

“Obey and Honor Your Father and Mother” - Ephesians 6:1-3 – July 22nd, 2018

- The title of today's teaching is “Obey and Honor Your Father and Mother.”
 - I suppose you could subtitle today's teaching, The Difficulty of Parenting, because parenting is one of the hardest things to do.
 - Actually, I have started and owned businesses, planted and pastored churches, but nothing is harder than parenting children.
- This is one of those places in God's Word where we need to have a little of the back-story of sorts to better understand the text.
- The book of Ephesians is actually a letter, or if you prefer, epistle, that the Apostle Paul wrote under the Holy Spirit's inspiration.
- As such, it would have been sent to and read aloud in the church, in which the children were present during the reading of it.
- The reason I mention this is that there's a time when a family should worship together sitting under the teaching of God's Word.
- While I realize this isn't age appropriate for the younger children, it's a disservice to our older children who aren't in the service.
- It's my belief that this is one of the main reasons children will disenfranchise themselves from the church when they are older.
- Sadly, the statistics bear this out when according to one source, 59% of millennials who grew up in church have dropped out.
- What makes these statistics so disturbing is millennials are currently the largest living generation in the United States today.
- Please know that this isn't the only reason this generation is not in church, I believe it's also a prophetic sign of the last days.
- 2 Timothy 3:1-4 - 1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—
- Lest we throw up our hands in despair and hopelessness, let me hasten to say that there is always hope and our text is proof.
- This because, the Apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit provides us with three very convincing reasons for children to obey parents.
- It's my hope that as we go through this we'll all have renewed hope that our children whether young or older will heed this word.
- The first convincing reason for children to obey their parents in the Lord is because it's the right thing to do as unto the Lord.
- In other words, to do what's right brings the blessing of God into the life of the child who obeys their parents for that reason.
- The problem even for parents is that we tie the hands of God's blessing on our lives with the ropes of disobedience in our lives.
- The second convincing reason for children to obey and honor their father and mother is things will go well for them in their lives.
- I find it interesting that Paul quotes the fifth commandment, which is the only of the Ten Commandments that has a promise.
- The reason I find this interesting is because, in scripture, the number five is the number of grace and grace changes everything.
- The third convincing reason is not only will the blessing and grace of God be on their lives, but they'll enjoy a long life as well.
- An enjoyable and long life is a life that isn't cut short unnecessarily due to the child disobeying and dishonoring their parents.
- This carries with it the idea of someone in battle disobeying orders meant to protect and direct only to have it cost him his life.
- Proverbs 30:17 speaks to this untimely death in a very graphic way concerning disobedience, “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.”
- Now I am keenly aware that all of this brings up questions as it relates to obedience to and honoring of the father and mother.
- If you'll kindly indulge me for the remainder of our time together, I will provide a biblical answer to two often-asked questions.
- However, it's important to understand that this is in no way an exhaustive attempt at what is arguably a very difficult subject.
- The first question, which is a very important one, is that of whether or not children are to obey an abusive parent. Answer-NO!
- Perhaps it goes without saying, but it is never okay for a parent to abuse a child, and any parent who does will answer to God.
- Also a child should never obey a parent if doing so means they would be disobeying God, which is why Paul says, “in the Lord.”
- The second question is that of the difference between respecting your father and mother, and honoring your father and mother.
- At the risk of an oversimplification, honor is given whereas respect is earned in the sense that they're authority is to be honored.
- This means we're to still show them honor in their position of authority, even though they haven't earned our respect as well.
- One commentator explained it this way, “What it means to honor our father and mother may change as we grow into adulthood, but the principle always endures. The adult child does not owe the parent obedience, but they do owe the parent honor.
- One more thought on this before we bring it to a close, and it's that of the “why” children obeying their parents is so important.
- First, I would suggest there are two reasons for this, one of which is spiritual and the second, which is a physiological reason.
- Like Jesus, Who was one with the Father, so too are we spiritually connected to and reflective of our father and our mother.
- When disobey and dishonor our parents, we do so to our own peril because of our spiritual reflection and connection to them.
- Just as there's a spiritual connection, so too is there a physical, emotional, and physiological connection genetically to them.
- When we dishonor them, we dishonor ourselves, made in their image, and it takes its toll on us, and will negatively impact us.
- I want to close with Luke 2:51-52 because it's a fascinating account of Jesus submitting to his parents, “Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.