



Date: May 4, 2025

Speaker: Sam Rainer

Series: Home is Where the Heart Is

Message: Tiny Teachers

Reflect:

- Share one surprising life-lesson you have learned from a child (your own or someone else's). How did that lesson shape you as an adult?
- Reflect on this question: "If I were to ask your kids what you are most passionate about, what would they say?" Answer that question honestly. What do you hope they would say instead?

Encounter:

- Read Proverbs 22:6 aloud. What does "the right path" look like in today's culture? How does the proverb's general promise differ from an absolute guarantee?
- In Ephesians 6:4 Paul addresses "fathers/parents." What is the balance between the negative command ("do not provoke") and the positive command ("bring them up...") in practical terms? How does seeing both parts keep us from lopsided parenting?
- Reflect on the apostles' courageous obedience despite danger from Acts 4-6. What parallels can you draw between their courage and the courage parents need to raise God-centered children today?

Transform:

- Which pressure weighs on you more right now—external cultural expectations (“be nice, be happy, be safe”) or internal child-centered pressure? What one change could you make this week to keep Christ at the center of your family?
- Healthy families build a healthy church. What specific practices could our group adopt (e.g., mentoring parents, child-friendly service projects, scripture memory challenges) to help one another disciple the next generation?

Related Passages:

- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9** | Foundation for family discipleship—parents impress God’s commands “when you sit, walk, lie down, rise.”
- **Colossians 3:20-21** | Parallel to Eph 6:4; warns against discouraging children and stresses obedience “in the Lord.”
- **Hebrews 12:9-11** | God’s loving discipline as a model for parental discipline that “produces a harvest of righteousness.”
- **Psalms 127:3-5** | Children as a heritage and reward—grounds the “blessing” language of the sermon.
- **Matthew 18:1-6** | Jesus elevates child-like faith and warns against causing little ones to stumble—reinforces a God-centered, not child-adoring, perspective.
- **Proverbs 20:5** | Reminds parents to “draw out” deep waters of wisdom in a child’s heart, echoing the sermon’s call to ask probing questions.

Interesting Facts and Tidbits:

- **“Fathers” = patéres** – In Koine Greek the word can mean both biological fathers and parents collectively, underscoring that either parent (or any guardian) can fulfill Ephesians 6:4.

- **Hebrew Education** – First-century Jewish boys began memorizing Torah by age five; The idea that children “can grasp Scripture” echoes this ancient expectation.
- **Self-control vs. Self-esteem** – Modern psychology links higher self-control in childhood to better life outcomes (the “Marshmallow Test”), aligning with the sermon’s call to prioritize discipline that leads to holiness over mere confidence.
- **“Tiny Teachers” Theme** – Early Church fathers like Augustine observed that parenting sanctifies parents; the sermon echoes this by calling children “tiny teachers” who shape us as much as we shape them.

Additional Discussion Questions:

- Where have you seen the line blur between courage and recklessness (in yourself or your kids)? How can the gospel recalibrate that balance?
- What practical habits help you say a meaningful “no” and stick to it?
- How might supporting outside authority figures (teachers, coaches) prepare children to recognize godly versus ungodly authority later in life?