



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

**Sunday – September 28, 2008**

## Heart to Heart...

God puts the responsibility of training, teaching and discipline of our children directly on the shoulders of the father (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21). Fathers are required by God to make certain the direction of the home is set toward Him!

Someone stated, "I wish my children came with an instruction manual. It sure would be easier!" To those who think in these terms or have said this in the past, there is an instruction manual and it's called the word of God. The problem enters when parents do not apply the word of God to their lives (or spend time reading it) and the children are left to be directed by the world because the parents are being directed by the world! The greatest and foremost teaching from God in which fathers can train their children is teaching them reverence and respect for ALL authority. God's word begins with this thought (Genesis 3:1-3). The lack of respect and reverence for authority sent man into all sorts of evil by following their own desires and reasoning. When children have little respect for authority, their attitudes and desires will take them on a road of evil and harm. We have all seen it in front of our own eyes. A child in a public place (or even at home) where the parent tells the child to stop something or come to them and the child keeps right on going. No response to the authority of the parent and if they get a response, it's usually not the right one. A child is told "no" and they throw a screaming fit because of it. Both instances are a matter of respect for authority of the parent and if a child will do this to their parents, guess what is coming down the road? Fathers need to make certain their children respect authority but that means as a father you respect authority and that begins by respecting God's authority! Too many times parents "buy off" their children with promises of treats or things to get them to do what we say. Can you imagine God doing that to us? God tells us if we do not heed, it will cost us dearly. No buying off, just warning and instilling in our heart the price we will pay for lack of respect. Children need to be taught from an early age that the lack of respect and not heeding your voice will bring pain into their lives. It might do us good to read Hebrews 12:4-13 about the discipline of the Lord toward us who believe whenever we do not heed.

To train and teach our children to heed our voice and have a great respect for authority builds three key ingredients in their lives: (1) **Trust**. They know you will do as you say and trust your word. As they mature, they will realize you have their best interest at heart. (2) **Respect**. They will develop a respect and love for you knowing you are a person of your word. Respect comes with trust. (3) **Love**. They will grow into a deeper sense of love for you because of the respect and trust they have developed. If we look closely, these are the things we have between us and God and we are to lead our children into the heart of God.

*"Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding, for I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction."* (Proverbs 4:1-2) How many of us are teaching our children to respect and heed? Think about it!!!

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