

# HARMONY

IN THE

# HOME



By Richard Elwell



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# ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

WHY IDEAS MATTER.

[www.ultimateoutcomes.org](http://www.ultimateoutcomes.org)

Ultimate Outcomes is a non-profit organization founded on the fruit of the 30 plus years Pastor Richard Elwell and his wife Marty spent in church ministry, developing studies that would help their congregants discern and apply God's truth. Richard was a firm believer that the outcomes in our lives are a result of what ideas we choose to believe and follow.

After Richard died of a rare liver disease in 2018, Ultimate Outcomes has taken on the mission of sharing the Elwells' insights with all who desire to live a better life and are willing to look to God for understanding of the way they are to go. To that end, it makes available for free download on its website: Bible studies, Sunday school curriculum, and sermon podcasts.

Richard earned a Master of Divinity degree from the International School of Theology and was the founding and senior pastor at University Park Church, San Bernardino, CA for over 30 years. His passion was always to make God's truth understandable and applicable to all who hunger for it. Marty holds a Master's Degree in Teaching Processes from Claremont Graduate University. Her passion has been to train women and provide curriculum for parents who want to raise their children up in the ways of the Lord.



# HARMONY

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## STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to help Christian couples understand the fullness of God's plan for marriage and the family, and in applying God's principles in their life experience the blessing and delight that God wants for them in their family relationships.

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# 1

# What Is Marriage?

## INTRODUCTION

### 🕒 Introduction To The Study

1. *Harmony in the Home* focuses on how to build families with integrity based on the plan God lays out in the Bible.
2. **Illustration:** Building with integrity  
When Hurricane Andrew blew through Homestead, Florida in 1992, many new tract homes were destroyed while some small, low-income homes were left standing. The homes that were left standing were built by Habitat for Humanity. Before the hurricane the bigger tract homes looked more substantial and impressive, yet the hurricane proved that the more modest homes were built with greater integrity.

### 🕒 Lesson Focus

1. What is the modern view of the purpose of marriage?
2. What does the Bible teach about marriage?
3. **Illustration:** After officiating at a wedding, I was told by the wedding photographer that it was encouraging to hear a wedding charge to the couple based on God's design for marriage. When I asked what was normally the charge, the photographer responded that vows now reflect the changing view of what marriage is, with the couples vowing to stay married "as long as our love lasts..."
4. The modern view of marriage sees marriage as a 50/50 partnership that can be dissolved if an issue develops.



#### **Remember:**

Marriage is not like other human partnerships. It is not meant to be dissolved.



# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## ◎ The Purpose of Mariage

Genesis 1:27

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

What does it mean to be created in God's image?

Isaiah 43:6-7

<sup>6</sup>Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth— <sup>7</sup>everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Why did God create us in his image?

## ◎ God's Perspective of Mariage

Mark 10:6-9

<sup>6</sup>"But at the beginning of creation God <sup>7</sup>made them male and female.'  
<sup>7</sup>For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,  
<sup>8</sup>and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one.  
<sup>9</sup>Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

1. Marriage has its foundation in creation (vs. 6).

*<sup>6</sup>But at the beginning of creation God <sup>7</sup>made them male and female.'*

a. What does verse 6 mean in terms of marriage?

b. How does having its foundation in creation set marriage apart from other human partnerships?

2. Marriage is the formation of a new family (vs. 7).

*<sup>7</sup>For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,...*

a. What does verse 7 mean in terms of marriage?

b. How does the command to “leave and cleave” set marriage apart from other human partnerships?

c. What happens when a spouse does not leave his or her parents?

**Illustration:** When a queen bee leaves a hive she, and the workers she takes with her, form a completely independent hive; they are no longer a part of the original hive they left. If they didn’t leave, the hive would not flourish; it would be overcrowded and not function well.

3. Marriage is two becoming one flesh (vs. 8).

*“and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one.*

a. What does verse 8 mean in terms of marriage?

The one flesh relationship is expressed in the sexual union, which has a three-fold purpose: the establishment of a covenant, procreation and recreation. In distorting God’s design, the world emphasizes the recreational purpose for the sexual union while minimizing the covenant and procreation aspects.

**Illustration:** When you take a ball of yellow clay and a ball of blue clay and mix them together, you have a new ball of green clay. The yellow and blue clay are no longer separate, they form a completely new entity. It is impossible to separate the two colors and make them what they were before.

b. How does the one flesh relationship differ from the modern view of human sexual partnerships?

4. Marriage is a three-way agreement (vs. 9a).

*“Therefore what God has joined together...”*

a. What does verse 9a mean in terms of marriage?

**Illustration:** A triangle is made of three angles joined together. The existence of the triangle is dependent upon the relationship of the three angles. Even when the partners are in conflict in the marriage, the connection to God must remain.

b. How does the three-way agreement differ from other human partnerships?

5. Marriage is not to be dissolved (vs. 9b).

*...let man not separate.*

a. What does verse 9b mean in terms of marriage and divorce?

**Illustration:** A button is designed to hold two pieces of fabric together, but it is not a permanent connection; it is meant to be unfastened. A weld is designed to be a permanent bond; it cannot be broken without destroying what was welded together.

b. How does the fact that marriage is not to be dissolved set it apart from other human partnerships?

Unlike marriage, other human partnerships...

- Don't have their origin in c\_\_\_\_\_.
- Aren't the formation of a new f\_\_\_\_\_.
- Aren't a one-flesh r\_\_\_\_\_.
- Aren't a three-way a\_\_\_\_\_.
- Aren't wrong to d\_\_\_\_\_.

## **THINKING IT THROUGH**

1. What is God's purpose for marriage?

2. What is the world's purpose for marriage?

3. Why can't a marriage ever become what God intended it to be without being built God's way?

4. Do most marriages perfectly result in what God intended them to be?

What keeps marriages from becoming what God intended them to be?

**Summary:** Marriage is a divine institution, created and designed by God to reflect his glory. A marriage functioning by God's design is a visible reflection of God's nature.

# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

## 🕒 **Setting Aside Self-Interest**

Philippians 2:3-4

<sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

1. What does it mean to set aside self-interest in favor of family interest?
2. What are some examples of setting aside self-interest in favor of family interest?
3. What is the result of setting aside self-interest?

What is the irony of that?

# PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

## 🕒 **Personal Evaluation**

1. Do you harbor thoughts of getting out of the marriage whenever you are in conflict with your spouse?
2. Do you put the interests of your spouse above your own interests?
3. Are you focused more on your needs being met in your marriage or on meeting the needs of your spouse?
4. Are you doing your part in your marriage to bring glory to God?

## 🙏 **Prayer**

Thank God that he created marriage for his purposes. Pray that he would reveal to you any way in which you are not honoring the marriage relationship or not relating to your spouse correctly. Pray that God would help you learn to honor him in all aspects of your marriage relationship.





# 2

# THE HUSBAND'S ROLE

## INTRODUCTION

### 🕒 Review

What is marriage?

### 🕒 Lesson Focus

This lesson focuses on the role of the husband.

1. Are men and women different?
2. The two views concerning the differences between men and women:

**1st view: The differences between men and women are culturally based.**

If the differences between men and women are cultural, then they can be changed with a change in culture.

**Illustration:** We speak the language we were taught. We can be taught to change the language we speak. The differences in language are cultural.

**2nd view: The differences between men and women are biologically based.**

If the differences between men and women are biological, then they can't be changed by a cultural shift.

**Illustration:** You can't make a dog act like a cat or a cat act like a dog because their differences are biologically based. To attempt to do so would result in frustration.

3. Why is the view that the difference between men and women is biological so strongly opposed today?
4. What does it mean to have equal status while performing different functions?  
*Galatians 3:28 – There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

**Illustration:** On a football team, the quarterback and the tight end are equally necessary in the completion of a touchdown pass, yet their functions are entirely different. If they both performed the same functions, one of them would be unnecessary.

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## ◎ The Role and the Challenge

Genesis 3:16

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

1. What does this scripture teach about a husband's role?
2. Is his leadership going to be challenged? (Remember, God is giving a punishment in this verse.) Why?

## ◎ The Progression of Authority

1 Corinthians 11:33

Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

1. What does this scripture teach about the progression of authority?
2. Only under what conditions can this line of authority be broken?

## ◎ The Nature and Purpose of the Role

Ephesians 5:21-33

<sup>21</sup>Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup>Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup>and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup>In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

<sup>29</sup>After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- <sup>30</sup>for we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup>"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." <sup>32</sup>This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup>However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

1. What does this scripture teach about the nature and purpose of a husband's role?
2. What is the example for men to imitate?

## ◎ The Husband's Relationship to His Wife

### 1 Peter 3:1-7

<sup>1</sup>Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup>when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

<sup>3</sup>Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. <sup>4</sup>Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. <sup>5</sup>For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup>like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

<sup>7</sup>Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1. How are husbands to view their wives? (vs. 7)



**Note:** The phrase weaker partner conveys the idea of a delicate and fragile vase rather than a heavy-duty jug. The vessel is not an inferior thing; it just has a different function.

2. What is a consequence of a husband mistreating his wife?

## THINKING IT THROUGH

1. If a husband's role is to lead, what are the different options on what he can do with his leadership?
  - a. He can a \_\_\_\_\_ (give up) his leadership role.
  - b. He can become a s \_\_\_\_\_ or t \_\_\_\_\_ leader
  - c. Through Christ he can become a s \_\_\_\_\_ leader.
2. One of the ingredients for a good marriage and a well-ordered family is male leadership in which the husband uses his leadership position to serve the family and in doing so places the needs of the family above his own personal needs. The best way a husband can improve his family is by fulfilling his own role better.

3. Currently, how are husbands and dads portrayed on TV?

Why do you think that is?

**Husbands:** Giving up your responsibility to lead your family + pursuing selfish interests = not being respectable.

**Wives:** Taking up your husband's responsibility to fill the void + disrespecting your husband = not being lovely

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

### 🕒 **The Completeness of a Couple**

**Genesis 2:18**  
The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

1. Is a husband and father necessary to a healthy family? Explain.
2. Can a single parent home with one good parent function as well as a home with two good parents working together? Explain.

## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

### 🕒 **Personal Evaluation**

1. **Men:** What are some things you can do to better serve your family?
2. **Women:** How can you better affect your husband's leadership?

### **Prayer**

Thank God for your spouse and how God has designed the marriage relationship. Pray for your spouse and you to understand more completely and better fulfill the roles God has given each of you in the marriage.

# 3

# THE WIFE'S ROLE

## INTRODUCTION

### ◎ **Review**

1. What is marriage?
  
2. What is a husband's role in a marriage?

### ◎ **Lesson Focus**

The focus of this lesson is the wife's role in the marriage relationship.

1. What is the traditional role of a wife compared to that of the husband?
  
2. Why is there so much resentment toward and resistance to the traditional role of a wife?
  
3. Is having power always productive?                      When is power productive?

### ◎ **Axioms of Power and Design**

Power is defined as strength, force or controlling influence (from the Latin *potere* meaning to be able). The use of power is not always productive. Power is only productive when it is used to build up rather than destroy and to be of benefit rather than control by force.

**Axiom 1: The release of power is never neutral. It is either productive or destructive.**

**Example:** The nuclear power in a power plant is productive power; the nuclear power of a bomb is destructive.

**Axiom 2: Power that is submitted to design is productive.** Power that is not submitted to design is unproductive.

**Example:** If you put gas into the gas tank, you are submitting to the car's design and the gas will produce productive power. If you pour the same gas over the engine of the car and ignite it, it is not being submitted to the design and the resulting power will not be productive.

**Axiom 3:** The degree of the productivity of power is proportionate to the efficiency of the design to which it is submitted.

**Example:** Pulleys would be an example of increasing the productivity of power through an efficient design.

**Axiom 4:** The exercise of power is only good when submitted to a morally good design.

**Example:** Hitler and the Nazi regime were an example of an efficient, yet evil, power design. In terms of a man's or a woman's role in the family it isn't a question of empowerment, it is a question of the proper use of the power one has been given. It is not a question of whether or not the spouses have power. The question is, "Is the power that has been given being submitted to God's good design?"

## **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

### **◎ A Wife's Power in God's Design**

#### Proverbs 31:11

- <sup>10</sup> A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.  
<sup>11</sup> Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.  
<sup>12</sup> She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.  
<sup>13</sup> She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands.  
<sup>14</sup> She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.  
<sup>15</sup> She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls.  
<sup>16</sup> She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
<sup>17</sup> She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.  
<sup>18</sup> She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.  
<sup>19</sup> In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.  
<sup>20</sup> She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.  
<sup>21</sup> When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.  
<sup>22</sup> She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.  
<sup>23</sup> Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.  
<sup>24</sup> She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.  
<sup>25</sup> She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.  
<sup>26</sup> She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.  
<sup>27</sup> She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.  
<sup>28</sup> Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:  
<sup>29</sup> "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."  
<sup>30</sup> Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.  
<sup>31</sup> Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

1. What are areas in this passage that describe a noble wife's exercise of power?

Vs. 13-15, 27 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 16, 18, 19, 24 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 20, 22 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 21, 25 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 26 \_\_\_\_\_

2. How does a noble wife's appropriate use of power affect her husband?

Vs. 11 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 12 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 23 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the results of a noble wife's power properly applied?

Vs. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 28 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 31 \_\_\_\_\_



**Remember:**

Power not submitted to a good design is destructive. A woman's power is not to be in competition with her husband; it is to work in harmony with her husband's power. A wife benefits not by being empowered to do what she wants apart from God, but by using her power to follow God's good design.

**© God's Design for the Role of the Wife**

**Genesis 2:20**

<sup>20</sup>So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

1. What does the phrase suitable helper mean and why do women chafe at that description?

2. The Hebrew word used for helper in Genesis 2:20 is used two other times in the Old Testament: One as a king coming alongside to help another king; the other as God coming to help man. What does the use of that word say about the woman's role as a helper?

**1 Corinthians 11:3**

**Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.**

3. What does the headship of a husband provide for his wife?

**Ephesians 5:21-24**

**<sup>21</sup>Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup>Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.**

4. Why is a wife's submission to her husband so essential for harmony in the home?

**1 Peter 3:1-6**

**<sup>1</sup>Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup>when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup>Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. <sup>4</sup>Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. <sup>5</sup>For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup>like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.**

5. What is a wife's most powerful means of influence? (vs. 1)



**Remember:**

A woman can't lead her husband to be a leader. She can influence him, however, through living a life submitted to Christ and him.



# THINKING IT THROUGH

1. What does the feminist movement want?

What is the irony of the feminist movement?

2. Are families better off today than 50 years ago?

Why not?

Are women better off today than 50 years ago?

Why not?

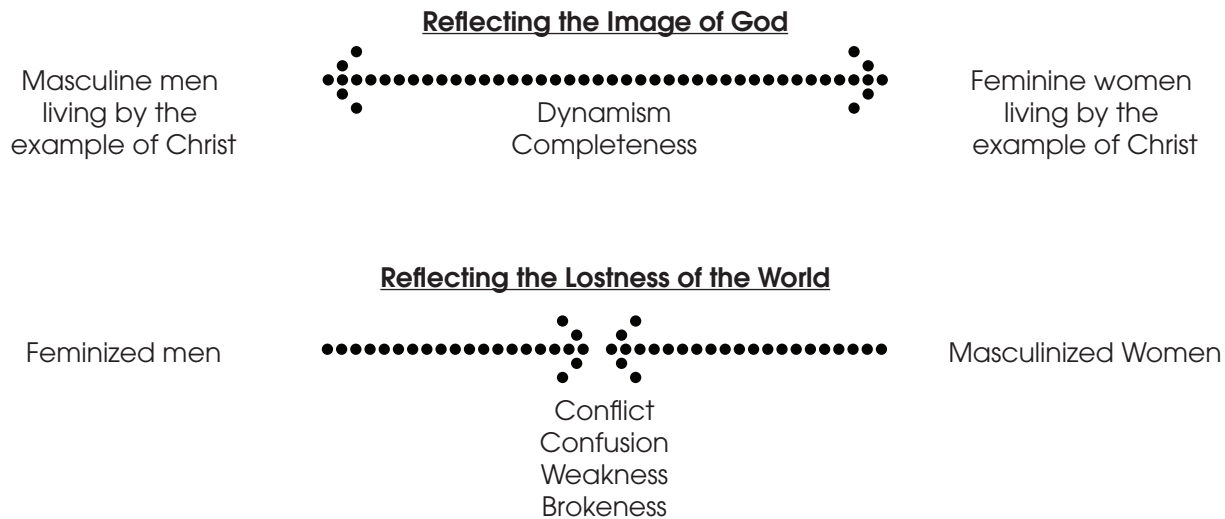
# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

## ◎ The Immeasurable Worth of a Noble Wife

**Proverbs 31:10**  
A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

**Genesis 1:27**  
So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

What makes a woman of immeasurable worth?





**Remember:**

God's design calls for a husband to love his wife and for a wife to respect her husband. Ephesians 5:33 says, *"However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."*

## **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

### **◎ Personal Evaluation**

**Wife:** Do you find it easier to love your husband or respect him?

Why is that so?

**Husband:** Do you find it easier to respect your wife or love her?

Why is that so?

### **◎ Personal Action**

**Wife:** What are some ways you as a wife can show greater respect to your husband?

**Husband:** What are some ways you as a husband can show greater love to your wife?

### **👐 Prayer**

Thank God that he has a good design for marriage. Pray that you would relate to your spouse according to God's design and that God would reveal any way that you are not relating to your spouse properly.

# 4 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

## INTRODUCTION

### 🎯 Review

1. What is God's design for marriage?
2. What is God's design for a husband?
3. What is God's design for a wife?

### 🎯 Lesson Focus

This lesson covers conflict resolution.

1. What causes conflict?
2. How do we most often try to resolve conflict?
3. Many people believe that if they are in control that will make things right. What is the problem with that belief?

**Illustration:** The *Dance for Dominance* is an expression used to describe two people who are both trying to be in control. It is seen in Genesis 3:16 as a result of the curse.

4. What are the different techniques used to dominate one's spouse?
5. Why doesn't domination ever really resolve conflict?

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## ◎ The Nature of Our Struggle

Ephesians 6:10-12

<sup>10</sup>Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

1. Who is our struggle against?
2. Who isn't our struggle against?
3. Who do we usually imagine our enemy to be?

## ◎ The Defeat of Evil

Romans 12:17-21

<sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1. What is our natural inclination when we are harmed?
2. Is our evil ever justified?  
Why do we sometimes feel justified in returning evil for evil?
3. Is it wrong to want justice?    When is our view of justice wrong?
4. From God's perspective how is evil to be defeated?

## **THINKING IT THROUGH**

1. Does returning good for evil mean we become a doormat to a dominant spouse?
2. What are some ways to overcome evil with good in a marriage?

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

### **☉ Man's Anger Does Not Bring About What God Desires**

James 1:19-20

<sup>19</sup>My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, <sup>20</sup>for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

1. Why do we get angry?
2. Does anger ever make things right?  
What does anger do in a situation?

If something never works, isn't it foolish to keep doing it?

3. What will keep us from getting angry?

### **☉ Communication Tips**

1. Don't accuse: Avoid using the pronoun "you". If you use "I" it isn't accusatory.  
Example: "I feel undervalued when I'm not told what is going on," instead of "You never tell me anything."
2. Drop hyperbole: Give up saying, "you never" or "you always".
3. Determine the right time: Can I talk to you now about something that might upset you, or should I wait until another time?
4. Forget the past: Don't bring up and rehash past issues. Stick to the issue at hand.

## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

### 🎯 **Personal Evaluation**

1. Do you focus more on whether or not your spouse is fulfilling his/her role or do you focus more on whether or not you're fulfilling your role?
2. Are you willing to keep your focus on what you're called to do regardless of what your spouse does?
3. **Husband:** Are you justified in treating your wife harshly if she is not treating you with respect?
4. **Wife:** Are you justified in disrespecting your husband if he is treating you harshly?

### 🙏 **Prayer**

Thank God for your spouse. Pray that God would do a work in you and you would learn to respond correctly to your spouse no matter how you are being treated. Pray that you would recognize when you are out of God's order in the marriage relationship.

# 5

# A CHILD'S PLACE

## INTRODUCTION

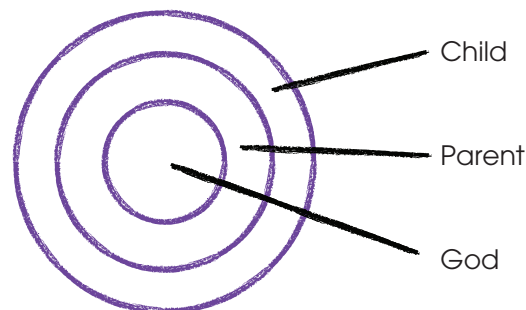
### 🕒 Review

1. What is marriage?
2. What is the husband's role?
3. What is the wife's role?
4. What do both the husband and wife need to focus on in terms of their roles?
5. How is conflict resolved?

### 🕒 Lesson Focus

This lesson begins the second half of *Harmony in the Home*. The next four lessons will focus on gaining God's perspective on raising children. This lesson, entitled "A Child's Place," will look at where children fit into the organizational structure of a family. Remember, the center of the family is the husband/wife relationship. A couple is a family with or without children. For a family to function correctly, God must form the core.

#### The Correct Family Structure



What are some examples of how families differ in their view of the role of children?

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## © The Relationship of Children to their Parents

Ephesians 6:1-4

<sup>1</sup>Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup>"Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise-- <sup>3</sup>"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." <sup>4</sup>Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

1. How are children to relate to their parents? (vs. 1-2)
2. Why is obedience right for children?
3. Why does honoring parents result in living well?
4. How are parents to relate to their children?
5. How do parents exasperate their children?
6. What is the reason God gives parents authority over their children?
7. In what way are the parent/child roles designed to work together?

**Illustration:** It is the employee's responsibility to be submitted to authority and respectful towards the employer. The employer's responsibility is to treat the employee well and give quality training. If both fulfill their responsibilities, there is a beneficial result for both of them. If either one of them fails to fulfill their responsibilities well, they both suffer.



## ◎ The Relationship of Family Structure to the Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17

<sup>1</sup>And God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup>"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

I <sup>3</sup>"You shall have no other gods before me.

II <sup>4</sup>"You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup>but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

III <sup>7</sup>"You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

IV <sup>8</sup>"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.

<sup>11</sup>For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

V <sup>12</sup>"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

VI <sup>13</sup>"You shall not murder.

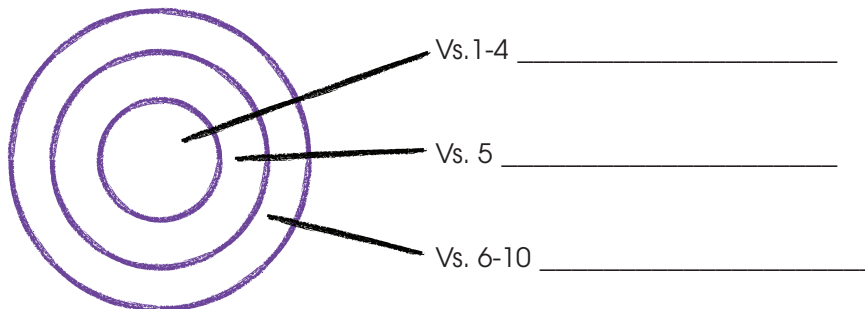
VII <sup>14</sup>"You shall not commit adultery.

VIII <sup>15</sup>"You shall not steal.

IX <sup>16</sup>"You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

X <sup>17</sup>"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

How does the correct family structure relate to the 10 Commandments?



# THINKING IT THROUGH

1. Below are some examples of poor family structures. What are their effects on the family members?



Child-Wedged Family

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Equal Status Family

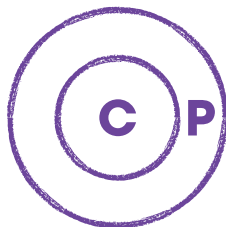
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Child-Centered Family

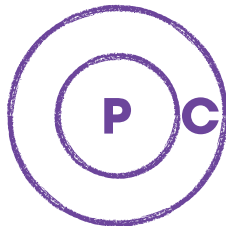
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Family Without God

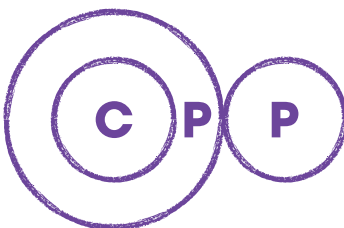
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Child-Centered, Isolated Parent Family

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2. Are there any examples of wrong family structure in your home?

3. What are the differences between the husband/wife relationship and the parent/child relationship? (We are looking at a child's place within the family.)

HUSBAND/WIFE	PARENT/CHILD
One flesh relationship which never changes	
Equal status	
Mutual volition (Both enter this relationship willingly.)	

4. What happens to a child raised in a child-centered family structure when the child leaves home?
5. What happens to the parent in a child-centered family structure when the child leaves home?

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

### **© The Evidence of Relating Rightly**

Colossians 3:20,21

<sup>20</sup>Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.  
<sup>21</sup>Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

1. How do children disrespect their parents?
2. What are the most important ways in which children show respect to their parents?
3. How do parents embitter their children?
4. How is “embitter” different from “exasperate”?
5. How can parents best encourage their children in the Lord?

## **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

### **🕒 Personal Evaluation**

1. Have you established authority over your children or do they do what they want?
2. Do your children respond to you with respect or do you allow them to disrespect you?
3. Do you discipline your children consistently and appropriately or do you exasperate them in any way?

### **🙌 Prayer**

Pray for the Lord to give you insight into how you can improve your relationship with your children and the strength to apply biblical truth in your family.

# 6

# CHILD DISCIPLINE

## INTRODUCTION

### 🕒 **Review**

The first four lessons examined the husband and wife's relationship and developed the biblical view of marriage as an institution created and designed by God to fulfill the purposes of God. The previous lesson switched the focus to the parent/child relationship by studying the topic of a child's place in the home.

How would you describe God's design for the family?

### 🕒 **Lesson Focus**

This lesson will be looking at biblical principles of child discipline.

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

### 🕒 **Why Should Parents Discipline Their Children?**

Proverbs 19:18

Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.

Proverbs 23:13-14

<sup>13</sup>Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.  
<sup>14</sup>Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

Proverbs 22:15

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

Proverbs 29:15

The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Summarize the scriptural principles:

Proverbs 19:18 & 23:13-14

Proverbs 22:15

Proverbs 29:15a

1. What is the biblical view of the nature of a child?
2. How does the biblical view of the nature of the child differ from the ideas of the world?

## ◎ **Who Are Parents to Discipline?**

Proverbs 29:17

Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

Summarize the scriptural principle:

What happens if we physically discipline those beyond our authority?

## ◎ **How Should Parents Discipline Their Children?**

Proverbs 29:19

A servant cannot be corrected by mere words; though he understands, he will not respond.

James 1:20

For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Proverbs 13:24

He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

Summarize the scriptural principles:

Proverbs 29:19

James 1:20

Ephesians 6:4

Proverbs 13:24a

Proverbs 13:24b

How does the biblical view of child discipline differ from the ideas of the world?

## © When Should Parents Punish Their Children?

Proverbs 15:10

Stern discipline awaits him who leaves the path; he who hates correction will die.  
(leaves refers to willingly)

Summarize the scriptural principle:

When should wrong behavior receive instruction and when should it receive discipline?

## © Where Should Parents Discipline Their Children?

Colossians 3:21

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

Summarize the scriptural principle:

## THINKING IT THROUGH

### 1. Keys to Effective Discipline

Explain what the following keys to effective discipline entail.

a. Understand the goal of discipline.

b. Communicate expectations clearly.

c. Discipline consistently.

d. Discipline dispassionately.

e. Discipline appropriately.

f. Discipline adequately.

g. Discipline in a timely manner.

2. How does the parents' discipline of their child affect the child's future relationship to God?



**Remember:**

Effective discipline is an opportunity to show your children their need for Christ.

3. How does the failure of parents to discipline their children correctly affect social order?

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

### **◎ The Relationship of the Family to the Nation**

Proverbs 29:2-4, 16-18

<sup>2</sup>When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan. <sup>3</sup>A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth. <sup>4</sup>By justice a king gives a country stability, but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down.

<sup>16</sup>When the wicked thrive, so does sin, but the righteous will see their downfall.

<sup>17</sup>Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

<sup>18</sup>Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.

What is the relationship of the family to the nation?

## **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

### **◎ Personal Evaluation**

1. Do you as parents agree on the rules for your home?
2. Do you back each other up in front of your children?
3. Do you have a productive way to discuss your disagreement on discipline?
4. Are you able to help correct each other?



5. Which of the keys to effective discipline do you fail to follow?

- a) Understand the goal of discipline.
- b) Communicate expectations clearly.
- c) Discipline consistently.
- d) Discipline dispassionately.
- e) Discipline appropriately.
- f) Discipline adequately.
- g) Discipline in a timely manner.

### **Personal Action**

Spend time together as a couple discussing and praying about ways you can improve the discipline in your home.

### **Prayer**

Thank God that his way is good and beneficial. Pray that you would truly understand the nature of the child, how that affects child training, and apply appropriate child discipline.



## INTRODUCTION

### 🕒 Review

The first four lessons looked at the meaning of marriage and God's design for the family. Lessons five through eight look at God's design for parents and children.

1. How are parents to relate to their children?
  
2. How are children to relate to their parents?
  
3. What are the keys to effective child discipline?

Understand the g\_\_\_\_\_ of discipline.

Communicate e\_\_\_\_\_ clearly.

Discipline c\_\_\_\_\_.

Discipline d\_\_\_\_\_.

Discipline a\_\_\_\_\_.

Discipline a\_\_\_\_\_.

Discipline in a t\_\_\_\_\_ m\_\_\_\_\_.

### 🕒 Lesson Focus

This lesson will focus on the training of children. What is the difference between discipline and training?



#### **Remember:**

The more effective the training, the less the discipline is needed.

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## ☉ Who Is Responsible For Teaching Children?

Deuteronomy 6:1-3

<sup>1</sup>These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, <sup>2</sup>so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. <sup>3</sup>Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you.

1. Who is responsible for teaching the children? Why?
2. Who do most people think are responsible for educating the children?
3. Why do educators often think the idea of parents teaching their own children is foolish?

What is wrong with that idea?

## ☉ What Are Parents To Teach To Their Children?

Psalms 78:1-8

<sup>1</sup>O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. <sup>2</sup>I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old-- <sup>3</sup>what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. <sup>4</sup>We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. <sup>5</sup>He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, <sup>6</sup>so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. <sup>7</sup>Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. <sup>8</sup>They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

1. What are parents to teach their children? (vs. 4-5)
2. What do God's great deeds include?
3. What are God's statutes?

## © What Are The Possible Outcomes Of An Education?

Deuteronomy 6:3

Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you.

Psalm 78:7-8

<sup>7</sup>Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. <sup>8</sup>They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

1. What is the result of an inadequate education?
2. What is the positive result of a good education?
3. What causes a bad result?
4. What causes a good result?

## © How Should Parents Teach Their Children?

Isaiah 28:9-10

<sup>9</sup>"Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast?  
<sup>10</sup>For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there."

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

<sup>6</sup>These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.  
<sup>7</sup>Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.  
<sup>8</sup>Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.  
<sup>9</sup>Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

How should parents teach their children?

## THINKING IT THROUGH

1. What are the school subjects that can be taught under the topics of God's law and God's deeds?

GOD'S LAW (God's Word)	GOD'S DEEDS (God's Work)

2. If parents delegate to a school the task of educating their children, what must the parents do to supplement the children's education?

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

### ◎ The Result Of A Good Education

Proverbs 1:8-9

<sup>8</sup> Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.  
<sup>9</sup> They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.

Proverbs 2:12

<sup>12</sup> Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse.

Proverbs 3:1-2

<sup>1</sup> My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,  
<sup>2</sup> for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

What is the result of a good education?



#### Remember:

A good education is more than learning how to read and write. It involves knowing what to read and write, how to act towards others, and the ability to live life well. It involves learning and obeying God's way. The ultimate result of good training is seen in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup>Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

## **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

### **🕒 Personal Evaluation**

1. Are you active in your children's education?  
How?
  
2. Are you teaching your children God's law and God's deeds?  
How?
  
3. Are you teaching in a way that builds on itself?  
How?
  
4. Are you using everyday life experiences as a teaching tool?  
How?

### **🕒 Personal Action**

It is recommended that as a couple you work through the study *Building Stable Children in Unstable Times: Developing a Biblical Philosophy of Education* to better understand your role as parents in the education of your children. The study is available for download at [www.ultimateoutcomes.org](http://www.ultimateoutcomes.org)

### **🙏 Prayer**

Pray that God would show you ways to improve your children's education so that they would understand more fully God's law and God's deeds.





## INTRODUCTION

### 🕒 **Review - God's Design For Marriage And The Family**

1. What is unique about the marriage relationship?
2. What is a key phrase to describe the husband's role?
3. What is a key phrase to describe the wife's role?
4. How is conflict resolved?
5. What is the correct family structure?

### 🕒 **Lesson Focus**

This final lesson will look at the overall process of raising children. Proverbs 22:6 says, *"Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it."*

1. When a child is being trained, whose authority is he under?
2. When the child grows up and is no longer under his parents' authority, whose authority is he under?

This lesson is an overall view of the process of taking a child from being under the parents' authority to being under God's authority. The way a child is to go is God's way of truth and wisdom.

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

## ☉ The Purpose of God's Discipline and Training

### Deuteronomy 8:1-18

<sup>1</sup>Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers. <sup>2</sup>Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. <sup>3</sup>He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. <sup>5</sup>Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you. <sup>6</sup>Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and revering him. <sup>7</sup>For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land--a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; <sup>8</sup>a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; <sup>9</sup>a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. <sup>10</sup>When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. <sup>11</sup>Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup>Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup>and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup>then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. <sup>15</sup>He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. <sup>16</sup>He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. <sup>17</sup>You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." <sup>18</sup>But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

1. What is God's discipline compared to? (vs. 5)
2. What did God do to discipline Israel? (vs. 2a)
3. What is the reason God disciplined Israel? (vs. 2b, 3, 15)
4. How did Israel experience her lesson of complete dependence on God? (vs. 3-4, 15b-16)

5. What did God do with Israel after she learned her lesson? (vs. 6-9)
6. What was God's purpose for his training of Israel? (vs. 16)
7. How does God's training of Israel parallel the process of child training?

## **THINKING IT THROUGH**

### **◎ The Process of Discipline and Training - Sports Analogy**

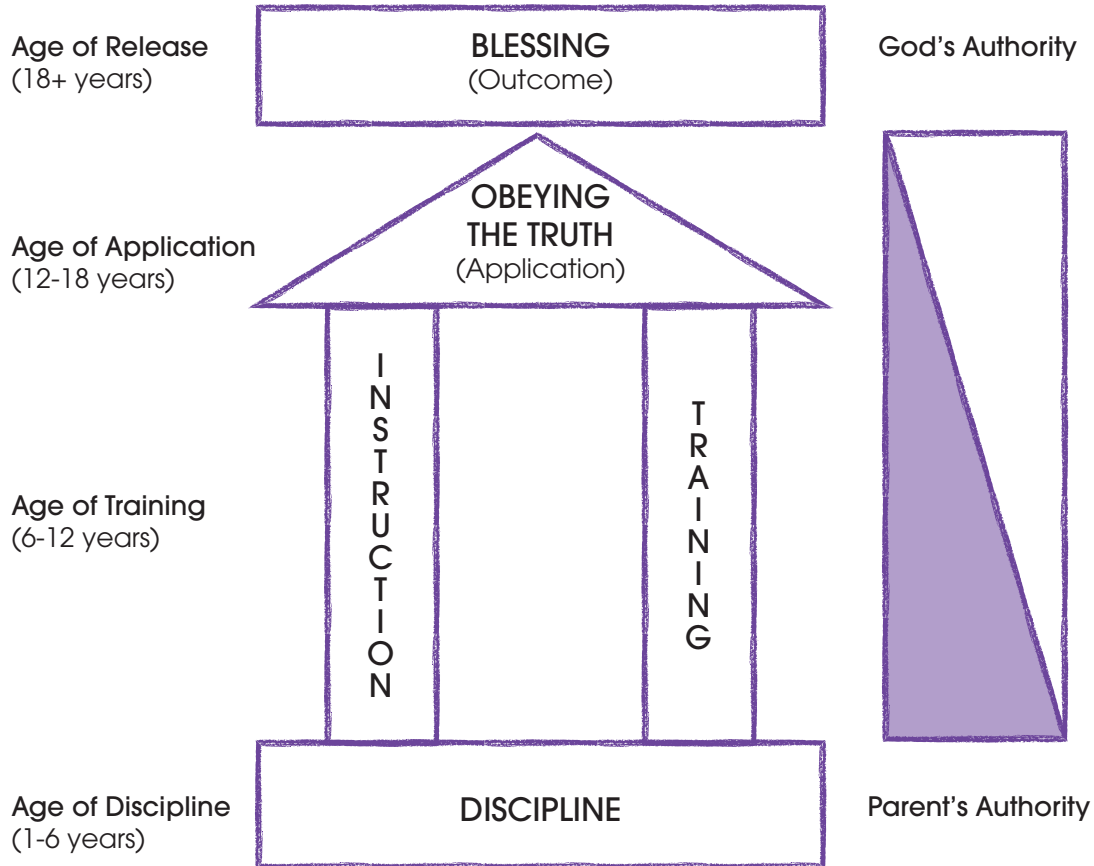
1. When a player joins a team, what is his relationship to the coach?
2. When a coach wants to develop a team, what does he have to teach first?
3. What does a coach work on after the players submit to his authority and understand the basics of the game?
4. When do players get to come off the bench and play in a real game?
5. What is the application of the sports illustration in terms of training children?

### **◎ The Progression of Authority**

There are four elements in training children up in the way they should go: discipline, training, application and release.

1. What is the goal of discipline?
2. What is the goal of training?
3. What is the goal of application?
4. What is the goal of release?

## THE PROGRESSION OF AUTHORITY



## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

### 🕒 The Importance of Obedience

#### Deuteronomy 21:18-21

<sup>18</sup>If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, <sup>19</sup>his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. <sup>20</sup>They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard." <sup>21</sup>Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid.

1. How important are obedient children to God?
2. Why would a merciful God sanction such a severe punishment for rebellion?

## **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

### **🕒 Personal Evaluation**

1. Why did God give you authority over your children?
2. Can you lead your children to be under God's authority if you are not?  
Explain.
3. What are ways you have not placed yourself under God's authority?
4. What happens if you don't establish your authority over your children when they are young?
5. What happens if you try to keep your children under your authority when they are old?

### **🙏 Prayer**

Pray that God will give you insight into ways you have not placed yourself under his authority and ways you can apply the Progression of Authority better in your home.