***Timothy - PH06-02  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:1***

We continue in the book of Philippians with the opening verse which has declared to us, "Paul and Timothy the bondslaves of Jesus Christ." Paul, you'll remember, is in Rome in prison. He is writing to the church at Philippi. He is writing to this church as a bondslave of Jesus Christ. This is a position which he considers of superior honor to that of being a bondsman of the emperor in which many Romans took pride. Paul views himself as belonging to Jesus Christ and, consequently, of having no will of his own. We have found that God's will for us may be rejected. However, with discipline, God will override through circumstance that resistance and guide us into His blessing and His plans. It is best to follow the directive will of God.

Jesus Christ wants his bondslaves to grow into spiritual maturity. He wants them to think Bible doctrine. He wants them to be in the right geographic place which He has appointed for each one. Divine guidance to the bondslaves into God's Will comes through: prayer; the mind; the Bible; providential circumstances; God the Holy Spirit; comparisons with frames of reference which we have built up; and, through Scripture which we have memorized. Major features that are involved in divine guidance are: a knowledge of the will of God; yieldedness of that will; and, then growth in spiritual maturity enabling us to enter into that will. A bondslave falls short of the plan of God for him: because of ignorance of doctrine; because he lacks a spiritual maturity structure; or, because of a state of carnality.

Paul, in this opening greeting, includes Timothy with him as the bondslave of Jesus Christ. Timothy is one of the best known of the companions of Paul in the ministry. He is not the co-author of this book, for Paul writes this book in the first person. However, Paul is an associate of Timothy in the ministry. Timothy has been closely associated with Paul relative to the Philippine church.

**Timothy**

Now I would like to direct our attention to this man of God associated with Paul--the younger man, Timothy. Timothy had some training in his background. He was converted as a result of the ministry of the apostle Paul. This seems taught to us in several passages where Paul refers to Timothy as his son. In 1 Corinthians 4:17, he speaks of Timothy as "my beloved son." In 1 Timothy 1:2, he says, "My own son in the faith." In 2 Timothy 1:2, he says, "My dearly beloved son." All of this is referring to Timothy as a spiritual son. Timothy viewed himself in relationship to Paul as Paul being his spiritual father, the one through whom he had received his basic spiritual understanding, his salvation, and his original guidance.

Paul apparently was a widower, and he seems to have adopted Timothy as his son in the Lord. Between Paul and Timothy, there developed a warm and an affection companionship in the Lord's service as two bondslaves of Jesus Christ. In Philippians 2:22, Paul says, "But you know the proof of him (referring to Timothy), that, as a son with the father, he has served me in the gospel." So whatever relationships Paul had with other men who were associated with him in the ministry, when it came to Timothy, it was a father / son relationship--a particularly close camaraderie on a family-type basis.

Timothy was converted on the first visit, apparently, of Paul to the city of Lystra which was Timothy's hometown. On the first missionary tour, Paul visited the city of Lystra. Act 16:1 tells us, "Then he came to Derbe and Lystra, and, behold, a certain disciple was there." This is Paul on his second missionary tour, and when he arrives, he finds a certain disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ named Timothy. This indicates that when Paul arrived in Lystra on the second tour, Timothy was already a believer, and apparently the result of Paul's ministry there the first time. Timothy's mother's name was Eunice, and she was a Jewess who was married to a gentile living in Lystra. So Lystra was probably Timothy's hometown.

Timothy knew of the persecutions and trials which Paul had suffered upon his first visit to Lystra. So Timothy was well aware of Paul and well aware of the ministry that had been Paul's on the first occasion, and he fully recognize him when he showed up the second time. In 2 Timothy 3:10-11, Paul says, "But you have fully known my doctrine, my manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, but out of them all the Lord delivered me." The time that Paul experienced these persecutions was the first time that he came to the city of Lystra. So Timothy himself may have been an observer of some of the things that Paul suffered in that town at the hands of his enemies, as he came on that first tour.

It's obvious that there was no gospel to be found in the home in which Timothy was reared. His father was a pagan, and probably died a pagan, but his mother was a Jewess, as well as his grandmother, Lois. Since they were Jews, they did have the Old Testament. 2 Timothy 3:15 tells us, consequently, about Timothy, "As a child, you have known the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." One thing that his Jewish mother and grandmother did was to teach him the Old Testament Scriptures.

So here is an important factor concerning Timothy as a youth. He grew up in a home that taught him Bible doctrine. He grew up in a home that taught him the Old Testament instruction, and the revelation that they possessed up to that time. The mother and grandmother became believers. 2 Timothy 1:5 says, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in you also." So that we have taught here that Timothy's mother and grandmother became believers, and subsequently also the son, Timothy.

So his heritage was a good one relative to the Word of God. He did not grow up as some roaming maverick animal without any spiritual orientation whatsoever. He was taught the Old Testament Scriptures from childhood. Obviously, this was a mother providing for the lack of spiritual training that the father was not able to give in the home. Of all that Timothy's home gave him, this was the most valuable of his heritage. The most important thing that he received from that home was the knowledge of the Word of God. It was by far the most valuable. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 make that famous declaration that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So Timothy's values; his thought patterns; his ideals; and, his conduct we're all set by Bible doctrine. This is important. When a child grows up in a home where the Word of God is not taught, or a home which is not functioning on biblical principles, he must in the nature of the case grow up with ideals, concepts, goals, and ambitions which are of this world's system. He must grow up with a human viewpoint frame of reference. Consequently, there has to come a time in his life when it all has to be wiped out. He has to start from scratch. He may be 25 or 30 years old before he finally comes to salvation. At that point, everything that he has had up to that point has to be wiped out, except what may be of a general moral nature, and of general spiritual principles which may have been instilled (that our society has) by the divine institutions that God has provided. He may have picked up some right concepts there, but he starts off at that age from scratch. From that point on, he has to start building up the concepts of the Word of God.

**John Mark**

Now it is quite obvious that somebody who grows up from childhood instilled in the concepts of the Word of God is far far ahead and has a life that has far more promise and hope than the person who starts off years and years later in his adulthood. This was Timothy's case. God was looking for a young man strategically needed. This is because on Paul's first missionary tour one, of the great tragedies of that tour was the tragedy which we still suffer from in Christian service today. We still get up as did Paul. We're going to engage in a certain Christian enterprise. So we lay this out before God's people as they did back there in Antioch. Barnabas and Paul are going on a missionary tour. They need an assistant. Out of the church (I don't know how it happened) one way or another, up comes John Mark who says, "I'll go."

**Challenges**

It may have been that somebody stood up and inadvertently gave a big challenge. Challenges are always a little dangerous because they tend to bestir a person's emotions at that minute, so that at that moment he says, "Yes, this is what I'll do." The average church operates on challenges. That's why people who come into a church where they are not challenged from the pulpit feel a little uncomfortable. They don't quite know what to do with themselves. All they hear is the Bible explained. They don't know what to do with that. They're waiting for somebody to challenge them and to get them all souped up so that they can finally feel that they can do something. Churches operate that way.

Offerings are taken by challenges. That's the way to collect an offering. They simply get up there and challenge the people. I sat in a church in Dallas one time when I was a student at Dallas Seminary, and I watched a man take an offering by going up and down the aisle, holding the money in his hand (all greenbacks), and shouting out the amounts as people gave it to him, and repeatedly shouting, "Praise the Lord" an appropriate number of times. If you gave $5, you got a "Praise the Lord." If you gave $10, you got a "Hallelujah." If you gave $1, he said, "That's nice." I sat there watching this thing, and the spirit mounted. It just rolled. Boy, pretty soon people were grabbing money, throwing money, and flicking it back and forth. They just got carried away with themselves. Now that's a challenge.

Well, I don't know what happened on Paul's missionary journey, but in the process, John Mark got in there. He was related to Barnabas, and that may have been the channel by which has happened, but Mark should not have been on that tour. Mark had no business signing up for this Christian service because he proved to be a deserter after they got into the operation. We've always got people who forever are getting carried away for one reason or another. Many times it's from their own guilt complexes. They feel they're not doing anything for the Lord. They feel they've got capacities and they're not using them. They see other people who are actively engaged. They see that the work is being carried. One day they realize that, "If I were to die, nobody in this church would know about it. They wouldn't miss me at all." However, they can look at some believers and say, "Boy, if that fellow died, we would surely miss him. We would surely know that there was a tree cut down on the horizon, and we can see that he's gone.

In that kind of a complex, people say, "Well, I've got to do something." So they get out and they sign up to do something. We find that when we get into Christian service (and if you're really doing real Christian service, not just rinky-tink stuff), it's hard going. It's soldiering, and pretty soon you find deserters who find they're going to have to leave. The deserters always leave by dignifying their desertion. They never say, "I'm tired of this work. I don't want to do it. I'd rather go home. I'd like to play with my toys. I've got all kinds of toys at home I want to play with." And adults have their toys they want to play with. They don't say that. They've put on a dignified front. Don't let that ever fool you. A deserter in spiritual combat is nothing but that--he's a deserter. No soldier who has ever been in combat found it pleasant, or everything going the right way and the way it should and the way he'd like to see it, but that didn't give him justification for leaving the field of battle. He still fought it through. Whatever else he may have done later to try to straighten things out better, he fought it through when he was in combat.

So Paul had been hurt. He had been hurt badly. There were only two of them on this tour, and they had one assistant. After this, you will notice that Paul usually travels with quite a contingent of associates. This is because he learned how disastrous it can be to have somebody that you count on who deserts you and leaves you so that the team that's left has to carry double duty. So he was looking, and God was preparing someone who could be a standby, not only for Paul now, but for all the years that Paul had left in ministry. From the second visit to Lystra to his execution in Rome, there was a stretch of 16 years. Somebody had to come in now, and fill in this 16 years as an absolute reliable standby to the apostle Paul. He needed one man that he could absolutely count on. He needed one man whose thinking was coordinated with Paul's thinking who had the insights and understanding such that Paul could depend upon his judgment.

That man was prepared from his childhood, you will notice, with the insights of the Word of God. The most valuable thing that Timothy received in his home was not all that food; clothing; good education in summer camps; and, fun and games. The most valuable thing that his parents gave him was teaching of the Word of God. We have told your sons and daughters in summer camp this past week that if they had fathers at home who discuss the Word of God with them and instruct them in the principles of the Word of God, they have the most valuable thing that they will ever possess, and they should thank God for parents like that. If they don't have that, they are to be pitied as being the poorest of the kids that they'll find anywhere.

So Timothy's mother made up for what the father was not able to do in spiritual training. The home is responsible for spiritual training. We have this taught clearly in Ephesians 6:4. We have this taught in Proverbs 22:6. The Old Testament saints were taught this in Deuteronomy 6:6-7. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual things. The family is a divine institution. God has set up several ways of protecting humanity so that it doesn't tear itself to pieces. Once the old sin nature came in in the fall and Eden, then everybody became a problem to everybody else, and everybody became a threat to everybody else. This was evidenced immediately by the oldest brother killing the younger one. The minute the old sin nature came, everybody was a threat.

This is one of the beauties of our American political system. Our founding fathers realized that when they used the word "government," they were talking about some people controlling and telling other people what to do. They understood that government was some people making rules for other people. That's government. They knew that the people who were making the rules and who were exercising the authority had an evil quality within them. They recognized that there was a basic sin nature. Therefore, they struck upon the magnificent truth which few people have discovered in history, and few nations have structured themselves upon. Our founding fathers discovered that the least amount of government is the most desirable government. Government with the greatest restrictions upon it is the most desirable government. Government with the least capacity to impose itself upon people is the best kind of government. This is because that meant minimizing old sin natures exercising themselves upon other people.

**Divine Institutions**

Since there is an old sin nature within all of us, God has put up certain divine institutions. He has given us freedom of choice. Nothing should ever interfere with your personal freedom of choice. If you have a government or you're in a society or you're under some system that takes away your freedom of choice, you are doomed to destruction. Once Hitler was able to declare that everybody who was Jewish born was an inferior person and to be exterminated, the personal liberties of every Jew all over Europe were removed (where Hitler controlled), and 6 million of them died as the result of that removal of their choice and their freedom of volition.

God has given marriage. Marriage is to prepare a home as the context for a family within which children are to be reared. The divine institution of the family was designed by God for the training of children. In Genesis 1:28, the man and woman were told to multiply and to prepare a family life situation.

**Authority**

So there are certain things you need to know if you're going to be parents. Please remember that, unfortunately, nature is not selective. All you need is the right equipment, and any two dumb do-dos can become parents. Unfortunately, the children can't do much about that. They don't have much selectivity in this. However, if you're going to be parents, then there are certain things, once that child comes into your family, that you are responsible to teach him. One is respect for authority. This is perhaps the number one thing that you are obliged to teach your children. You are never to undermine this concept in the eyes of your child.

We do a lot of work around here with young people, and sometimes we have leaders and teachers who act inadvisably in a certain situation. Sometimes our teachers get very exasperated with your fine children. I had a teacher in the academy one time who got so exasperated with a kid who was trying to get out of his seat, that she finally got a rope and tied him to his seat. That stopped his roaming around the room. The only trouble was that his mother decided to come and visit school that day, and in she walks, and there was her beautiful boy tied to a seat. I'm just glad she didn't use a chain. It would have added a touch of finesse, but the rope was bad enough. The point is that that mother could have gone home, and she could have undermined the authority of that teacher. The kid wasn't hurt. Maybe his pride was hurt, and maybe it didn't solve the problem. However, I don't care what it did. There was no occasion for the mother to undermine the authority of the teacher. I don't know that she did, but she ought not to have.

When you think your children are mistreated, and all of you sooner or later think they are, you are downright fools if you stand against the authority that has been placed over your son or your daughter. Maybe the kid needs to have justice. We always see that justice is done around here. However, we do not see that justice is done by undermining the authority of the people who are in responsible positions of leadership. We take care of it privately. We straighten things out, and you may be sure that eventually your child will get what's coming to him. I will personally see to that. Don't undermine the authority of those that God has placed over your children, whether it's your teachers; your club leaders; or, you as parents. That's the worst. This is absolutely ridiculous--the undermining that parents permit of their authority with their children. I can't get over how many times I hear parents debating with their kids what they have told their children to do. They've told their children to do something, and the child will debate it back, and the parent will answer back.

Those of you who are young enough to still learn something, I would advise you that when your children come along, and they want to challenge you and debate you over why they have to do something you said, I would consider the value of looking them in the eye and saying, "Because I said so," and the discussion is closed. Then when he says, "Yeah, but I want to know," then you get steel-eyed and silent. There isn't anything that collapses an arrogant child like a steely-eyed silent parent. Some of you aren't capable of this. You're going to have to go home and get yourself a nice mirror and practice being steely-eyed. I know a lot of you are going to have to practice being silent. That's for sure. However, I'm giving you good advice, and your children will rise up and call you blessed because they will have learned respect for authority. Then they will know respect for authority out in society, and they will know it when they get out in college, and you will not see the kind of fracas and the kind of the inanities and asininities that you would otherwise see.

The first thing you have to teach your children is authority, and there are some parents that are just too dumb to do this. You just can't seem to be able to teach it to them. This is partly because the parents have such great pride. I finally have traced it down that it is the parent's personal pride. If you cut down their youngster, they rise up in indignation that you're cutting them down. Very frequently you are taking this kid to task for a quality that is indeed very evident in his mother and father. They know it, and that's what bugs them. However, the wise parent, even if your child is treated unfairly, will never undermine authority, and you will seek justice for them in a way that does not ever give him the idea that he does not have to be responsive to authority. This is the core protection which God has given us in our society.

You also are to teach your children respect for the rights of others. Other people have certain rights, and your children have to learn to respect those rights, and that, consequently, they are not to invade the things that are the rights of other people. They are not to impose themselves upon what is another person's right. This is absolutely fantastic how many adults have never learned not to impose themselves upon that which is the right of other people. Also, you have to teach your children respect for the privacy of other people. There are many ways for you to teach children to mind their own business. Again, for many parents this is a real problem because they haven't learned that themselves. They simply have not learned to mind their own business.

If your children are not taught to respect the privacy of other people, they will grow up and they will waste fantastic amounts of their time, of their energy, and of their lives poking around in other people's business. I have a hard time understanding this because there's nothing that bores me more than having people relate to me the adventures, escapades, experiences of somebody--some hot scoop. I'm impatient. I have to be nice, and try to be courteous at the time, but I couldn't be less interested. When you get your life filled with the significance of the Word of God, you wouldn't be interested either. You will never go up to somebody and give them a leading question because you're trying to squeeze out some information about something you think is going on that you'd like to know about. If you did know about it, you'd have the respect for the rights of others to keep your information to yourself; to mind your own business; and, to let God be God. He will take care of what other people need to have taken care of in them without your help.

**Private Property**

So don't try to dignify it by saying that you're going to pray about it, or that you're sincerely interested. You're just an old sin nature personality trying to indulge yourself, and that's all you are. Teach your children to respect the privacy of other people. Teach your children to respect the law. That's part of tying in with authority--teaching your children to respect the rules of the game. You teach them that primarily by your own example. You teach them to respect the property of other people. This begins right off the bat. You should be teaching children to respect the property of others. You should be teaching them that everything in the world that they see is not theirs.

Sometimes people come along and they say, "Do you think I should give my child an allowance?" I think allowances are bad. I think giving a child an allowance gives him the idea that every week he's got something automatically coming to him. After you have well trained him that every week he has something coming to him (and as he gets older he has a progressively increased rate of allowance), when he gets out of high school and into college on his own, he will begin to look far afield to who's now going to provide his allowance for him. Those are the people who begin to look to the United States government to provide the allowance.

We have fantastic welfare programs for people who were trained as children to look for somebody else to provide that which they would like to have. The Word of God says, "Work" so that you may earn for yourself, without stealing, what you need. Then it will be your privilege, the Scriptures say, to assist those who are in need. You will have free choice as to what you will do with what you have earned. Respect for the property of other people is not something that comes naturally to a child.

**Socialism**

You may think that this is a small thing, but just remember that when private property is lost, so is freedom. This is the core of American freedom. There are three things that socialism realizes it must destroy in American society if it is ever to take over this country:

1. It has to destroy private property. As long as people have private property, they can make choices. As long as your money is your money, you can make choices what you're going to do with it; where you're going to go; where you're going to live; how you're going to live; and, so on. As long as you have a piece of property that is your property, you have a choice as to what you're going to do on it, and nobody will tell you what to raise on it, what to build on it, and so on. Once private property is denied you, the cornerstone of human liberty is gone. That's why communism and socialism are condemned by the Word of God. These idiots who suggest that the Bible does not sustain one economic system over against another don't know what they're talking about. Clearly, if the Bible says for you to work and to earn to use your money as you choose, that's private property.
2. The second thing that socialism has to get rid of in this country is family. It has to destroy parents who are performing these functions for the family; for their children; and, who are training their children in these basics. It has to set children against parents. It has to fracture the loyalties between the members of the family. It has to encourage the father to go one way, and the mother to go another way.
3. It also has to, along with this, destroy the belief in the existence of God.

Socialism is out to destroy these three things: destruction of private property; destruction of the family; and, destruction of a belief in God. Every socialist and every communist who knows his business knows that those are the three things to strike at in American society. You just look around you and you tell me what is being hit the hardest in our society, and you will see it's those three. That is their game plan.

**Children**

The parents are the authority in the family. In Colossians 3:20, the apostle Paul declares to the children, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." They are the authorities within the home. Teach the fear of the Lord. Proverbs 1:7-8: "That is the beginning of wisdom." If parents will not act as authorities in the home, they will not tell their children what to do, and they will not discipline their children (they are indulgent children), then they are unrealistic people, and they are bringing grief for themselves; for that child; and, for our society.

Psalm 127 tells us how we may view children that the Lord does give us. This is the normative view that parents should have toward their children. Yet, many parents cannot say this is true of them. Psalm 127:3 says, "Lo, children are a heritage from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." Happy is the man that has children. They are a blessing from the Lord. Yet, children, for many parents, are a sorrow. There are many parents who would read this passage and say, "No, not for me. If there's anything my kid is, it's a grief. If there's anything, as I look upon my son and my daughter at this point of time in history, it's that the youngster is a grief and a disappointment to me."

The reason for that is often basically failure on the part of the training of parents. They have failed to grasp the signals. This is one of the things that again I find it frustratingly impossible to try to teach young parents--to grasp the signals of what their children are doing when they are little, and project those into the full blown blossom situation it will be when they're grown. How many a mother has justified some miserable, selfish, contemptuous act on the part of some little kid saying, "Oh daddy, he's just a little boy?" This little boy who is permitted and tolerated to do this which is out of line is going to grow up to be a big rat someday.

However, the father and the mother don't see that what he's doing here, when you project it out there, is going to make a big rat. He is not going to be a little boy forever. Maybe that's all I can say about it, and hope to God that you've got enough sense, and enough personal good judgment, and you'll take the time to look at your children and see what they're doing here, and say. "Now this is the point at which I have to nail this guy to the wall. That's because when I project this out here, this is where this is going to go." And I know that that's not easy to do. You like the guy. You like the little kid. You've got nothing against him. He is nice. She is sweet. You hate to use a heavy hand.

One time we had one little boy here in Vacation Bible School who said to another kid, "So you know what? Your parents don't love you." The other kid said, "My parents do love me." The first boy said, "No they don't, because they don't ever punish you. They let you get away with stuff all the time." That's pretty smart for a little kid who doesn't know anything. If your parents love you, and they have the discernment to project out there, you're a fortunate kid.

However, sometimes it's parents who do the job, but it's the child who is negative who brings the grief to the parents because the child himself has rejected the instruction which he has received. In Proverbs 17:21, it says, "He that sires a fool does it with sorrow, and the father of a fool will have no joy." There is a negative volition quality in some children that makes it obvious that they were born fools. They will never be a joy to their parents. Children who are positive to the Word as Timothy was are children who are a joy to their parents. Proverbs 23:24 says, "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice. He that has a wise child shall have joy in him."

**Proverbs**

By the way, one of the best things you can do on this business of taking your responsibility of rearing your children is to immerse them in the book of Proverbs. The book of Proverbs will give them more sound hard-core divine viewpoint in a concentrated dose than almost any place else in the Bible. They'll learn about pride; they learn about arrogance; they'll learn about wealth; they'll learn about loose women; they'll learn about cute girls; they'll learn about contentious wives; they'll learn about abuse of the poor; they'll learn social values; and, right down the line. Proverbs is a book that ought to be read to your children; they ought to read it; you ought to read it; and, you ought to constantly be bringing the concepts of Proverbs to their attention. They are to be a blessing from the Lord. Those who responded to the Word as Timothy did, they were youngsters with a mental attitude that was not rebellious, but was receptive. A mean kid is a great sorrow and disappointment to his parents. A responsive one is indeed a great joy.

This is what you parents are responsible for. This is what Timothy's mother and grandmother were doing for him. It is not the job of the local church or our responsibility to train your children in these matters. It is your job. The local church comes in, and we assist. We back up your spiritual; your moral; and, your social training. However, we are not responsible for providing it. Many parents sense that they are not doing this job, so they send their children to our Christian day school. Well, that helps a great deal, but it will never carry a youngster through.

I have noticed, in two decades in the ministry, that children have a very peculiar way of being very responsive in clubs; in Sunday school; in church; in camp; or, in our school, but they will come to a certain point in their life (seemingly without any control over it) where they fall into being like their parents. They follow the pattern of their parents. It's almost like they are in a dream, being compelled and carried long. They just have a way of flipping over into the pattern of their parents. So what you demonstrate, and the influences you bring to bear are ultimately the greatest. Juvenile delinquents will regularly tell you that what they lacked in their life was somebody to tell them what to do, and somebody to teach them spiritual laws and to teach them moral qualities. The Christian ministry backs your home, but it is your job to do it.

Rebellion toward God's authority is a sin. Jeremiah 5:25 tells us that children who are rebels cannot have God's blessings upon them. Proverbs 30:17 and Matthew 15:4 tell us that a rebellious child may be disciplined by God with death. If you are a rebel against your parents' instruction, then you may expect that somewhere along the line you will suffer consequences of that rebellion. I don't mean if your parents are wrong. If your parents are right in their instruction, and you rebel and resist it, you will get away with it for the moment, and you will have your way. You will have overridden the directive will of God and you will have entered the permissive will of God. However, in time the circumstances of God will close in on you, and you will find that you will pay the price of that move, and your satisfaction will turn to worms right in your mouth. Maybe it will cost you your life.

The child, during the days that he is a minor, is told to obey his parents in all things--period. When you come to maturity, you are no longer obliged to obey your parents, but you are always obliged to respect and to pay concern and attention to their opinions and to their advice (Exodus 20:12, Colossians 3:20). Children with Christian parents who know doctrine are to be thankful. You should obey your parents even if you think the parents are unwise, and let God correct them. Don't listen to the radical youth.

Timothy came from this kind of a background. Timothy had the spiritual heritage of the Old Testament given to him when he was receptive. When your children are little, they'll believe everything you say, and anything you say. That's why they go to school and they have an authority image in the teacher, and they believe everything the teacher says. Sometimes you say something different at home, and the teacher is a little higher authority in these matters than you are, and your children argue with you. The point they are showing you is that they will listen to you. When they are small, they will listen to you now.

Many people try to bring kids to us when they are on their way, and they moved up into the teenage bracket, and now the parents are discovering what their heritage is producing. We have these parents who will send their children to public school for six or seven years, and then suddenly they will expect that their children will not be reacting according to the principles that the public school (in the nature of the case) must instill in a child. Those are principles that are contrary to the Word of God (human viewpoint). So they bring them over to us. And what do they think? They think that suddenly they're going to change the situation and this child is going to respond. That is pathetic. God says, "Teach the child when he is a child." When he becomes a youth, your teaching will be much harder.

What the Bible promises is that what you have instructed in the days of his childhood are the patterns that he will stay with for the rest of his life. Anybody knows this. Even the communists know this. This is why they want to break up the family. This is why they want to take your children when they are young, so they may sit there thinking along a socialistic line. If you don't start early, then don't come crying to some preacher or to some church or expect somebody to have some kind of a youth program that's going to fish you out of your trouble. No Christian grade school is going to pull it off either. Anybody who says they are, they're conning you. If you get there, and the child is of a temperament to be responsive, you may save the day. However, the trouble lies with the fact that you did not begin early enough. You did not respect these things that God says you are to teach your children. You did not have the discernment to project where your child was going to go with certain things he was doing now.

I think in the life of Timothy, we must lay great stress upon the fact that he was a key personality in that 16-year strategic period of the ministry of the apostle Paul. Without Timothy, this ministry of Paul could not have been what it was. There was a time when Timothy stood alone. Outside of Luke being with Paul in Rome, only Timothy stood by him. Everybody else had deserted him like scared rabbits. It was this courageous Timothy who had his own problems of certain modesty and certain areas of timidity. However, it was Timothy that was a man that God had prepared. It was no small thing that he was a man that God did not pick up from a total vacuum spiritually, but a man who from his earliest days had learned the Scriptures.

So parents, get over the idea that you're going to give your children nice clothes; you're going to be kind to them; you're going to give them good food; you're going to feed them vitamins; you're going to see that they come to church; and, you're going to see they're in a Christian school, and that that's going to do it. Realize that the biggest thing is what you teach them as their parents, and that you are alert to teaching these things. This one here, authority, is number one. It is you parents who have problems at your local church that cause you to undermine authority--not the kids. We can tell, according to your children, when you're bucking something here at the local ministry. That is because your children come and they reflect it because they have picked it up from you at home, even if you haven't said anything to them. They pick up your subtle signals. They have their radars, and whether you believe it or not, they are locked on you. There's a lot more to say about Timothy. We'll pick it up next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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