Title: The Faithful Son, Part 2- The Duties of Parents

Text: John 19:25-27

Date Preached: 1/27/2019 (MBC PM)

Our text tonight is John 19:25-27 where we see Jesus hanging bloodied and dying on the cross of calvary. He’s been betrayed, beaten, crowned with a crown of thorns, whipped, and nailed to the cross of pain, cursed in our place. Let’s read John 19:25-27

**25**but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.**26**When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” **27**Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

PRAYER

Last week we examined this text that has Jesus hanging on the cross. We noted how, even under great duress he loved his mother, made provision for her after he was gone, and how he put the disciple John in charge of her care. Jesus was being the faithful son and providing for his mother. He was fulfilling the 5th commandment, which is the command to honor your father and your mother. This commandment touches many areas of our lives because the principle of honoring those in authority over you extends not just to parents, but also to employers, teachers, and civil authorities.

Last week we looked at the 5th commandment in a very practical manner, and we focused only on the duties of the children. This week will take a look at the other side of the 5th commandment, the duties of parents.

Although tonight’s sermon will mainly talk to parents, please note that these principles are not just for parents, but are applicable to all those in authority, whether you’re a grandparent, a teacher, a an employer, or a civil servant.

Furthermore, these principles are still relevant for you children, even if you aren’t in authority over someone else yet. Young ones, don’t check out from this sermon just because you’re not a parent yet. It is useful for you to know the duties required of parents, so that you can work with them toward the same ends, work with the grain instead of against it. Plus, Lord willing, you’ll be parents too one day, so these are things to which you should aspire. And, these duties required of your parents would make a great prayer list for you, as you think of ways to pray to the Lord on behalf of your parents.

Much of what I am going to say is drawn from the wisdom of men in the past. I encourage you to read JC Ryle’s work, *The Duties Of Parents*, or Thomas Watson’s sermons on the 5th commandment. Both are free online.

Let’s begin.

1. If you are to train your children rightly, **you must train them in the way they should go, and not in the way that they would to go**.
   1. When your child is born, you don’t know if they will be tall or short, skinny or stocky, reserved or outgoing. But you do know that they will naturally incline toward foolishness. Proverbs tells us that “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child” (Prov. 22:15) and that “a child left to himself brings his mother shame” (Prov. 29:15).
   2. So, if you would deal wisely with your child, then you must direct them, teach them, correct them. It is not wise, indeed it is hateful, to let the child go in any direction that he chooses. All parents know that children need direction; you can’t let them figure things out on their own. You can’t let a child figure out on their own that stoves are hot and can burn you, or that playing in the street is dangerous; you need to warn them, and not doing so is negligence.
   3. Our culture today has been lead astray by false philosophies about the nature of truth and about the nature of revelation. You’ll have people actually say that we need to make truth together, that children need to discover their own truth, that they need to experience their own truth. If you buy into that, if you buy into the notion that children need to be left to discover their own truth, then you are letting them run down the path of foolishness that leads to hell. Their heart is born with an aversion to God’s truth, naturally blind to it, and to be faithful parents we need to reveal to them God’s word, we need to tell them, we need to correct them, we need to warn them about the way to go and the way to avoid.
   4. Faithful parents must use God’s word to teach, train, encourage, exhort, discipline and correct their children.
   5. **you must train them in the way they should go, and not in the way that they would to go.**
2. It’s not enough just to train them, **but you must pay attention to the manner of your training.** You must pay attention to the manner of your training.
   1. We must be patient, tender and loving. Any harshness, coarseness, or hateful parenting will undermine our efforts, increase the child’s resistance, and dishonor our Lord.
   2. JC Ryle says that, “Love should be the silver thread that runs through all your conduct. Kindness, gentleness, long-suffering, forbearance, patience, sympathy, a willingness to enter into childish troubles, a readiness to take part in childish joys, -- these are the cords by which a child may be led most easily, --these are the clues you must follow if you would find the way to his heart.”
   3. This idea is a principle that we all understand. If our goal is to led the child in paths of righteousness, then we ought to be sweetly leading them, not forcefully driving them from behind, like cattle. None of us likes forced obedience. But all of us likes to be sweetly led.
   4. This principle applies to parenting, but also to anyone in a position of authority. Adults, do your employees think that you are patient and longsuffering with them? Older siblings, would your younger siblings think that you are tender and loving with them? Or do they think that you are demanding and bossy? Teachers, do your students consider you a compassionate and gentle guide, or a severe dictator?
      1. Proverbs says that sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness. If we really want our children to heed God’s word, wouldn’t we want to do everything in our power to persuade them? Wouldn’t we want to remove every possible impediment that might keep them from hearing God’s truth? If so, then we ought to be tender, patient, and loving with them as we train them.
   5. Indeed, this is exactly how our savior leads us. Christ doesn’t bark out orders to us. He gently woos us with his grace. He isn’t rigid and inflexible, never satisfied with our efforts; instead he grants us his holy spirit, who guides us into all righteousness. He doesn’t berate us when we mess up again and again, he reminds of his forgiveness, picks us up and dusts us off, and rejoins us in fellowship by his restorative grace. He doesn’t keep a record of wrongs and continually bring up our past mistakes, but he reminds us that his work on the cross cancelled the record of debt that we had hanging over us. And he doesn’t load us down with burdens and expectations that we could never meet; instead he says to us, “Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” He promises us that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.
   6. Christ leads us as a faithful master who doesn’t harshly drive us like cattle, but goes before us in righteousness. He doesn’t ask us to do something that he’d never do; indeed, he has done it all, and we merely follow his example with his spirit of power. He speaks tenderly and gently, with much patience for us who so often err.
   7. And in like manner, we must pay attention to the tenor of our training, and be full of love, patience, and tenderness.
3. Train your child with this thought constantly before you: that **the soul of your child is of first importance**. the soul of your child is of first importance.
   1. If you love your child, you will think of their souls often. You’ll pray for their souls, and not merely their behavior, their safety, their grades, or their athletic performance.
   2. If you think of their soul often, then you’ll remember that this world and all of it’s glory will pass away, but their souls are eternal. You’ll change how you make plans, how you think about their education, how you think about activities, how you think about college, how you think about dating, how you think about privileges and responsibility.
   3. If you consider their soul, then you’ll be reluctant to spoil the child.
      1. JC Ryle again writes, “To pet and pamper and indulge your child, as if this world was all he had to look to, and this life the only season for happiness, to do this is not true love, but cruelty. It is treating him like some beast of the earth, which has but one world to look to, and nothing after death. It is hiding from him that grand truth, which he ought to be made to learn from his very infancy,-- that the chief end (or purpose) of his life is the salvation of his soul.”
   4. Parents must not be distracted by this world and all its cares, because our children’s hearts are naturally inclined to that distraction, to the cares of this world, and we must be constantly re-aligning our sights, re-calibrating our priorities by the word of God so that we can rightly lead our children in spiritual matters.
   5. We must constantly remember the souls of our children, and treat the care of their souls as a matter of first importance.
4. **Parents must train our children in biblical knowledge.** We must train our children in biblical knowledge.
   1. I admit that we cannot make our children love the bible. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. But we can introduce them to it, and lead them to know it. I’ve never met a child that learned the bible too well, or learned it too soon.
   2. If our previous point be true, that we must remember the souls of our children, then we must train them to have a thorough knowledge of God’s word. If we are concerned about their souls, then we must have concern that they not be carried to and fro by every wind of new doctrine and every new false teacher.
   3. The devil is not stationary, he prowls around like a lion. He is not content to use the same old tricks, but constantly is repackaging his old lies, leading millions into error, lulling into a stupor those that lack the clarity of God’s word. If you love your children, then you will arm them with the sword of truth, with God’s word, so that they can stand against the devil’s lies.
   4. It would be grave dishonor to a commander so send troops into battle unarmed, and it would likewise be a grave dishonor to us parents if we sent our children out into the world defenseless.
   5. Giving them confidence in God’s word, confidence in its truthfulness, confidence in its sufficiency, confidence in its profitability for our souls, confidence in its relevance, that comes through prayerful intentionality on the part of the parents.
   6. We must train our children in biblical knowledge.
5. **Don’t Exasperate your children. Don’t exasperate your children.** Paul says in Ephesians 6:4 that we must not exasperate them, or provoke them to anger. There is a way for us to lead, for us to parent, that casts a stumbling block in front of our children’s feet and bids them to fall. We’re impeding them instead of promoting them. And there are many ways to exasperate. But here are a few:
   1. **A first way provoke our children’s anger is by treating them with partiality.** That means that we don’t treat them with equal love and affection. We cater to one above the others, we favor one ahead of the rest. This temptation towards partiality is a dangerous one because it is so easy to do.If you have children you know that some of them are easier for you to get along with than others. Some of them have personalities that complement your own, while others of your children have personalities and interests that are… less than complementary. If you are quiet and like to read, then you will likely naturally favor a child with similar interests. Or, if you are more relationally oriented, then you will likely appreciate more the company of the child that is wired like you are.
      1. This is true for parents, and it is true for employers, and it is true in the church as well. We tend to gravitate toward those that are most like us, and we can, even unintentionally, drift into partiality. We give preferential treatment to those that we favor. We give heavier weight to the opinions of those that think like we do. We reward more generously those workers that have similar interests as our own. We punish more harshly the children that sin in ways that we don’t understand or ways that we aren’t tempted in.
      2. James chapter 2 condemns very clearly the sin of partiality. He specifically condemns the sin of preferring the rich man and being unloving toward a poor man in church, but the principle of partiality is equally damaging in the home. Children, even from a shockingly early age, have a pretty sensitive eye toward what they perceive to be injustice, and they can be tempted to anger when they see it. Just like Joseph’s brothers were enraged by their father’s preferential treatment of Joseph, favoring him, giving him special gifts, prizing him above all the other siblings, we too can provoke our children by such behavior.
      3. Praise God that he doesn’t treat his household with partiality. That he doesn’t unjustly grant a special salvation status on some, while others he merely gives the minimum. He doesn’t crown some of us with Christ’s righteousness, while others have to prove their faithfulness through obedience. He doesn’t give some of us the fullness of the holy spirit, while others get merely a taste. The father has lavishly given out his grace. He has poured out his love by sending his own son, adopting us into his very household, making us full co-heirs beside Christ, filling each of us with the fullness of his very own holy Spirit, and promised each of us an imperishable inheritance in his presence forever.
      4. Let us never be guilty of partiality, at home or at church or at work, but let us love lavishly, just as the father has loved us.
      5. We must avoid exasperating our children because of our partiality.
   2. **We can exasperate our children by having inconsistent standards.**
      1. You’ve likely experienced this in the workplace, but if you have a boss that is never happy, a boss that always leaves you guessing, a boss that seems to want something one week and something else the next, that wants it done one way to day and another way tomorrow, that is frustrating.
      2. The same goes for children; they can be provoked to anger when there is inconsistency in expectations. If you let your child stay out until 10PM one Friday night, and then next week get mad at them for being home past 930, you’ll provoke them to anger.
      3. If you tell them to do A & B, but get mad when they don’t do C, you’ll provoke them. If you define “cleaning your room” as making the bed and picking up the clothes, then don’t get mad that they didn’t wipe down the baseboards.
      4. If you set the expectation that everyone needs to help clear the table after dinner, but you don’t enforce that rule for a week or two, and then get upset one day when nobody is helping you clear the table and wash the dishes, you’ll exasperate your children.
      5. We need to have clear expectations of what the standards of obedience are, and we need to keep those standards fixed, not fluctuate them based on our mood.
   3. **Not only do we need to avoid partiality and fluctuating standards, but we can exasperate our children by being hypocritical.**
      1. If you are a parent, or if you’ve worked with children at all, you know that children come hard-wired with an innate ability to detect hypocrisy. They can sniff it out immediately. And when they see it, they will be tempted to anger.
      2. For example, if I expect my children to help out around the house and do some chores, that is a good thing. But If I spend all my time in the recliner barking orders for everyone else to follow, I’d be hypocritical. I could perhaps give them a great biblical lesson about self-sacrifice, faithfulness, and service, but if I am unwilling to help out myself, if I am unwilling to be self-sacrificial, faithful, and to serve, then I am being a hypocrite, and the children will be provoked by that.
      3. If I tell the children to speak kindly to one another, I will be seen as a hypocrite if I only speak with harshness and yelling.
      4. If I tell the children to share their toys, but I never share my time or my attention with them, then I’m being hypocritical.
      5. If I tell the children that it is good to read the bible and pray to Christ, but I don’t do those things myself, then I am being hypocritical.
      6. If I tell the children that going to church is important, but I skip church whenever some game is on or whenever it’s a nice day for golf, I am being hypocritical, and tempting my children to be angered.
      7. We must let our life preach the same message as our tongue, and not let our actions undermine our message. Indeed, as you parents know very well, your children imitate you from a very early age. Are you giving them something worth imitating? Are you living a model of faithfulness that you’d be proud of them to follow? Or is your tongue undoing your message? Is your laziness or apathy undoing your message?
   4. The good news is that Jesus offers a way out from hypocrisy. He knows the true condition of our heart, and yet he came to die for our sins anyway. We need not waste anymore of our life supporting this false holiness; we can come to him with all of our falsity, all of our hypocrisy, all of our pretension, and we can trust that he will not cast us out. Our lives are already exposed before him, and yet he still bids us come. He offers forgiveness. He offers restoration and reconciliation. He offers new life in the holy spirit. A life of freedom and not slavery to comfort and ease; a life in the light, and not in the darkness of anger and irritability. A life of authenticity, a life of genuine vitality, rather than feigned superficiality.
   5. Christ died for the sin of hypocrisy, all you must do is come to him, to the Son who lived a genuine life of righteousness, to the one who himself is the Passover lamb, and he will provide atonement for your hypocrisy.
   6. We must not exasperate our children by the sins of partiality, by having a fluctuating standard, or by being hypocritical.
6. **In light of our current culture, we must train them with an eye to adulthood.**
   1. **In order to train our children with adulthood in mind, that means, first, that we train our boys to be men**
      1. This means that they need not be ashamed to be masculine; indeed, one of the sins that Paul speaks about in the New Testament is men acting in an effeminate way. Boys need to be instructed in what it means to be a faithful man of God, and they need models of what true, Christ-like masculinity looks like.
      2. And I am not talking about a macho manliness that is defined by horsepower and guns and muscle. I’m talking about a secure, steady disposition to pursue justice and righteousness, to serve with faithfulness in every sphere of life with Christ-like humility. It means to protect those that need protection, and to provide for those that need provision.
      3. In short, boys need to be trained to grow up to be like Christ. Christ did not demand a throne and a title, but washed the feet of those under him. He did not protect himself from harm, but willingly entered into the battle to protect his wife. Christ did not cling to his comfort and his possessions, but willingly gave it all up in order to secure the provisions needed for his bride. Christ honored the Father with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and he loved his neighbor as himself. That is what Godly manhood looks like, and that is what we have to prayerfully train our boys towards.
      4. Unlike the message of our current culture which thinks that masculinity is a problem to be weeded out, we need to train our boys to be righteous in their masculinity, to be just in their manhood, and be faithful in their role as husbands and fathers. In short, we need to train them to become like Christ.
   2. **Similarly, for us to train our children for adulthood, we need to train our girls to be women.**
      1. I’m going to make some statements that the world considers hateful, but that were completely assumed as truth 50 years ago.
         1. Woman was made to be a helper for man.
         2. The wife should submit to her husband.
         3. Women cannot and should be pastors.
      2. The rise of feminism has so permeated our culture such that many of us cringed when I made those statements, even though they came right out of the bible. We hear the word “submit” and think of it as a bad thing. We want to immediately stand up and shout “yeah, but, but.” We’ve been trained by the world to demand that women be equal to man in role and in every way.
      3. But that is not how God has made the world, and it is not how God speaks in his word.
      4. In the Garden, Eve was made from Adam’s side; they were of the same substance, and made in the same image of God. This means that they are equally worthy of dignity, because they are equally made in God’s image.
      5. God did not make Eve and tell her that if she became more like Adam then she’d have the image of God. Eve was made to be Eve, and to help Adam.
      6. But the world preaches to our daughters the false gospel of feminism that says that men are the problem, that every man oppresses women at every turn, and that femininity is the true goal for everyone, even men.
      7. We in the church have to push back against this false narrative. Just like the world proclaims a false message to our boys, so too does that false message impact our ladies.
      8. We need to tell our ladies that true godly femininity does not mean weakness. Rather, it means a faith-fueled godliness, and a trust that provides the humility and wisdom to honor their husbands.
      9. Rather than raising our girls to use every platform possible to demand worldly notions of equality, we need to train our young ladies to pursue a gently and quiet spirit, like Peter says in 1 Peter 3.
      10. We need to train our girls the practical skills needed to manage a household well. If we send out young ladies who know the finer points of theology but can’t cook a meal or run a home, then we haven’t done them any favors, and we haven’t done any favors to the young men that they will marry. We’re limiting the churches ability to minister through hospitality and love.
      11. We need to warn them that this world is full of wicked men that want to lure them into sin. Ladies, when you graduate and head out into the world, there are men that will shower you with gifts, that will give you all the attention that your heart has always craved, that will praise your beauty and your charm, and they will say and do it all with one sinister motive in their hearts. We have to warn our young ladies, and train them to know what a true godliness looks like so that they can discern it in their potential husband.
      12. Finally, we have to have a church full of women that can model godly femininity. We can’t tell our daughters that godly submission is a good thing if we aren’t willing to honor our husbands. We can’t model a gentle and quiet spirit if our wives are always being quarrelsome and demanding. We can’t train our daughters toward purity if we are full of all sorts of lusts and immoral behavior ourselves. We must be models of chastity and discernment, if we are ever going to get our daughters to prize the same.
   3. But men and women, hear me, I know this is a heavy burden. You’re probably thinking of the ways that you’ve failed to train your sons or daughters. You’re likely feeling that sense of dread that can come over you when you start to wonder, “have I done enough”? or “was my example too poor?”
   4. Well, I have some news for you, your example was too poor. You weren’t the godly parent that you were meant to be. You got angry when you should have been patient, you were self-indulgent when you should have been self-sacrificial. You’ve been hypocritical, judgmental, lazy, and unrighteous.
   5. But the good news of the gospel is that there is hope for failures. There is hope for people like you and me. There is hope for those us of that are feeling crushed under the weight of responsibility for raising little human beings into mature adulthood.
   6. The Good news of Jesus Christ tells us that we can be forgiven of all of our failings. Every time we were selfish, impatient, and angry can be forgiven. Every time we neglected to do our duty, that can be removed. Christ’s died on the cross for the selfishness of parents like me and you. Christ willingly suffered in our place, even though we wanted to do things our own way. Christ loved his wife, even when she was unfaithful to him, and he did that so that we unfaithful husbands and wives might be restored into communion with him.
   7. And even more than that, Christ has promised us the gift of the holy Spirit. He has not left us alone to try and raise our children single-handedly. He has granted us his very own Spirit to guide us in holiness and wisdom, and to enable us to carry our burdens to the Father in prayer.
   8. He even has granted us his very own body, the church, to surround us with brothers and sisters to help us in this journey, to remind us of his grace, and to help carry our burdens.
   9. And he has given us the promise of eternal joy and bliss in his presence when we finish our labors here on earth. We will be united with him in paradise, removed from the thorns and thistles of this world, singing his praises and enjoying communion with him for all of eternity.
   10. That’s the good news for tired parents, that God has provided us with forgiveness for our failings, strength and companionship for the journey, and the promise of eternal joy when we reach our destination.

We have before us tonight another tangible reminder of God’s lavish grace to us. We have the Father bidding us to come and join him at the table of fellowship. We have the Son reminding us that he joyfully gave his own body and blood that we might be faithful sons and daughters of the king. And we have the promise of the Holy Spirit to sustain us until our Lord returns.

Join me in prayer, and then our servants will come.

PRAYER

Bread- “the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24**and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+corinthians+11&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28608f)] you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Cup- In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

PRAYER