

For you know how, like a father with his children, I have exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

I Thes 2:11-12 ESV



BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH

Worship Service & Communion

Sunday, 1 June, 2025

Worship Services In-person & Online 10:40am & 6pm

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/bereanbarbados/live>

 <https://www.facebook.com/BereanBarbados/live>

Sunday School In-person 9:30 - 1015am

 **ZOOM** links provided

Midweek In-person & Online Service (Wednesday)

Noon & 7:30 pm | ZOOM links provided

Youth Service in-person 7pm (Friday)

 **WhatsApp** 845 - 5752 or Tel: 426 - 4707

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www.bereanbarbados.org



EVERY FATHER'S CALLING

HOW TO NURTURE AND ADMONISH

We live in a perilous age. What Christian parents haven't worried about the world they are sending their children into?

Depravity is widely praised and promoted. Moral order has been turned on its head. Many good customs and institutions, once taken for granted in our society, have crumbled into dust. We have to fight many times harder than our parents and grandparents to defend even the most basic of moral truths. Our increasingly secular society, however, should lead us not to despair, but to greater vigilance in how we raise our children.

Ephesians 6:4 gives us a command to shape all our attempts to form our children into those who love the Lord and desire to serve him all their days. Although I normally use the ESV, I think the King James Version is better here: "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Consider how this brief charge shapes Christian parenting in an unchristian world.

Every Father's Calling

First, note that the command is given to *fathers*. In Ephesians 6:4, Paul deliberately shifts from using the word *parents* (in Ephesians 6:1), or speaking of fathers and mothers together (in Ephesians 6:2). Fathers are the divinely appointed leaders of the household (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12; Hebrews 12:7-11) — which is not to downplay the vital role of mothers in the household, but simply to note that fathers are given the chief responsibility for the nurture and admonition of their children. And so, Paul calls fathers to rise to the challenge for the sake of their children's spiritual well-being, even as mothers play their own indispensable role, both as a complement to the father, and as a support.

Second, remember the first half of the verse. Fathers are commanded to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord *rather than* provoking them to wrath (sinful anger). There is a way of disciplining our children, in other words, that will actually lead to more rebellion and alienation. Such discipline is hard and unloving, driven by sinful anger and resentment: anger because our commands are not heeded;

resentment because of the resulting unpleasantness; all of it driven by love for self rather than love for our children.

In contrast, godly discipline is driven by love for our children (Hebrews 12:7-11), by the recognition that the pathway of uncorrected error and rebellion is the pathway to death and hell (Proverbs 5:1-6). The world may tell us that we will alienate and embitter our children if we firmly and consistently discipline them, but we live by faith in God's promise that "folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15; see also Proverbs 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 23:13). Paul, therefore, calls us to raise our children in the "nurture and admonition" of the Lord.

Nurture and Admonition

Nurture is a word sometimes used positively, sometimes negatively in the New Testament. It has the positive sense of instruction and training in Paul's words about the purpose of preaching in 2 Timothy 3:16, and the negative sense of chastisement or corrective discipline in Hebrews 12:5-11.

Admonition, on the other hand, has the sense of warning in both of its instances in the New Testament: in 1 Corinthians 10:11, the Old Testament's "instruction" functions as a warning to the Corinthian church not to follow the example of Israel's wilderness rebellion; in Titus 3:10, Paul commands the church's leaders to "have nothing more to do" with the man "who stirs up division" after "warning him" twice. These uses make it more likely that nurture in Ephesians 6:4 should be taken positively: it is the positive counterpart to the admonitory warning.

To nurture, then, is to teach and show our children positively what the Lord requires of them: repentance, faith, and a humble life of obedient service. To admonish is to warn them of the spiritual peril that will necessarily result if they turn away from the Lord in unbelief and disobedience. In his book *Parenting by God's Promises*, Joel Beeke captures both the overlapping and distinct qualities of these two words:

"Nurture" (*paideia*) is the general training of all parts of the child: instructing his mind, shaping his character, bending his will, awakening his conscience, enriching his soul, and building his body. "Admonition" (*nouthesia*) has to do with conduct: encouraging children to do what is right, rewarding good conduct, confronting them when they do what is wrong, and punishing their misconduct in an appropriate way. (80)

Our Twofold Responsibility

Both sides of the equation are indispensable. Our children must be taught to embrace Christ by faith, to love what is good and true, and they must also be shown the positive and negative consequences of unbelief and disobedience (see the similar positive-negative dynamic in Paul's comment on preaching in 2 Timothy 3:16).

The twofold call is much like the old adage about the training of inspectors of counterfeit dollar bills: they spend as much time studying real bills as they do counterfeit ones so that they will be able to tell the difference. In much the same way, our children cannot pursue faithfulness merely by being told what they have done wrong. They must also positively be shown the pathway of faith and obedience.

Nurturing our children also includes showing how pleased we are when they do well, and praising and encouraging them in their obedience, as our heavenly Father does with us: "The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing" (Zephaniah 3:17; see also Matthew 25:23; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 2 Corinthians 5:9; Colossians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 2:4; 4:1; 1 John 3:22).

Ephesians 6:4 in Practice

What might obeying Ephesians 6:4 look like in practice? We can begin by reading the Scriptures with our children and encouraging them to do the same.

We can also teach them what the Scriptures mean. Many parents will feel daunted by this calling, but there are many helps to be found. Chief among these are the great catechisms of historic Protestantism. Why reinvent the wheel when we have such wonderful teaching aids already at our fingertips? Family worship is also vital, which need not be complex or overlong. In addition, calling our children to faithfulness requires modeling faithfulness ourselves. What greater hindrance to a love for Christ could there be than for our children to hear it from our lips, but not see it in our lives?

Perhaps an example will be useful. Consider a command to an 8-year-old son to take out the trash, which he ignores. Nurture requires that we explain to him what he *should* have done, but also how he should have done it: the obedience God requires is immediate, complete, and without complaint. We explain to him

that a truly obedient heart responds with respectful acknowledgment (“yes, sir,” or “yes, daddy,” for example), begins to obey immediately, and obeys without complaining.

Along the way, we exercise care not to “provoke our children” to anger (Colossians 3:21) with undue harshness and condemnation, or with unreasonable expectations that do not fit our children’s capacities, even as we train them toward complete obedience. To that end, as the New Testament commentator Andrew Lincoln puts it, we also treat all of our children with fairness, we do not seek to humiliate them, and we do not arbitrarily command them to do something just to show that we have power over them (Ephesians, 406). At the same time, however, we insist upon obedience, just as the Lord does with us.

Hard, Slow, Wonderful Work

All parents fall short of what God requires of us, and there is abundant grace in Christ for the forgiveness of our failures. And yet, grace does not teach us to lessen what God requires of us in any way, even though this is our natural tendency, a way of trying to cope with our parenting failures. God’s grace is sufficient to forgive us, and then strengthen us to strive after obedience to what he requires, *not* to find our hope by lowering the standard and congratulating ourselves in how we have met it.

Nurturing and admonishing our children for their eternal spiritual well-being is hard, slow work. As a vital aspect of our own holiness, it is an endurance race set before us (Hebrews 12:1). Our children’s spiritual growth will not occur overnight, but don’t be discouraged: we look for spiritual fruit, the fruit God promises, to develop over time as we patiently and prayerfully nurture and admonish our children to take hold of Christ and to follow him wherever he leads (John 10:27).

Order of Service

COMMUNION SUNDAY

June 1, 2025 at 10:40am

THEME: "Fathers, Worship King Jesus"

Call to Worship - Pastor Paul Garnes

Welcome & Announcements - Sec. Mark Murray

Meditation

SCRIPTURAL CALL TO WORSHIP

PRAYER OF ADORATION & INVOCATION - Elder Elon Richards

Chorus: Come Let Us Worship And Bow Down

Hymn 505: A Charge To Keep I Have

OT SCRIPTURE READING - Bro. Clyde Lucas

NT SCRIPTURE READING - Sis. Betty Mendes

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & PARDON

Hymn 2: Come Thou Almighty King

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & OFFERTORY Deacon Nicholas Williams

Chorus: Hear My Cry - Offertory

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Berean Choir: That Secret Place

Song: He Will Hold Me Fast

SERMON - Pastor Paul Garnes

Song: We Receive

Communion: Distribution of Elements

Hymn 812: Victory In Jesus

Benediction

ITEMS FOR PRAYER



- For Chirlene Black who lost all to fire.
- For our Fathers who are Godly examples.
- For guidance as we build God's Church.
- For our upcoming Vacation Bible School
- IBYC and the Grenada Missions trip
- For comfort to those who are grieving.
- For the persecuted church.
- Pray for the ministry and wellbeing of our Pastor and family.
- For healing for our sick members.
- For grace for our shut-in members.
- As we share the Word and make disciples.
- For our unemployed members to find meaningful employment.
- For the peace of Jerusalem.

June Birthdays

4 - Annette Dasent

6 - Owen Thompson

7 - Josiah Williams

8 - Deborah Gonsalves-King

14 - Connie Whittaker

15 - Erleen Whitehall

19 - Richard Pierce

21 - Ezra Gilbert

23 - Kingsley Reece

25 - Lorna Ward

27 - Richard James

28 - Shurley Reece

29 - Michael Jones

30 - Ivan Parris

Anniversaries

4 - Harold & Dolores Codrington

25 - Steve & Cheryl Brewster