

## LESSON 8

**THE CHILD'S PLACE IN THE HOME**

*Scripture Texts: Psalm 127:3; Matthew 18:5-6; Ephesians 6:1-3; Lamentations 3:27; Ecclesiastes 12:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-2; 1 Timothy 5:4*

We influence everyone who enters our home. The children shed influence not only in the home but also upon the neighbors and friends and community. Children have a responsibility to parents and to the other members of the family, as well as to God.

The child should give attention to the eternal moral principles which lie beneath all of God's revealed Word. The child's first responsibility and concern is obedience and respect to his parents. The Christian home is a school where each member learns to respect and forbear the others.



**MEMORY VERSE:** *Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* Exodus 20:12

**Children Are Precious**

**Psalm 127:3 Children are an heritage of the Lord.** They are a gift from our Heavenly Father. They are a blessing, not a curse. They are a comfort, not a burden. We should think of them as good, not as a nuisance. Children have as sure a position and as definite responsibilities as other members of the family. Children seem to mirror their parents; thus parents are, for the most part, responsible for the character molded into each child.

**Matthew 18:5 Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.** Receive it as sent from Christ, receive it as a follower of Christ doing it as a service to Him. One who receives a child in this way is actually doing it to Christ. This is the right way to treat children. Notice the attitude Jesus has to children in Mark 10:13-16.

**Matthew 18:6** Now we look at the wrong way and its results. **Whoso shall offend**—shall cause to do wrong—**one of these little ones which believe in me**—who in the innocence and trust of childhood believes in Jesus. A terrible punishment awaits the one who leads the child astray. His punishment will be worse than natural death. The preceding concerns the attitude toward and treatment of children by parents and others. Now we will consider the position and duties of children.

**Obey in the Lord**

**Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents**—clear and plain, yet many overlook this command of God. Here the Word of God points to the influence of family life and discipline upon the formative years of a child's development. Christians have always built on this principle of home government. Children have a place in the home and must accept that place. Just as between husband and wife, so between child and parent, obedience must have love for its control. This is not the sort of obedience that responds to a promise of some favor or prize. Children are not to command their parents, demand from them, or ignore them. They are to obey. They should show the same respect for older folks. There is a noticeable lack of respect by young people for their elders in our day. **Obey . . . in the Lord**—in right things, commands which do not violate God's Laws. Obedience is to be given as to the Lord. **For this is right**—what better reason for obedience can be found? **Honour thy father and mother.** Honor from love and respect. God has promised long life as the reward.

Of course, there will be differences of opinion, and occasionally sharp disagreements, but they can be settled

without any show of violent feeling. Disappointments will come, but they are a part of the process of development.

### Self-Discipline

**Lamentations 3:27** **It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.** A child should learn to work, to bear responsibility, to meet hard things and hold steady, and to go without some things. Only in these ways can he or she gain self-discipline. By these, children learn to carry their part in life. Through these he learns to handle larger duties until he is able to stand on his own two feet. He learns to choose and stand by his choice, knowing that the decision and choice must meet the standards of the home. In this the parents' love and care should encourage him. Children allowed, or taught, to always take and never give, to seek pleasure rather than to give service, learn to be leeches and not fruit bearers. Every member of the family shares with the others, instead of trying to grab whatever another has. By bearing the yoke early, children become men and women, not overgrown babies. They learn self-discipline.

### Be Saved While Young

**Ecclesiastes 12:1** **Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.** Children feel a sense of sin early. They feel conviction at a tender age. As soon as this is felt, a child should be saved. Why? The **evil days** have not yet come. The heart is not hardened by sin. The child still has a desire for the things of God. To be easily convicted of sin is to be easily won to repentance and easily led to trust God. The devil always tries to get us to put off being saved, because he knows the longer we put it off, the harder it will be to be saved. For this same reason God tells us to be saved in the days of our youth.

### The Last Days

**2 Timothy 3:1-2** God tells us that **in the last days perilous—dangerous—times shall come.** That time is now. Dangerous because many sinful customs make it harder to stand for the right. One of these sins is of people being **disobedient to parents.** This sin is prevalent today. No matter what others do, God's command of obedience to parents still stands.

### Children Are Indebted to Parents

**1 Timothy 5:4** Children should show **piety**—loving service to those to whom it is due—**at home.** They should know that service to God includes doing family duties. As parents and other relatives grow older and weaker, the children who have become able have an obligation **to requite**—to repay, to recompense, to make return for—**their parents.** Repay the love and care received from them. This will include financial support when needed, as well as love and consideration. Respect for the aged, and especially for those who have held positions of care and authority over us, is still a virtue and a duty. It is **good and acceptable before God.** This makes it a joy.

If a child obeys his parents, he will more easily obey the Lord. If he bears earthly responsibilities, he will more easily accept heavenly ones. If he sees Christ in his parents' lives, he will more readily find Him for himself. It must be the child's decision as to whether he will serve God, but others can influence him to make the right decision.

## JUST A THOUGHT

**We may describe the Christian home, in short, as a  
happy one, the very best place in the world  
for growing boys and girls.**