

^{BNT} **Ephesians 6:4** Καὶ οἱ πατέρες, μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ κυρίου.

^{NKJ} **Ephesians 6:4** And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Proposition: Fathers and future fathers, if you are going to accomplish anything for God, you must nourish your children as God's representative!

πατέρες – fathers = Paul is singling out fathers. If he wanted to include both parents he did that in v. 1, if he wanted to mention both individually he did that in v. 2.

- It is your (Dads) responsibility to nourish your children!
- There is no exception clause. i.e. except when you are busy in seminary, except when you are busy “serving the Lord in ministry.”
- Might I suggest (based on the qualifications of an overseer), this is especially true if you are in or preparing for ministry.
- Your wife will spend more hours with your children, but you are responsible for the nourishment of your children even when you are not there!

Paul mentions two **methods** for nourishing our children. One is to be avoided, the other is God's prescribed method.

1. The first method you must avoid:

- μὴ παροργίζετε – (present active imperative) – “do not **exasperate/frustrate, discourage** Col. 3: 18 **your children to the point of anger.**”
 - i. Does not signify that this is something you are currently doing.
 - ii. Rather it signifies the critical need to avoid the regular practice.
- How do parents do this?
 - i. Inconsistency
 - ii. Favoritism
 - iii. Disproportional correction/discipline
 - iv. Few if any positive words of encouragement
 - v. Fathers = Too busy with other things in life to give them time, both:

- To enjoy the things they enjoy
 - a. Grown, educated man jumping up and down because your daughter poops!
 - b. Getting excited about the color of her dress, the picture on his new PJs.
- Not taking the time necessary to follow God's prescribed method.

2. God' prescribed method:

- **“Fathers, you must actively nourish your children with God's discipline and instruction.”**

ἀλλὰ - adversative, indicating a strong contrast in concepts.

ἐκτρέφετε – (present active imperative) – indicates an ongoing regular action in your life.

- The verb itself embodies the idea of a progressive ongoing action.
- To bring up from childhood, to nourish

ILL: The nourishment of a small sapling.

- You plant the small tree.
- You build up a mulch bed around it to give it support and help it stand.
- Not a day goes by without care and concern, checking on it progress.
- While it is still a sapling you can bend it and shape it.
- As it grows, it becomes stronger, less pliable and more independent of your aid.
- Once it is full grown the same action that would have helped shape and bend the small sapling will break off a branch.

ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νοουθεσίᾳ

- Datives of Manner – indicates the manner in which this nourishing is to be conducted. Answers the question, How?
- Both of these verbal nouns are connected to κυρίου – subjective genitive.
- “With the Lord's discipline.” “With the Lord's instruction.”
- Raises the standard.

You are God's representative in their lives – you are God to them. It is not your job to determine how to nourish your children. It is your job to find out how God says to do it and do it.

- Just this week, I was told for the 100th time in the last month, “you’ve got to find something that works.”
 - What does “work” mean?
 - Usually means compliant behavior. Doomed to inconsistency and frustration, both your own and your child’s.
 - God is looking for a changed heart. Consistent application of God’s method!

Your children will gain much of their initial understanding of Who God is and how He works (i.e. loves, corrects, disciplines, instructs) by how you do those things Dad!

Life is hard, life is busy but you are still responsible before God to nourish your children.

You have goals for school/training and ministry, but God will hold you responsible for the nourishment of your children.

You want to make an impact, you want to really “do something for God?” – nourish your children as God’s representative. They will go on after you and most of the other accomplishments you have made in life have been forgotten.

- “Your children are a message you send to a time you will never see.”

Proposition: Fathers and future fathers, if you are going to accomplish anything for God, you must nourish your children as God’s representative!