

Ephesians

More than a Makeover

“House Rules”

Ephesians 6:1-4

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / June 22, 2025

Ephesians 6:1-4 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’ ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Reader: This is the Word of The Lord.

Response: ***Thanks Be To God!***

I. You relate to others the way you relate to God.

A. Cain killed Abel because he was angry at God.

Genesis 4:3-8 “In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering He had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶ The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.’ ⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.”

B. Saul’s real issue wasn’t with David, but God.

1 Samuel 18:12,28-29 “Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul... ²⁸ But when Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him, ²⁹ Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was David’s enemy continually.”

C. Joseph’s brothers didn’t really hate Joseph as much as they hated what God revealed through him.

Genesis 37:8,19-20 “His brothers said to him, ‘Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?’ So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words... ¹⁹ They said to one another, ‘Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.’”

D. The Sanhedrin couldn’t silence God, but could stone Stephen.

Acts 7:51,54,57-58 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you... ⁵⁴ Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him... ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. ⁵⁸ Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him...”

*In every horizontal relationship,
a vertical reality is revealed.*

II. God takes your obedience to your parents more seriously than you do.

Ephesians 6:1-3 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’”

A. The first law relating to human relationships was how children were to treat their parents.

Exodus 20:12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”

Leviticus 19:3 “Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep My Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God.”

Deuteronomy 5:16 “‘Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you...’”

B. In the Old Testament, some of the most severe civil penalties were reserved for children who disobeyed their parents.

Deuteronomy 21:18,21 “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them... ²¹ Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”

Exodus 21:17 “Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.”

C. Disobedience can be evidence of a God-abandoned mind.

Romans 1:28-32 “And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, **disobedient to parents**, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

D. Disobedience isn’t just a childish ‘phase.’ It’s often a high-handed rebellion against God.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, **disobedient to their parents**, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

III. Don’t be a domineering, discouraging parent. Be a discipling one.

Ephesians 6:4 “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Colossians 3:21 “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

7 Ways To Stop Provoking Your Kids and Start Pointing Them To Jesus

1. Stop overprotecting them, and show them you trust in the Lord (Jer. 17:7-8).
2. Stop playing favorites, and show consistent, Christlike love to each kid (Gen. 37:3-4).
3. Stop demanding perfection, and remember they’re human—just like you (Ps. 103:14).
4. Stop using harsh words or actions, and reflect God’s gentleness and justice (Ps. 11:5).
5. Stop insisting on your own way, and model servant-hearted love (1 Cor. 13:5).
6. Stop withholding love as punishment, and show them Christ’s compassion (Ps. 103:13).
7. Stop using words that tear down, and speak with grace that builds up (Eph. 4:29).

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Small Group Discussion:

1. Which of the biblical examples (Cain, Saul, Joseph’s brothers, or the Sanhedrin) most challenged or convicted you? Why?
2. When have you been angry at God and taken it out on someone else? What happened, and what did you learn?
3. What does it mean to obey your parents ‘in the Lord,’ and how does that change your motivation to obey?
4. Which of the “7 Ways to Stop Provoking Your Kids” hit home the most for you? Why?
5. **Children—humble yourselves.** Ask your parents: “What’s one way I can grow in honoring or obeying you more sincerely?”
6. **Parents—humble yourselves.** Ask your children: “Is there anything I do that discourages or frustrates you?”