

Last week, in our 2-part sermon series on parenting, we explored the foundation of parenting as discipleship from Deuteronomy 6. Today, we'll turn to Ephesians 4 and 6 to see what that discipleship looks like in real life.

**"It takes a village to raise a child" (An African proverb)**

This message is not just for parents or grandparents - it is for everyone, as we are all called to this sacred ministry of raising the next generation together as a spiritual family.

Parenting can feel overwhelming. It is complicated. Trying to understand - let alone guide - the next generation can be challenging. At times, you just want to 'toss' the baby and hope that someone else can bear the responsibility.

**But the truth is, we're all called to this sacred task - and the Bible tells us how!**

**1) Who we are as parents begins with who we are as children.**

**Ephesians 6:1-3:**

*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 go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth*

- You can't be a godly parent if you are not living as a godly child
- How are you honoring your parents? How are you honoring elders in your church, neighborhood, and community?
- More importantly, how are you obeying, loving, and honoring your Father God?

**2) Responding to the Void**

**Ephesians 6:4:**

*Fathers (and mothers), do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord*

- Anger is not the primary emotion. It is secondary.
- Identify what is causing the anger - Identify what is missing
- Be real and authentic in responding to that void

**3) Parenting with Christlike Character (3 Don'ts)**

**Ephesians 4:2-3:**

*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

- **Don't Push - PULL!**
- **Don't Rush - WAIT!**
- **Don't Quit - LOVE!**

**You don't have to be perfect. You just have to be present.  
It's not the performance, but your presence.**