

1 Timothy 3: 4 and 5; "With all Reverence", Sermon # 16
in the series on the Eldership, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on July 18th, 2010, In the Afternoon Worship Service.

We have been looking at what ruling one's own house will involve, and we have seen that it involves providing well materially and spiritually for your wife and children. It 2ndly requires a right understanding of submission by the candidate; of submission to God's Word and to God Himself before he can expect it of others in the church. This understanding of submission is necessary lest the man become a tyrant in the way that he goes about to lead others and teach others. Without a Biblical view of submission, he may become very demanding of other people and want to Lord it over their faith. Then 3rdly, ruling one's own house also requires the ability to confront and when necessary, to cross or displease those children whom you love, for the purpose of securing their submission to God's Word. And lastly, ruling one's house well involves establishing a reverence or a dignity in the outworking of this submission. The phrase reads – "Having his children in submission with all reverence." The King James reads – "Having his children in subjection with all gravity." The NAS reads, "Keeping his children under control with all dignity." The parallel passage in Titus 1: 6 states – "having faithful children, not accused of dissipation (that is; debauchery or incorrigibility) or insubordination"(that is; rebellion). Incorrigible means, "to be beyond any hope of reform or improvement in conduct." To lead a dissipated life is to squander or waste what is given to you. It is to be a prodigal child. To be insubordinate is to be disobedient or unruly; one who will not submit to authority. Matthew Poole has interesting words on these verses in Titus 1: 6 – "Having faithful children – He says, "having also a religious family, children that are believers or at least honest in a moral sense." Concerning the words "not unruly" – he says, "those who are not sons of Belial, ungoverned, disorderly persons, like soldiers who will not keep their ranks, or rather like cattle untamed, that will not endure any yoke." "Objection – But why must none be put into the ministry that have such children?" "The fathers may be good men, though the children be bad." "Solution: 1st - Because the honor and repute of the church is more to be regarded than the interest of any private person." "2nd – Because it is an ill-sign that the parents of such children have not ruled their own houses well, keeping their children in all subjection and gravity under authority, and are therefore very unfit to rule the greater society of the church."

There is a dignity and a reverence with which a father rules his household. And that dignity and that reverence are communicated to the children by the father's words and actions as he represents to his children the holy regard he has for God's righteousness and God's truth. The children as they look at their father ought to be able to see not only the goodness of God, but they ought to be able to also catch the indignant flash of fire in his eye, of God's holy hatred of sin, and of

God's determination to deal with it. God is not to be mocked, and therefore the father's words and expectations, on God's behalf, toward his children ought not to be mocked. In the days of the Law of Moses the recourse was quite shocking. Turn with me to Deuteronomy 21: 18. It says here: "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 who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city." "And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.'" "Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear." And we find that even God Himself promised to step in to deal with such mocking. Turn over to Proverbs 30, verse 17. "The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it." But a loving father greatly desires to see his children do the right thing. He will not leave the child to himself to figure out the meaning of life, or what God expects. He will teach them to reverence the Lord – to fear the Lord.

There are 5 ways and things that a father will teach his children. 1st – A godly father will teach his children by word and precept. Look at Psalm 34: 11. "Come you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." "Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?" "Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit." "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." "The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." The godly father will set before his children the way and the principles of life and death; good and evil in both speech and conduct. 2nd, He will teach them with discipline and the rod. Look at Proverbs 29: 15. "The rod and the rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother." And verse 17 – "Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul." Look at Proverbs 22: 15. "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him." And when the godly father has to discipline his son or daughter, he will explain to them their offense against God or the rule of the house which has been broken which is based upon God's moral law and His revealed will. He will then lovingly and firmly correct them with an appropriately administered spanking. But he will also express his love for them and share the gospel with them and plead with them. Look at Proverbs 27: 11. "My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him who reproaches me." He will not only tell them of where they are wrong, he will plead with them to trust in Christ so that their heart will be changed. 3rdly, a godly father will teach them that reverence is always good. Look at Proverbs 28: 14. "Happy is the man who is always reverent, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity." To be reverent to show a real consideration for how God would have you to think; when you go about to say things the things that

you say, and to do the things that you do. A father will be concerned for this, to see this developed in his children, hopefully by the grace of Christ, and not simply by outward instruction. He prays that God would reveal Himself to His children and teach them by His good Spirit Himself. O for saving grace to be given to them, he prays.

4thly – He will teach them to confess their sins and to pray to Christ. Proverbs 28: 13 – "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." And John 6: 37 – "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." And Matthew 11: 28 – "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Oh fathers teach them that Jesus is this way. Show them how willing He is to undertake to be their Savior and to give them grace so that the burden and guilt of sin will all be taken away! Show them that God's salvation is based not upon the Law and the efforts that they make to do what is right. It is based upon the grace of Christ and what He has already worked out in His righteousness. And then 5thly – The godly father will show them what will please him and make him glad. Proverbs 23: 22 – "Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old." "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding." "The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will delight in him." Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her who bore you rejoice." "My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways." This is what will make him glad. The object of all of his efforts with his children, as a father, is to lead them to reverence the Lord. Whatever dignity and reverence and honor are due to us as fathers is simply a result of the position which God has put us in – To communicate the importance of their submission to God. When they submit us, they are submitting to God when we faithfully communicate by precept and discipline, and example, what God expects of them and what He is like.

Now we never ought to suggest, in all these efforts, that submission is to be seen as salvation. A child can be very compliant and even submissive to the outward eye, and yet still be in rebellion against God in his or her heart. To that child, there is still no need to have Christ save him or her; still no love to God and to Christ pre-eminently, because of what He undertook for sinners at the cross. But nevertheless it is a good thing for a child to learn submission even before conversion; to have the outward submission, and for the father to keep teaching the need of a new heart and the new birth through Christ. Let us, as father, when we teach and expect submission, keep preaching to our children their need of Christ and conversion. Let us not only expect submission, but pray for God's powerful working in their heart and mind to show them their need of Christ to have eternal life and in order to please God. The man who would be an elder now understands what is involved in shepherding the church of God. It is to so feed the

flock; it is to so preach and to so counsel; to so portray what it means to reverence God, that all will know and submit to God. Let us pray for this reverence to be seen in each of our lives. May God grant it to His glory.