

THE NEW HUMANITY OF JESUS THE CHRIST
MEDITATIONS IN THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL'S ADDRESS TO THE EPHESIAN FAITHFUL

FATHERS, NURTURE:
A VISION OF THE SPIRIT-FILLED, TIME-REDEEMING, CHRIST-REVERING FATHER
Ephesians 6:4

I. "Mum still knows best"

II. (Spirit-Filled) Fathers, Nurture Your Children (Eph 6:4)

- A. "Fathers..." (*pateres*). Why does Paul address fathers and not mothers?
1. Because fathers because fathers in Jewish and Greco-Roman culture were responsible for their children's education.
 2. Because Greco-Roman fathers had absolute power over their homes.
- B. Fathers, do not provoke your children (6:4a)
1. God does not want fathers to rouse their children to anger.
 2. There are two implications from this.
 - a. God is limiting the father's authority.
 - b. God is elevating the status of children.
- C. Fathers, nurture your children (6:4b).
1. Paul may be pre-empting opposition here.
 - a. He is not being anti-family.
 - b. He is not being anti-father.
 2. Fathers must "bring up" or "nurture" their children.
 - a. Nurturing is not just the mother's role.
 - b. Nurturing is not mainly the Government's role.
 3. Fathers must nurture "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- D. Let us consider the big picture.
1. God is cutting the father down to size.
 2. The resurrected Christ has taken over the family by taking over the father.

III. Spirit-Filled Living in Evil-Filled Days—For Fathers

God does not want us Christian fathers to look either to traditional practices or modern society for our purpose, our meaning. He wants us to look to his word. And God's word shows us that fatherhood is for nurturing our children into the likeness of Christ, not conforming them to our own dreams and plans.

- A. Ephesians 6:4 does not mean that nurturing is the father's only duty.
1. The father must work to provide for his family.
 2. Sometimes, the father must fight to protect his family.
- B. But then, the father must always go home—that's where he ultimately belongs.
1. 1 Timothy 3:5 says that a man must be able to manage his family well before he considers the office of pastor/elder.
 2. But how can a man manage his home well if he is hardly home?!
 3. The nurture of children may not be the father's only duty—but it is his basic duty as a father.
- C. The father's duty to nurture also requires that he be a disciple of God.
1. It's not good when fathers have no desire to grow in their understanding of Scripture.
 2. If fathers are not learning from God...
 - a. They cannot impart God's instruction to his children.
 - b. They will rely on worldly wisdom.
 - c. They will rely on their personal tastes and ambitions.

IV. Good News for Uncaring, Annoying, and Exasperating Fathers

*The Lord Jesus Christ has taken control of the family.
This is now the age of the evangelical household,
the era of the gospel-driven parent.
The Christian family is God's holy instrument
in fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ.*