**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ in Parenting**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 3:20-21/Ephesians 6:1-2**

**Sermon Purpose: To call parents and children to reflect the purity of Christ in the new family.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 2 principles related to healthy parenting and childhoods.**

**Introduction:**

Proverb: A short saying often based on observing creation, that presents a truth that is generally applicable in most situations.

Wisdom: The skill, rooted in the worship of God, to live a successful life as defined by God.

Foolishness: The way of life characterized by those who do not fear God or follow His instructions.

 “The undeniable consequence of our urban family crisis is a generation that has abandoned the Christian faith. The church has attempted to solve the puzzle of un-Christian Gen Y’ers, also called the Millennials, with little to no success. Voddie Baucham Jr. laments this point in his landmark book *Family Driven Faith*:

 Anyone who has been paying attention lately is aware of the startling statistics concerning “Christian” children leaving the faith. Depending on the study, we are losing the vast majority of teens raised in evangelical homes. . . .

 I believe we are looking for answers in all the wrong places. Our children are not falling away because the church is doing a poor job. . . . Our children are falling away because we are asking the church to do what God designed the family to accomplish. Discipleship and multi- generational faithfulness begins and ends at home.”

 [**Christopher W. Brooks, “Urban Apologetics: Why The Gospel Is Good News For The City,” Kregel Publications, 2014, p.100**]

**I. The message to children. V.20**

**II. The message to parents. V.21**

**I. The message to children. V.20**

 A. Who are the **children**? V.20a

 Tekna, is a general term for children and is not limited to a specific age group. It was used of any child still living at home under their parents guidance or roof. This is the third relationship in the home, the relationship of parents and children.

 B. **What** are the children to do? V.20b

 The word obey lacks the voluntary sense found in the command to be submissive. Children are to be obedient to their parents, this is how they please the Lord and validate they are a new creation or a new man. The present tense of the imperative (hupakouete) be obedient or be being obedient, demands a continuous obedience.

 **Exodus 20:12** "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

 **Exodus 21:15-17** "And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

 **16** "And he who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his possession, shall surely be put to death. **17** "And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

 **Deuteronomy 21:18-21** "If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, **19** then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his home town. **20** "And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' **21** "Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear *of it* and fear.

 **Proverbs 1:8** Hear, my son, your father's instruction, And do not forsake your mother's teaching;

 **Proverbs 6:20** My son, observe the commandment of your father, And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;

 **Proverbs 30:17** The eye that mocks a father, And scorns a mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.

 1. Disobedience to parents marks the **ungodly**.

 **2 Timothy 3:2** For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

 **Romans 1:30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

 2. **Commitment** to Christ is validated by the child’s obedience.

 **Matthew 3:17** and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

 C. What is the **scope** of the child’s obedience? V.20c

 Children are to obey their parents in all things that pertain to Christ and His Word.

 a. **Luke 12:51-53** "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; **52** for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two, and two against three. **53** "They will be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

 b. **Luke 14:26** "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

 This scope of obedience does not include immoral or idolatrous demands from a parent, because this type of behavior is not pleasing to the Lord.

**II. The message to parents. V.21**

 A. The **challenge**. V.21

 Pateres, should be translated “parents” as in **Hebrews 11:23**.

 **Hebrews 11:23** By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

 B. The **charge**. V.21b

 Erethizo, means to not stir up, provoke, irritate, or exasperate. Another way to say it is “stop nagging or irritating your children.” Failure to do this can cause our children to lose heart. This is the idea of “becoming discouraged” “to break the child’s spirit.” Parents can take the heart out of their children by failing to discipline them lovingly and instructing them in the ways of the Lord. (Proverbs)

10 ways parents can provoke or exasperate their children:

1. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by **over protection**.

 Over protective parents never allow their children any liberty. They have strict rules about everything. Over protective parents do not demonstrate trust in their children.

2. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by showing **favoritism**.

 This is done by comparing a child favorably or unfavorably to other children. This can create a sense of frustration in children.

3. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by depreciating their children’s worth.

 Many children have been convinced that what they do and feel is not important. They communicate to their children they are not unique or significant. In these cases parents do not listen or empathize with their children. Life can be confusing, hurtful, stressful, evil, cruel, and unloving.

4. Parents provoke or exasperate their children by setting **unrealistic** goals.

 Parents can do this by never rewarding them, or never letting them feel they have succeeded. These types of parents never give their children full approval, they are often holding their children to standards they themselves have never met. This can often push children to rebellion, depression, crime, or suicide.

5. Parents provoke or exasperate their children by failing to show **affection**.

 Parents need to communicate, demonstrate, and administrate love to their children, and among their children.

6. Parents provoke or exasperate their children by a lack of standards.

 This is the opposite of over protection. This is when parents fail to discipline, set boundaries or discipline is inconsistent, or only a threatening tool. Children are often left on their own to raise themselves. This can lead to children feeling insecure and unloved.

7. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by not providing for their needs.

 Children may need privacy, a safe place to live and play, clean clothes, places to study, some of their own possessions to manage, in order to learn responsibility and accountability. This shows love, concern, and respect for the children created in the image of God.

8. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by **non-constructive** criticism.

 As Haim Ginott wrote, “A child learns what he lives. If he lives with criticism he does not learn responsibility. He learns to condemn himself and to find fault with others. He learns to doubt his own judgment, to disparage his own ability, and to distrust the intentions of others. And above all, he learns to live with continual expectations of impending doom.”

 [**Between Parent and Child, New York, McMillon, 1965, p.72**]

9. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by **neglect**.

 Absalom, the Son of David would be a picture of this. David was indifferent to him, and the result was rebellion, civil war, and Absalom’s death. Parents need to be involved in their children’s life. It is not enough to put a roof over their head, food in their stomachs, and clothes on their back!

10. Parents can provoke or exasperate their children by excessive discipline and boundaries or rules.

 This is the parent who abuses their children, with verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. Saying things, they would never say to others, or would want said to them. Never discipline your children out of or when angry. But do it as God the Father does unto you.

[**Excerpts taken from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Colossians & Philemon, pp.170-173**]