

Pillar Passage – Proverbs 27:11
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Welcome to another Pillar Passage. Today we are looking at another proverb about parenting, Proverbs 27:11.

I want to point out 3 observations about parenting—3 very important observations. But before we get to that we need to remember with proverbs it's not a promise from God. But it is telling us in general if you want to thrive, if you want to flourish in whatever the subject is that's being discussed, here's how you do it.

This is a command. A command from the father to the son. *Be wise*. This is the first observation. It is dead obvious, but one that our generation needs and that is that it is a father talking to a son. Which some of you there say, "Ah, yeah. Duh." But plenty others of you will say, "Right. That's really important. Wish I had that." Or "Right. That's really important. I better get down with that."

It is crucial because fathers are called to be the chief instructors of their children. How do I know that? Later in scripture, Paul commands the Ephesians these: He says first, *Children, obey your parents in the Lord*. Which by faith looking over your father's shoulder and seeing the Lord that gave you your father, so it's the Lord giving you these commands that you ought to obey. There is a proverb here and also a promise here. ...*for this is right* because, Paul says, it's *the first commandment with a promise*. Children are to obey their parents banking on, believing the promise that God will cause it to *go well with you and that you may live long in the land*.

That is what children are to do but in the same way, from the other angle, fathers are to live not provoking their children to anger. There are many ways father may do this, but instead we are to *bring them up in the discipline and instruction (again) of the Lord*. Not of our own intuition. Not of our own convivence. No. But in the *instruction of the Lord*.

Just as children are to obey their parents in the Lord, fathers are charged to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This is the father's job. Yes, children grow in their own responsibility, but as long as the children are at home, just like a ship at sea. If a ship runs aground, the fellow who fell asleep at his watch, he is culpable. He is in the wrong. He as some has some consequence for that, but who is really responsible? The captain of the ship. The father in this case.

The father is in charge of instructing the children. We need to note, first off this is a father speaking to a son, and there is a wisdom he is basing this on. It is the wisdom of the Word of God. The Bible expects fathers to instruct their children—in this case his son—in the wisdom of God.

Now, secondly, he does this, however ... look at the attitude he does this with. ... to make his heart glad. The father is doing this out of joy. Out of joy he looks forward in faith to the twenty-five-year-old version of this son, and he sees what this could look like. What he sees that son take step, by step, by step, step, by step, by step to that twenty-five-year-old version of himself, the father grows in joy. Each step fills the father with joy as he sees him. The general attitude the father does this in is an attitude of optimism born out of faith. Not a stupid Pollyanna attitude but a wise optimism that is born out of faith. Faith in what? Faith in the Lord, because he is instructing this son in the Lord with the instruction of the Lord. And the instruction of the Lord will cause the children to flourish. The father does this in faith.

That's the second piece. The first piece is to be a father to the son. The father needs to be doing this. Secondly, he does this in faith in the wisdom of God that does lead to flourishing and this makes his heart glad. It is a joy hunt in his son. That's the second observation.

The third one is a little less obvious to us. It says here; ... *that I may answer him who reproaches me*. The general principle here is that the father view the father and the son as an us; as a team—going into life as a team facing their enemies; facing those that reproach them.

That he many answer him, now this may come in a couple different ways. One is just that the general strength and honor and nobility of the son makes the father less of a target, because this is a man who stands next to another strong man. Two strong men verses one strong man who are locked arms together, that's a tough thing to beat. It could be that.

It could also be that when people look at the son that they see that the father is a man not to be trifled with. Because he knows the way of the world, and he knows what he is doing. Take a look at the wisdom of this man embodied in his son. So, the reproaches then that would come before this man; that would be hurled against this man, they would fall short. They would fall short before the man because of the wisdom that is obviously displayed in the strength and nobility of this man's son.

The general principle here is that aim of this father is to build a fellowship with his son where they go into the world fighting the Lord's battles together as a team.

Teams like this, they are unbeatable in the Lord's hands.

This speaks against the common modern household and a few of ways. Number one, fathers often forsake or leave the instruction and upbringing of their children to wives, of course, to mother, but also to the state—to public schools where Muslims, and Christians, and atheists, and Jews, and Buddhist and Hindus, and environmentalist, and LGBTQ activists all come together. And we think that is going to churn out wise children that are wise in the Lord. I don't think so.

I'm not saying to always take your kids out of public schools but I am saying that when the fathers completely punt on this project, it often goes back. We see the results of this all around our culture.

Number two; the fact that it's a joy hunt, means that the general attitude in the this kind of household is going to be one of happiness and one of optimism; one of a positive atmosphere from the parents to children. It's not going to be one generally of suspicion, and of resentment and distant watchfulness. It's going to be one of a positive atmosphere where the parents are for the kids. Really important.

Then thirdly, when there is an us. When the whole focus and project is aimed at being an us, then the modern household then is—normally, yes, there's people in this household, but they're all atoms that don't connect with each other. They're all in the same household but they're atomistic. What this approach gives; what this aim gives—to be an us, to be a team that fight together—it turns the family from a bunch of atoms that never touch each other to one molecule. One group; one little platoon that's on a mission—on the Lord's mission.

When this happens—when these three pieces happen—it is a beautiful thing. This is not to diminish or disparage the role of mothers or women in the household. Not at all. But it men and boys that often need this very very important exhortation.