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When I was with my daughter after the birth of her first child, I thought about all the joy that will continue to come into her and her husband's lives as they decide to raise their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Will there be challenges along the way? Absolutely. However, as parents decide to raise their children according to the Word of God and not the world, there will be great joy in that family. You see, God gave the authority for raising children to the parents, and God will provide what is needed. Let's look at that authority, for there are great benefits in raising children God's way.

The world will have many ideas on how a child should be raised, but we want to make God's Word our standard. The Word of God is the will of God in all matters of life. God's way of child raising is for parents to lead their children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). God has given the authority over children to their parents, and children truly need their parents to be in authority over them. Let's look at the examples of two men in the Old Testament, Abraham and Eli, and see how they raised their children.

Genesis 18:19:

For I [God] know him [Abraham], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Abraham commanded, or took charge of, his children so that they would keep the way of the Lord. Abraham's love and authority had great results as his son Isaac is listed in Hebrews 11:9 as a believing man. Abraham and Isaac are direct ancestors of Jesus Christ according to Matthew 1.

On the other hand, Eli did not command, or take charge of, his children, and the results are very different.

I Samuel 3:13:

For I [God] have told him [Eli] that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile [his sons cursed God], and he [Eli] restrained them not.

Eli did not let his sons know that he was displeased with their actions. He put pleasing his sons *before* pleasing God (I Samuel 2:29). The results of this kind of parenting were not good. Eli's sons were of "Belial"—without law, without standard—and knew not the Lord (I Samuel 2:12).

We looked at the results of one father who took the authority for raising his children and of one father who did not. Let's now look at how we can take the authority in child raising and enjoy the resulting benefits in our family for doing so.

"Authority" is defined as the power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior. Parents are to use their authority to diligently teach God's Word to their children.

Deuteronomy 6:7:

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

As parents, it is our responsibility to teach, or rub in by repetition, the Word of God to our children. Along with that, it is important that we teach our children to obey and respect us so that they will learn to obey and respect God and the Word that we teach them. When they do not, the parent has the authority and responsibility to correct and help them get back on track.

Proverbs 3:12:

For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

God did not give the authority to the children to lead the house (Proverbs 29:15). God has given the parent the authority to raise their children. Parents manifest that authority as they lovingly lead, teach, set boundaries, and correct their children.

When parents decide to take responsibility and exercise their authority to lead, teach, and take charge of their family, the whole family can enjoy the benefits of the close fellowship of living the Word together. We want the true standard of God's Word to be our focus as parents. For in that, both parents and children are pleasing to God and there is great joy.

III John 4:

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

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