

**Divine Design for Family**

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-4

Code: 49-37

Open your Bible to Ephesians 6, Ephesians 6. And this is the continuing of our study on the book of Ephesians, and we come now to God's design for the family, God's design for the family. We've been working on the issue of marriage over the last few weeks. And by the way, I spent two weeks going through the section prior to this one today, two weeks; and I think in the past when I did a series on Ephesians there's probably at least ten messages. So if you want more of the Word of God in more depth and breadth, you can go back. You can go to the Grace to You website, and you can download the Ephesians sermons from the past on the husband and the wife, as well as much more extensive messages on even the family, the children, and the parents. We're just going to hit some highlights this morning. There's a lot more at the Grace to You website.

Now when we talk about the divine design for the family, it's really summed up in four verses. They're really very simple and direct: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

That is a minimalist approach to the family, and yet it covers as everything. There are plenty of places you can go and get bad advice about the family. This is the foundation of all God's design for the family, directed at children and at parents.

I don't need to belabor the point. We all know that the family is being assaulted. I mean, it's just wholesale. Men are being assaulted by the culture and have been for a long time. Men are recast as toxic, a toxic patriarchy that has had a destructive impact on society. Women are the abused targets of this toxic patriarchy by being forced to stay home and have children and never find their real fulfillment, which would come to them in the corporate location because that's where women need to be fulfilled. That's the deception of this culture.

Marriage is a form of bondage to this society, much of it. Marriage is a form of bondage that needs to be ended so that all can be free to pursue whatever personal desires they desire to fulfill without being encumbered by another person. So this leads to singleness. Singleness is sexual freedom and personal freedom. And of course, the children are obviously the victims of all of this distortion of God's design. Children have the right to live if they're not going to be a bother to you, they're not going to intrude on your freedom; otherwise you can kill them in the womb. Even after they're born, if they irritate you, you can medicate them, which is a horrendous thing. It should be considered a criminal act. People are in such a hurry to do that. I heard today that there are new medications for puppies, to tone down the puppy irritations. If you don't like a puppy, don't get a puppy. But when you have a child, to use medication on a child is a short-term act of irresponsibility that can lead to a long-term total disaster in a life.

So we know all of this, and we've talked about the war on children. I did a series on it, so I'm not going to belabor all of that. But it's time for us to look at the simplicity of what Scripture says. And the Bible gives us, here, the formula for raising our children. We know what's wrong with the culture; we understand that. And we know how perverse it is, to the degree that the medical profession who are supposed to be the people that protect us from death and do no harm basically are medicating our children into disastrous futures, as well as mutilating them for the ideology of transgender insanity. We understand the horror of all of that, and we understand that the education system is perverting our children, exposing five-year-olds to drag queens. I mean, you know it all because it's all out there.

We have to get back to the Word of God and get our sights set on how God views this relationship between parents and their children. And by the way, in Ezekiel 16, the Lord says, concerning the children that were being offered to Molech—they were being offered as human sacrifices to the god Molech—He says, "They are My children." In that sense, all children are God's children. Psalm 127 says, "Children are a gift from the Lord." "Children are a gift from the Lord." In Mark 10 Jesus said, "Permit the children to come unto Me . . . for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

So you have to start with that. The children belong to the Lord, and you're given the responsibility to steward them for Him, so that you can return them to Him. That's why you want to raise your child "in the nurture"—or "the discipline"—"and instruction of the Lord." They belong to Him. Now in order to successfully carry out the responsibility of raising children, there are two duties here. One, on the part of the children, verses 1 to 3, and then on the part of the parents in verse 4. And as I said, there's so much more that can be said; I'm just going to give you an overview with a few select emphases.

So let's look at verse 1, the duty of the children. This is obviously children who are old enough to understand obedience and to take responsibility for acting in an obedient way and acting in honor of their parents. So we're not talking here about infants—"children" is *ta tekna*. There is a Greek word for "infants" that's not used here. This is the word of just generally "offspring," "children." It has reference to anyone, from small children through young people before they start their own adult life—any who are still under the care of their parents; all inclusive. And they have two commands. One: "Obey your parents in the Lord." Obey. Verse 2, "Honor your father and mother." It's obey and honor. Those go together. Obedience is an action, and honor is an attitude. We'll say more about that in a moment.

But basic to civilization—I mean, basic to civilization is the instruction to children to be obedient. The fifth commandment is to obey your parents, Exodus 20, verse 12. But I don't know if you recall this: Disobedience to parents was basically a prescription for an execution. In Exodus 21:15 and 17, and also in Leviticus and verse 9, the death penalty was prescribed for rebellious children. They are a devastation to a society, and so the law of God was severe at the point of child rebellion. The death penalty came with it.

Now the fact that children are to be commanded is Old Testament, to start with. So go back to the book of Proverbs, and let's just hear a few simple statements. Chapter 1, verse 8, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching." That's a command: Listen to your father and your mother.

Chapter 2, “My son,” verse 1, “if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you, make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding.” Again, a command: “My commandments.” Chapter 3, “My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments.” Chapter 4, “Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding, for I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction.” And then down in verse 4, “Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live.” This is parental duty, to command.

Chapter 5, “My son,” verse 1, “give attention to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding.” Chapter 7, again, verse 1, “My son, keep my words and treasure my commandments within you. Keep my commandments and live.” And it goes on like that, instruction to be obedient. The parent is in the position of the commander. That is parental responsibility; and children are to obey.

Now this is a challenging reality, and there’s a good summarization of the challenge of this in Luke chapter 2, and it’s related to our Lord. Luke 2 and verse 52 says concerning Jesus, He “kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Now without sin, perfectly righteous; as a man, nonetheless, He needed to increase in wisdom, He needed to increase in stature, He needed to increase in favor with God and to increase in favor with man.

Now these are the four categories in which children develop. Wisdom is mental, stature is physical, favor with men is social, and favor with God is spiritual. Now our children are not perfect, our children are not righteous, they are not sinless like the Son of God; so we have to take on this reprobate that showed up disguised as a tender baby, and we have to understand what we’re dealing with. They have to grow mentally, physically, socially, spiritually, and we have to care for them in all four categories. We teach them how to think, we teach them how to work, we teach them how to relate to people, and we teach them how to relate to God. We make a place for them in the world in this instruction; this is our responsibility.

And I would just emphasize again, the last thing you ever want to do is dull your child’s understanding, dull your child’s responses with medication. You need to see the full force of that child’s fallenness. And parenting is the solution to that, parenting. You have the responsibility not to somehow tranquilize your child; that accomplishes absolutely nothing. It provides no mental growth, no physical development, no social skills, and no spiritual development at all. This is the challenge of parenting, and it’s being set aside for medication in many, many cases. And as I said earlier, that should be criminal, that should be disallowed, along with all the horrific transgender puberty blockers and surgeries that are popular. You have a responsibility to your children to see them for what they are: sinful, in need of the gospel, in need of development that parenting is designed to provide.

In chapter 30 of Proverbs, verse 11, “There is a kind of man who curses his father and doesn’t bless his mother.” Verse 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.” That is just graphic language speaking of a rebellious child, a child who mocks his parents.

You have the responsibility to teach your children to be obedient—that’s also in Colossians 3:20, “obedient” because it’s “pleasing to the Lord.” This is what parenting is. It’s not developing their fashion sense. It’s not turning them into some kind of highly motivated scholar. It’s not making them

into some kind of a great athlete. It is to elevate them mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually by training them with the full faculties that you have, confronting the full faculties that they have.

And you are all those things. You are mature physically, you're mature mentally, you're mature spiritually, you're mature physically. You're the model, you're the example; you get it, you understand it, and your job is to pass that on to your children; and it starts with teaching them to obey, *hupakouō*, from which we get "acoustic." It starts with them listening. Teach your children to listen and to submit to what you say. It's a present imperative. Keep on doing this. Keep on obeying.

"Obey your parents all the time in everything"—and then it adds, "in the Lord." In other words, because this is what pleases the Lord. The same thing is said about submitting to the government in 1 Peter 2:13: Do it as unto the Lord. Same thing is said about slaves, in Colossians 3, and their masters: Slaves, serve your masters in the Lord. This is because all of this is God's design for the most productive life. And you do it without any caveats; you just obey all the time in the Lord.

Why? This is so good: "For this is right." Can I stop here for a minute and say your children need to know what's right. That's the best answer you'll ever give your child when your child asks, "Why do I have to do that? Why do I have to do this? Why don't I get to do this?" It's right, or it's wrong; that's all, and that's enough. What you're doing is showing them that in the world in which they live, there are absolutes. You don't need to give a philosophical defense of any behavior you require if it's consistent with the Word of God, and having your children obey is consistent with the Word of God.

I remember my father saying to me many times when I said, "Why, Dad? Why?" He said, "Because I'm in charge. Because it's right, it's right. All you need to know is this is right." This whole culture doesn't buy absolutes. And that's what's being fed to our kids through all the media and educational outlets, that you can believe anything you want; nothing is right and nothing is wrong, and you can establish that from the very ground.

The other familiar phrase echoing in my mind from my father was, "Because I said so." That's really important to talk like that. "You do it because I said so, and I know what's right." You do it because it's right, and God says it right. And teach your children that there are things that are absolutely right because they're right and wrong because they're wrong, and God has made that determination. The word "right" there, by the way, is the word for "righteousness" that speaks of God and Christ and the righteousness imputed to us in salvation.

So you do what God says because it's right. Let me just give you an illustration of that in Nehemiah. I was reading this the other day, Nehemiah 9:13. It's not in the context of parenting, but it's an interesting statement. This is a bit of a rehearsal of Egypt's—of, yeah, Israel's exodus from Egypt and coming to Mount Sinai. And in verse 13 we read this: "Then You came down on Mount Sinai"—this is looking at God's appearance on Mount Sinai to give the law—"and You spoke"—this is Nehemiah 9:13—"and You spoke with them"—that is with the people—"from heaven; You gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments. . . . And [You] laid down for them commandments, statutes and law." They are good, they are true, and they are just. Why? Because God said so; and He establishes what is right.

Psalms 119:75 says, "Your judgments are righteous." Hosea chapter 14 and—I think it's verse 9, same thing: Your commandments, Your judgments are righteous; they're righteous because they

come from You. So children are to obey righteous commandments from God passed on through their parents.

Is there ever a time when you don't do that? Well, there's one explicitly laid out in the Scripture, explicitly laid out in the words of Jesus. Listen to what He said, Luke 14: "If you don't hate your father and mother, you can't be My disciple." At what point do you hate your father and mother? When your father and mother forbid you to come to Christ.

For centuries Jewish children and others have been forbidden to believe in Christ. They've been asked to curse Christ. That's where the break comes, Matthew 10, "If you don't love Me more than father or mother, you can't be My disciple." So the assumption, then, is that children are to obey their parents in the Lord because their parents are in the Lord. You don't obey parents who are defying the commandments of Scripture. So what is a child's responsibility? To obey, because the parents are passing down the Lord's commands.

And then in verse 2, "Honor your father and mother." That is the attitude that corresponds to the active obedience. It's not reluctant. It's not rebellious. It's not unwilling. It's with honor, *timaō*. It actually can be used to mean awe or respect. It's used in John 5:23 of honoring God and honoring Christ. So this is how you obey: with honor. This means the attitude and the action.

And then the apostle Paul says, "[This] is the first commandment with a promise." This is the fifth of the Ten Commandments, but this is the first one with a promise because it's unique, and it's the first one in the human relationship section. The first four commandments have to do with your relationship to God; the last six commandments have to do with your relationship to each other. The first of those human-relationship commandments has a promise. And what is the promise? Verse 3, "So that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth." That's quoted right out of Exodus 20, verse 12, the Ten Commandments that God wrote in stone on Mount Sinai. It's absolutely essential that children both obey and honor their parents, absolutely essential.

Now it's not natural, it is not natural. They are born reprobates, they are born rebellious, they are born with a fallen nature; they have to be taught obedience and honor. And go back to Proverbs with me for a few moments, and I'll give you some quick insight into how you develop that.

Proverbs 3:11, "My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord or loathe His reproof, for whom the Lord loves He reproves, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights." The Lord disciplines, the Lord reproves, and He does it because He loves, and so does a father. So there you see discipline and reproof. That's part of the training.

I'll expand on that in chapter 10 of Proverbs. Gets really specific, verse 13, "A rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding." Anybody unclear on that? "A rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding."

Chapter 19 and verse 18, "Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death." You have a choice. You can discipline your son or desire his death. If you don't discipline your son, he's headed for disaster and death. So you have the choice: Do you want him dead, do you want her dead, or disciplined?

In chapter 22, verse 15, “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.” Some of it’s cute, some of it’s not, but it’s foolishness. “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it . . . from him.” That is a promise, folks. Get out the rod. They need to associate pain with misbehavior.

Chapter 23, verse 13, “Do not hold back discipline from the child”—what do you mean by that?—“although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol.” Do you understand: Spank your kids, and save them from hell? Wow.

And even in chapter 29 a couple of verses, verses 15 and 17—29:15, “The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.” Verse 17, “Correct your son, and he’ll give you comfort; he will also delight your soul.”

So what do you do? How do you train the child to obey and honor? With discipline. What does that discipline look like? It looks like telling them what is right and forcing them to conform to what is right, both in attitude and action, by discipline that is painful. It’s not sending your child to your room to think about something. You don’t want to prolong it. A few whacks, and it’s over. But they remember.

If you don’t discipline your child—and by the way, this is where, again, you don’t want to medicate a child because you never ever get to the issue of being able to correct them in their worst moments. You don’t do this with a child, and Proverbs says a child who is disobedient and dishonoring to parents is a grief to his mother, a rebel to his father, a sorrow to his parents, a disaster to his parents, a disgrace to his parents, a humility to his parents, and an abuser of his parents. That’s Proverbs 28:24, “He robs his father and mother.” Children can abuse their parents. How? By their rebellion and dishonor being tolerated.

Why do you do this? Verse 3, because you want it to “be well with [them]” and you want them to “live long on the earth.” Godly children will be living a blessed life—that’s quality. And they will be living a long life—that’s quantity. You want your children to have a rich, full, joyous, happy, peaceful, rewarding life—then discipline them to obedience and honor. And if you want them to live long—a long, full life, not shortcuted because of their sin and transgression and lack of self-control—then you discipline them. And we see that explicitly then in verse 4, don’t we?

Parents, what is your job? “Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” This is the duty of the parents. It is essential to raise a child with truth and discipline, truth and discipline, so that the promise of a blessed life may become a reality—truth and discipline so that the sins of the fathers aren’t passed on to corrupt the subsequent generations.

And he gives you two positive—or two approaches, one positive and one negative. The first is negative. But let’s look at the word “fathers”; that’s *patēr* in the Greek, and it can be “fathers,” as it’s translated. But it also can mean “parents,” and the same exact word is used in Hebrews 11:23 to speak of the parents of Moses. So I think we can embrace “parents” in this. “Parents”—here’s the negative—“do not provoke your children to anger.” Don’t make your children mad; don’t make them angry. That’s an abuse. That’s a terrible thing to do to a child, make the child angry.

There must have been a lot of angry children in biblical times. In Rome, Roman law was called *patria potestas*—father had the absolute right of life and death over his children. He could sell them into

slavery. He could make them work in the fields. He could put them in chains and make them slaves. He could take the law into his own hands and punish them any way he wanted. He could even kill a child.

When the child was born in the Roman world, the child was placed at the feet of the father. If the father stood to lift the child, it meant he acknowledged that he wished the child to live. If he turned and walked away, the child was killed. Unwanted children were often left in the Roman Forum to become slaves or prostitutes.

Seneca, the ancient Roman stoic philosopher who lived right during the time of Christ, wrote this: "We slaughter a fierce ox, we strangle a mad dog, we plunge the knife into the sick cattle. Children who are born weak and deformed, we drown." Children were abused brutally in the Roman world. Well what Paul is saying, right at the same period of time, is revolutionary.

Parents, there are four factors, I think, in parenting. You can understand it this way: the father's leading and discipline, the mother's love and care, the father and mother's very demonstrable affection for each other, and the closeness of the family. Fathers leading and disciplining, mothers loving and caring, both parents loving each other so the child sees that, produces immense security, and the closeness of the family. Don't let the family fragment.

So, "Do not provoke your children to anger." That should be obvious. But there are an awful lot of very angry children running around in the world. They're angry with their parents. They're angry with the culture. They're angry at everything. And it goes back to parenting.

How do you make your child angry? Well, you know the ways you can do that. But let me remind you. You can make a child angry by overprotection, by fencing them in, confining them, distrusting them, never allowing them any freedom, so that the relationship becomes a kind of bondage that is irritating.

You can make them angry by favoritism: "Why don't you act like your sister?" Don't compare them with each other to defend a preference.

You can make them angry by unrealistic expectations. This is huge. Don't crush them under the weight of your own pride and ambition, because you want somebody to know that you have a scholar for a child or a great musician for a child or a good athlete for a child. You set standards so high that they never feel like they can ever attain it, and that turns into deep bitterness and feelings of failure and rejection.

Over the years—I have vivid memories of two young people, college-age young people who took their own lives to punish parents who were unrealistic, unfair, and never, ever encouraging, who set standards that were ridiculously high. They were so angry that they wanted to inflict punishment on their parents that their parents would never recover from, so they took their lives. You don't recover from that.

You can cause your child to be angry by discouragement, negative reinforcement, no thanks, no rewards, no approval, no honor. It destroys motivation. To make them feel like they have to earn your love is a terrible thing. You're suppose to love with grace, like God loves you.

You can make a child angry by selfishness, failing to sacrifice for them. Children can become bitter when they feel like they're an intrusion into your life or a bother to your parents. You need to help them, serve them, do the things that communicate sacrificial love.

You can make a child angry through impatience, failure to allow for childish behavior, for mistakes, for foolish things, for spilling things, breaking things, sharing ridiculous ideas and desires. Don't condemn them. Don't be impatient in their development.

You can irritate and make your children angry by neglect. So much of that: mother not in the home, fathers not in the home. Neglect turns to bitterness and anger.

And you can do that by verbal abuse, failure to restrain your very advanced vocabulary, which you use to crush a child with sarcasm, ridicule, cutting, swearing, name-calling, whatever.

A lot of ways to do this. The remedy is, don't do it. The means is be filled with the Spirit, right? Go back to chapter 5, verse 18. What you give to your child will shape your child. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he's old he won't depart from it." In other words, you train the child, you get the product.

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn. If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight. If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy. If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty. If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient. If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to have confidence. If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate. If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice. If a child lives with security, he learns to trust. If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself. If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to love.

So this is the challenge that parents have: Don't make your children angry.

But on the positive side: "Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." I don't have a lot of time to develop that; it should be obvious. Bring them up; raise them—discipline. We've talked about the discipline. This means you force them to conform to what is right. Instruction, of course; that's the truth that you convey to them. And the word has—built into the word "instruction" is the idea of warning: verbal instruction with a view to consequences if you don't obey.

The goal is righteousness and love and obedience to God. And you start early. You remember Paul in 2 Timothy 3:15 said to Timothy, "that from a childhood you [learned the] scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation." Start the process of gospelizing your children from their childhood.

Timothy was in the ministry because his mother and his grandmother had taught him the gospel from his childhood. Teach your children the gospel: Who is God? Who is Christ? What is sin? Teach them to repent, to reject all that dishonors God, to love and trust the Lord Jesus, to follow Christ in faithful obedience. This is the wisdom that comes from above. "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child," there's no question about that, and you have the responsibility to replace it with wisdom.

If I could just give you, quickly, two suggestions to start with. One, teach your children to fear the

Lord. And by that I don't mean just to be afraid, although there's a healthy fear that makes you respect the judgment of God. But Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." Start with God. Teach them about God.

Proverbs says that those who fear God prolong life, are blessed beyond wealth, enjoy an abundant life, and stay free from evil. Those who fear God sleep satisfied, foresee confidence in the future, are praised by others, and have their prayers answered. Would you want all that for your child? Then teach your child to fear God. Fearing God is the foundation of worship, and therefore the foundation of blessing.

And the second thing I would say: to teach your child—and this is really urgent—to teach your child to speak the truth. Teach your child to speak the truth. Fear God, and speak the truth. Proverbs says those who speak truth offer words that endure forever, are a fountain of life, a tree of life, like choice silver, soul-satisfying, they feed others, they bring healing, they bring deliverance, because they are true, kind, wise, honest, pure, soft, gentle, slow to anger. They have mouths that speak for the Lord.

On the other hand, you have some other mouths in Proverbs. The mouths of fools pour out crooked speech, folly, violence, hatred, malice, too many words, strife, ruin, slander, belittlement, gossip, disgrace, scorching fire, mischief, and perversity.

Truth is not important in our day; it's not. This is, of all generations, a generation that must be taught to speak the truth. By the way, Psalm 58:3 says, "The wicked are estranged from the womb . . . [they] go astray" as soon as they are born, speaking lies. You have a born liar in your child. And God hates lying. And I'll tell you something: If you're a good liar, you'll commit any crime. If you're a good liar, you'll commit any crime.

If you have been disciplined not to lie, there's a restraint on you, because if you're a truth-speaker, and lying is alien to this child, it's going to be hard for that child to admit doing evil, and thereby the child is restrained from doing evil. You want a child who is so truthful that you know in an instant by looking at their face when they are telling you a lie, because it's alien to them.

So teach your children to fear God; teach your children to love and speak truth. Again, any crime is possible to a liar. Be a true worshiper of God and a lover of truth. A fear of God and the love of truth, parents—you teach that to your children, and discipline that in a relationship of love, consistency, and example; and children will be a joy and a delight not only to you but to everybody else.

So maybe some practical helps. I'll give you this. This is advice: Love your spouse more, laugh with your children more, listen to your children more, pray more, play more, praise more, pay more attention, and preach more by word and example—and your children will bring you joy. And more than that, they'll bring honor to the Lord.

Our Father, we again are so grateful that the Word of God instructs us without equivocation and without confusion in the simplicity of parental responsibility. But we understand it takes a Spirit-filled mom and a Spirit-filled dad to live the kind of life that supports the command to fear God and to speak truth. So Lord, fill us with Your Spirit, that we might behave toward one another and toward our children as Christ would. May we be Christlike, teaching them and training them, even disciplining them, as You do us: out of love, to conform us to what is right, for Your glory and our

good.

Help us to feed them consistently on divine truth, taught and lived. And may this be understood: that this is our high calling, and nothing but godly, faithful parenting will accomplish in the life of our children what You desire. May we all make a commitment—a new, fresh covenant with You—to take on this responsibility as the greatest sacred trust we have.

We talked earlier about our church being given all these children and stepping forward to develop all these educational opportunities. And as critical and as important as they are, and as utterly devoted to them as we are, they'll not be able to replace mom and dad. They'll not overcome in the failures parenting.

So Lord, help us all to be filled with Your Spirit, to be joyful worshipers, to be thankful, and to be submissive to You, even in this responsibility of raising our children. And we do that for their sake, our sake, the sake of all the people who will ever meet them, both now and throughout their lives, that they may flourish and that they may be a blessing to everyone; and most important, that they may be able to give You glory. May we parent with that in mind.

Forgive us for our failures, and help us to be able to restore what we need to restore, to get a grip on what we need to get a grip on, to begin to do the things we need to do, so that we can see Your hand of blessing. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2023 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).