooked concept with Proverbs twenty-two verse six.

What I like about Proverb twenty-two is it gives a lot of information that you could immediately be working with children on. Children learn in many different ways. One of the ways children learn best is simply by doing. If the only methodology that your children have to learn is by the spoken word, you're going to miss many forms of learning that will benefit your child. They will not learn the fullness of God's way of life simply by hearing, hearing, and hearing, hearing, hearing, hearing, and hearing. It's going to get very boring for the children. There have to be other ways for the children that are in the faith that you know to learn. There are some principles that we can work on with the children, and some big concepts that we can use and harvest to help them grow. Let's take a look at verse seven.

### **7. The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.**

It's important as we are working with children that they learn about money concepts. When you are affiliated with an organization of faith, a church group, a Bible study group, the concept might immediately be focused on tithing, and solely on tithing. That's a mistake. Tithing is a part of finances, but it is not every part of finances, and it may not be the most immediate, important area in the mind of the child you are working with. Think of Paul when he went to Athens and spoke to the people in Athens. He spoke to the people of Athens from the perspective of the people in Athens, not from him. He found what was important in their mind and spoke to them from that point of view. That's exactly how we need to work with our children. So, children are most interested in learning what it is to be an adult. There is this mystique living the life of an adult. If they are unschooled in finances, children will think parents have oodles and oodles and oodles of money. They will think it nothing to ask you to drop a thousand dollars for this new bit of technology, you know, two thousand dollars for that next big part of technology, and it's simply because they lack awareness. The big part of managing your finances is managing your finances so that you are not in debt. There are ways how you can do that and work with children and help them learn that concept. Verse eight.

#### **8. He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.**

Children need to be reminded about how violating God's way of life doesn't work. It's important to whenever a bad situation happens in your community, that that and situation be analyzed from the perspective of God's way of life, what happened that was good, what happened that was bad, what could have been changed so that tragedy could have been avoided. It's important not to let the concept of iniquity to gain a foothold with your children. Verse nine.

#### **9. He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.**

It's very easy for children to give, many times because they've never had to work to earn whatever it was that was given. Whenever a child gives a gift, it's a result of what the parent does, but giving is still something that parents and churches still need to work with their young people on. Giving can come in many different ways. What's most important is when your teaching your children to give, that it be a very natural and normal thing for the child to do. For instance, if the child has

the ability to bake cookies; wonderful! Bake some cookies, bring them in for people who may not have the ability to bake their own cookies. It could be something as simple as that. You want to teach your children to give to others. Verse ten.

**10. Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.**

Some people would look at a verse like this and say get rid of the teenagers because you know teenagers don't listen. Teenagers have a lot of questions. Teenagers see hypocrisy. Teenagers are beginning to develop some of those thinking skills that go beyond just knowledge. Learning how to handle their new thought processes is part of what makes a teenager, a teenager. What many people see as rebelliousness is really the desire to learn how to think. So as you are working with a teenager, somebody who is slightly older, when your first inclination might be to think of them as a scorner who needs to be cast out, think of them as somebody who is developing the ability to evaluate and synthesize knowledge, but they don't understand all of the nuances of that skill. Verse eleven.

**11. He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.**

Children will use a variety of language, some of which they will learn from friends at school, some of which they will pick up from music they may listen to. There are different principles and philosophies on allowing your children to with other children who may not be of the faith. I think it is very important for children to be knowledgeable about who and what is around them, and the only way that can happen is if they are allowed to socialize with people in their classes, people in their schools, people in the neighborhood. And sometimes they will get words that are never used in the family home. What's important is to teach them the value of using language that is proper and restrained, how it will benefit them in times of great difficulty. Whenever someone is detained by the police, if they are being arrested, they're always advised that anything they say can and will be used against them. That's exactly what most people will do with people in their life. If somebody says or does something that is way out of character or even somewhat out of character, chances are a lot of other people will soon know about that.

Having pureness of heart and the lips that go along with the pureness of heart will benefit anyone in the long term.

**12. The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.**

Knowledge is the very foundational basis of our relationship with God. We have to move our children beyond the foundational basis of knowledge so that they will be able to have a very rich and deep understanding of the complexities of this evil world in which we live in, so they can make the right decisions in their own life. Verse thirteen.

**13. The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.**

It's a very big part of human nature to be lazy at any given time. I don't think it's the normal nature of people to be busy and engaged. I think people would be very happy being a couch potato. If people could lose weight by eating donuts, drinking beer, eating potato chips, yeah, I think people would be very happy. The nature of man is not necessarily to be active. When we take a look at the commandments, we're given a commandment about the Sabbath, to rest on the Sabbath Day. But that same commandment tells us that we are to work the other six days. There is always something to be done. We have to encourage our children to be proactive in their approach to life and to not let excuses keep them from doing what they need to do. Verse fourteen.

**14. The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.**

Well, the mouth of a strange woman or man is a deep pit. We have to stay away from people who are very different than we are. We still have to show respect and deference to people who are different than we are, especially when it comes to ideologies and religious beliefs. We can't be sucked into what these other people are teaching. Verse fifteen.

**15. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.**



Sadly, some parents look at verse fifteen as a reason why they should spank their children, and spank their children, and spank their children. There are many different ways how a child may be taught, and if your first reaction is to go to physical violence, I would be very concerned about that, because you may not be equating the physical violence to anything that is of meaningful value to the child. If by spanking your child the child only gathers that you are a mean, hateful person, and you are a mean, hateful person because that is what God teaches you, you have done nothing great for your child. You have done great harm to your child. Verse sixteen.

**16. He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.**

As children are growing up, they will begin to understand the concept of bullying. Kids will talk about someone being a bully at school, they will talk about other people bullying them. Bullying is a basic form of oppression. People oppress other people for self-gain. That's evil according to the Bible. We need to teach our children how to be careful and observant of other people who may oppress them. Oppression happens in many different forms. Several churches have faced pedophilia scandals. Pedophilia is an evil act of sin. At its core is an act of oppression using official capacity to take from another person while oppressing them. That's what is incredibly evil about abuse of power. We need to teach our children how evil that is before God.

Let's take a look at Leviticus nineteen, Leviticus nineteen verse twenty-six. It says,

**Leviticus 19:26-29**

**26. Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.**

We're moving into the Halloween season where people think of mystical spells. Well, mystical spells are something we do not use in Christian faith. We're not to use those. Verse twenty-seven.

**27. Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.**

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We are not to do anything to our bodies that would make us look purposefully different than how we were born or intended to look. Look at verse twenty-eight.

**28. Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.**

Think about the act of tattooing. Tattooing is a very common art form and form of expression. The Bible says not to do that. Verse twenty-nine.

**29. Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.**

Sin multiplies and it's interesting that the reason given to not prostitute the daughter here is not because it was bad for the daughter but because it was bad for the land. We should never do anything to bring harm to our daughter or our son. Many people think sex-trafficking is something that happens only to girls and young ladies. It also happens to boys and men on a regular basis. We can't sell our children's soul away for anything we feel might personally benefit us. It doesn't make any difference if it is focused on the act of sex and sex trade, or anything else. Our children are not merchandise that we use to gain favor in our life. We have children and as parents we are not to gain from our children in any capacity. We are here to help them grow in the name and knowledge of God, so that one day they will be adults who will be able to fully stand when we are not here with them.

Let's move on to the New Testament. Let's take a look at Ephesians six, Ephesians six verse one, Ephesians six verse one. Information given to children here,

**Ephesians 6:1-4**

- 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.**
- 2. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)**

The commandment says that your days may be long here on the earth. God's way of life is intended to preserve life, and to preserve an abundant way of life.

### **3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.**

In verse three. Notice verse four.

### **4. And, ye fathers,**

And this would go along with mothers as well,

### **provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.**

As we are raising our children, all children are going to be different. What makes one child happy can very well make another child angry. There are differences in personality. It's the parent's responsibility to understand the personality of their child. You're probably not going to be able to change the personality of your child. Some people are naturally more outgoing and extroverted. Some people are naturally more withdrawn and introverted. Both personality types are worthwhile and have merit. You don't have to be in the business of trying to change your child's personality, but you need to understand your child's personality because as parents we are told to not provoke our children to wrath.

If in teaching your child about God and God's way of life, you continually and without end get them angry, I'm going to guess when they are old enough, they will choose not to live God's way of life, and that's going to be something more you did, then something they did. It's important to understand your child's temperament and their tolerance and to nurture them. You know nurturing is not beating your children when they make a mistake. Here it says we nurture them, and we admonish them. Even admonishing is not beating somebody with a rod. Admonishing is more talking to, reasoning with, helping them understand. If we want our children to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot be using physical and corporal punishment as the basis to teach that. At some point the children will become totally discouraged, they will hate us, they will associate God's way of life with a life of pain. They will move on and go do something else.

Let's take a look at Colossians chapter three verse twenty, Colossians three verse twenty.

**Colossians 3:20-21, 25**

**20. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**

**21. Fathers,**

And again, mothers,

**provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.**

We cannot use our Christian faith as the basis for haranguing our children, discouraging our children, causing our children to become angry. We have to avoid that. We have to be able to show them how God's way of life works. Verse twenty-five.

**25. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.**

So, if you are a parent and you choose to provoke your children to wrath, you choose to provoke your children to anger, you cause them to become discouraged, and your children end of leaving the faith, that is something you, God, and Jesus Christ will have a conversation about. That is something we need to avoid.

The other point I will bring up for children who may be listening is when you are told to obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord, it does not mean you need to subject yourself to physical or mental abuse in any way. If you are child, maybe the only child in a congregation, and anything bad is happening to you, it may be very hard for you to have that conversation with an adult in that congregation or Bible study group. You should let somebody that you trust know about your concerns. You should go to a teacher that you have at school, a school counselor, any adult that you know who may be not part of the group that you are studying the Bible with and let them know the situation.

Of you are part of a larger group that maybe has a youth minister, that might be somebody who you might be able to go to. But under no circumstance should

anybody use their position of power or authority to abuse you or harm you in any way.

Let's look at first Peter five verse one, first Peter five verse one.

### **1 Peter 5:1-11**

**1. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:**

**2. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;**

Sometimes when people are in charge of a group, people are in charge of group for the wrong reasons. That's why it's possible for the children who are listening that sometimes you might have people who act as if they are in charge over you, and yet they are acting in a very wrong way. Again, when you are learning to obey your parents in all things, to listen to the minister, it is not with the intent that you need to be abused or victimized by these people. Verse three of first Peter five.

**3. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.**

**4. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.**

And then, let's look at some information for the younger people who may be listening.

**5. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.**

We are all to be subject one to another. That would be young people subject to old people, old people subject to young people. That's what that means. Submitting yourselves to the elder understand there is a hierarchy that you may have people who have a responsibility, they may ask for you to help them. When we are subject one to another though, it does not mean that somebody has the ability or authority to in any way abuse you in any way. Verse six.

**6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:**

**7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**

God cares for us very, very deeply and he cares for those least able to care for themselves. That's why in so many ways we look at verses that talk about pure religion, taking a look at the elderly who are widows, and the orphans, children who have no parents. Verse eight.

**8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:**

**9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**

It makes no difference if you are an eighty year old elder, a twelve year old child, a fifteen year old teenager; your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking to devour you. And if you are weak and can be preyed upon, that's exactly what will happen.

Satan can use many different tools to devour somebody, and the easiest tool that Satan can use to devour a twelve year old, a teenager, somebody who is young in the faith is simply a well-meaning adult who totally alienates that child or youth from God's way of life. We need to be very careful as adults that we are encouraging and nurturing the young people in our life and not alienating them from God's way of life. Verse ten.

**10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.**

**11. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

A very beautiful concept for us to understand. So, I know with what I have been saying there are some adults, parents, senior citizens, who are hearing what I am saying, in their mind they are thinking I am totally wrong, that I've got it all backwards, that my words will bring great harm to the younger generation.

Some people believe that the role of the parent is to spare not the rod and to beat, to beat, to beat, to beat, to beat, to beat, to beat, to beat the child into submission. That's what some people think. I want you who are adults, the parents and the elderly, as well as the children to consider that idea of beating, beating, beating, beating, beating, beating, beating, beating a child into submission. And I want you to compare that to what is recorded for us in Psalm one hundred three. Comparing, contrasting, analyzing, those are all higher ways of thinking. That's what we are supposed to be doing with our lives as we grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's take a look at Psalm one hundred three verse eight.

### **Psalm 103:8-17**

#### **8. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.**

God does not very quickly get angry. If you have been working on overcoming sins and sometimes there are challenges in overcoming sin, sometimes it takes longer than you would hope. We can take hope that the LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. If God has that perspective and approach to us as His children, how much more should we have that approach for the children in our own life? Verse nine.

#### **9. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.**

When you have angered a father and a mother and they speak angry words back to you, and you know right away you have made a mistake as a child, that is chiding. God does not always chide with us as His children, and He doesn't keep His anger forever. We must do the same thing with the children in our life. Verse ten.

#### **10. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.**

We're not always given the consequences of what we do bad, neither are we rewarded for doing bad. Those are the two mistakes that a lot of time happen. People are sometimes punished greatly for what they do bad, and sometimes people are given a reward. In public education, when behaviors would spiral out of control, sometimes those behaviors would spiral out of control because of bad

behavior management techniques. Sometimes, teachers would actually reward bad behavior. And for those teachers, for some strange reason, it came as surprise when those bad behaviors increased. Verse ten. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. God is aware of what has happened bad, but there's not necessarily a punishment, there's not a reward. So, you see, there's sort of this awareness but no action being taken. How is that different than beat, beat, beat, beat a child into submission. It's a huge difference. Verse eleven.

**11. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.**

God is very merciful to us because we have respect toward God. What we are most interested in with our children and we need to be aware of is do they have respect for us. If all you do is beat, beat, beat, beat, beat your child into submission they may fear you, they may be fearful for their own life, I'm not sure they will have respect for you. Respect is something that is earned, it is something that is given, but respect is not based on fear. Verse twelve.

**12. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**

We have to be willing to forgive our children for the mistakes they make in their life. A child is a child because children are learning, and when you are learning you are going to make a mistake. It's OK to make a mistake as long as you learn from the mistake, and you grow from the mistake. Making a mistake is not something to be punished time, and time, and time again. Verse thirteen.

**13. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.**

Do we pity our children? Do we understand how frail, how limited, and how dependent they are upon us, or do we see ourselves as this total, absolute ruler that controls their life? There's a difference in attitude there. Verse fourteen.

**14. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.**



God understands how frail we are, and as we are working with children, we need to understand that if we are frail in the eyes of God, our children are much more frail. Verse fifteen.

**15. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.**

**16. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.**

**17. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;**

As we respect and have this awesome fear for God, and everything we do is based on that awesome fear and respect of God, that will be trickled down not only to our children, but our grandchildren. As we work with our children, we understand the need to have mercy with our children just as we would want God to have mercy with us. God provides for our needs and that is an example for us to follow.

A big mistake that people will make is to put the needs of an organization, a church, their job, a political party, a hobby, a pet above the responsibility of the family. Everything we do as an adult may be done to honor and glorify God. As people though, we go to work to provide for our family and to take care of our family. We'll read a verse that shows us that people who do not take care of their family is like somebody who is not faithful, except the person who doesn't take care of their family is worse than the person who is unfaithful. Let's take a look at first Timothy chapter five verse three, first Timothy five verse three, talking about elderly people, widows primarily in this passage,

**1 Timothy 5:3-8, 19**

**3. Honour widows that are widows indeed.**

**4. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.**

We want our children to grow up with the knowledge that as a child their needs are being taken care of now. There will be this expectation that down the road they will be there to take care of the needs of their elderly parents. That's something that as we get older, we will all do as something that is expected of us.

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It is good and acceptable before God. There is nothing wrong in taking care of your parents. Verse five.

**5. Now she that is a widow indeed,**

Somebody who is not married because her husband has died and there are no children, she's desolate, she is alone

**and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.**

**6. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.**

There's a couple of kind of senior citizen widows just like there are people, those who remain focused on God and those who take it as a reason to party up life. Those perspectives never change. What changes is the physical appearance of your body and your energy level. That's it. Most people may not be aware of it, the highest rate of sexually transmissible diseases occur in senior citizen homes. Somebody dies, the mental and thought processes do not go away. Verse seven.

**7. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.**

Verse eight, notice.

**8. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.**

So, notice here, you are worse than unfaithful because you have denied the faith. We have to provide for our family and that goes in many different ways. Here, we are talking about the elderly mother. We cannot ignore elderly parents if they need help because we may be focused on our faith, the church. Doing so makes us worse than being unfaithful. We have denied the faith. And in that case when we hear about denying the faith, that starts moving us into some very significant and serious territory from an area of salvation we all need to avoid. We have to provide for our families.

There's another verse that sometimes is used in first Timothy five verse nineteen, that is sometimes really misapplied. It says,

**19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.**

There used to be a time when if somebody went to and complained about a priest, an elder, somebody in authority in the church that they would simply be ignored until several accusations would roll in. If it's a spiritual matter against an elder, a priest, or a deacon, or anyone who may be in charge, that may make sense. But if the concern is a criminal matter, that needs to be reported to law enforcement without delay. There is never an excuse to not report a criminal matter to law enforcement. If you are an adult in a church and you hear an outcry of sexual abuse, sexual assault, any kind of a criminal act perpetrated by any supposed leader or adult in your church, that is a criminal matter and that needs to be reported right away to law enforcement. Law enforcement will investigate it. There is no basis not to report something like that to law enforcement.

We've talked a lot about working with children and helping them to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's take a look at Proverbs twenty-nine, Proverbs twenty-nine verse fifteen.

**Proverbs 29:15-17**

**15. The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.**

When a child makes a mistake, one parent will typically blame the other parent. The father will blame the mother, the mother will blame the father. In the most extreme cases of tragedy, maybe when the child's action led to the child's death, I've seen mother and father get divorced because it was simply too much for them to bear. So, the rod and reproof, reproof again is talking about talking with children, giving them the knowledge. We should not be using physical punishment as the only or immediate go to method of handling behavioral concerns with our children. When I read the Bible, I see physical punishment as a punishment of last resort, not the first thing that will happen. Verse sixteen.

**16. When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.**

It's important that we talk with our children about the evil that we see in the world and why it's evil. And, it's important to have children explain the evil they see in their own life as part of that conversation. Children should not be in our life just to be seen or spoken to; children should be actively engaged in our life just as much as we should be actively engaged in the life of our children. Verse seventeen.

**17. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.**

So, correcting again does not mean physically punishing. Just like a teacher may make a correction on a math assignment, I can tell you there is never a reason or excuse for a teacher to physically discipline a child because they made a mistake on math assignment. Correction has nothing to do with physical punishment. There are many different ways how correction can come about, and again we want to lead and nurture our children so that they can grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We'll end the day by taking a look at Psalm one hundred twenty-seven, Psalm one hundred twenty-seven verse one.

**Psalm 127:1-5**

**1. Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**

If God is not part of our family, if God is not part of what we do, what we do will have no value and will come to nothing.

**2. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.**

Many people they get up early, they stay up late. They worry about what is happening in their life. They can't sleep. That's not how God would want things to happen in our life. Verse three.

**3. Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.**

When we die, our legacy will live through our children, and their children, and their children's children, and that will happen until it is time for the resurrection. What kind of heritage do we want to be remembered for? That is the big thought we need to have as we work with our children.

#### **4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.**

Children are our future. They're the future of God's church. If we are in a church where the youth simply stop attending that's a big indication that something needs to change dramatically in our approach in working with the children. If your data shows the children are staying with you and becoming adults and your church is naturally and organically growing through the increases in family, then you're probably OK with how you're working with the children. But if you show a lot of children are leaving when they become adults, there's a problem. We need to take a look and as adults begin to understand the reasons why. Verse five.

#### **5. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.**

Our children should bring us great happiness and should be a source of pride and strength in our life. As our children are a source of pride and strength in our life, we must always be reflective and remember Malachi four and verse six. We know there will be this Elijah the prophet coming before the great and dreadful day of the LORD. We know that he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest God come and smite the earth with utter destruction.

I suppose if we wanted to, we could wait for this Elijah the prophet to show up, I believe God works through each of us and that each of us needs to take a look at we work with the children in the faith in our life, and we each need to diligently work to turn the heart of fathers to their children and the heart of the children to their fathers. If we don't do that, the earth will have utter destruction. That's something I'd rather avoid.

Thank you for joining us today on the Sabbath. God-willing we'll get together again next week on the Sabbath. Until next time, thank you for joining us today.