

# The Responsibility of the Children

## Ephesians 6:1-3

This is Mother's Day, but this message will be more inclusive of the entire family, and not just entirely focused on mothers. There will be an emphasis on mothers throughout, but understand the text is dealing more with the children than it is the parents.

This text deals with two main points: Obedience to parents while at home and honoring parents when we get older. We'll honor them while at home when we willingly obey them, but when we get away from home, we will honor them, no matter what they do.

Several boys were playing marbles. In the midst of their sport, the rain began to fall. Freddie S. stopped, and said, "Boys, I must go home; mother said I must not go out in the rain."

"Your mother, fudge! The rain won't hurt you any more than it will us," said two or three voices at once. Freddie turned upon them with a look of pity, and the courage of a hero, and replied, "I'll not disobey my mother for any of you!"

## I. RESPONSIBILITY #1 - OBEY YOUR PARENTS - VS. 1

### A. *It's a command - "obey"*

Indicates a child recognizes authority, and submission.

Proverbs 1:8

<sup>8</sup> My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 6:20

<sup>20</sup> My son, keep thy father's commandment, and

forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 23:22

<sup>22</sup> Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

Luke 2:51

<sup>51</sup> And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

Colossians 3:20

<sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

### ***B. It's specific - "your parents"***

Indicates the child recognizes the proper authority in respect to submission.

If we don't teach our children to obey, then we will lose our children.

Some parents say: "We will not influence our children in making choices and decisions in matters of religion!"

But why not?

The ads will!

The press will!

The movies will!

The neighbors will!

The forces of sin will!

The politicians will!

We use our influence over flowers, vegetables, cattle, etc. Shall we ignore our own children? May God

forgive us if we do!

### **C. *It's to have the right motivation - "In the Lord"***

1. If we teach our children to obey us "in the Lord," or give them the proper motivation, then they will be less likely to disobey us.

Colossians 3:16-17

<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Colossians 3:23-24

<sup>23</sup> And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

<sup>24</sup> Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

2. We're to obey our parents "unless they require of you things forbidden by the Lord. Our duty to Christ is superior, and if parents require us to disobey Him, we must still be loyal to Him. This passage has been thought to imply that all children of Christians are baptized in infancy into the church, but the children addressed are surely not babes, but old enough to hear and obey the apostolic command, and hence old enough to have heard and obeyed Christ" (The People's New Testament, B.W. Johnson).

### 1 Corinthians 15:58

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

#### ***D. It's to be done for the right reason - "for this is right"***

The only time in the Bible the phrase "for this is right" is used is here. It demonstrates that one of the basic principles of a child's life is to be obedient to parents because it is simply the right thing to do. "[I]t means that which is expected as duty and which is claimed as a right because of one's conformity to the rules of God or society" (Zodhiates).

### Psalm 19:8

<sup>8</sup> The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

### Psalm 119:75

<sup>75</sup> I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

### Hosea 14:9

<sup>9</sup> Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

### 1 Timothy 5:4

<sup>4</sup> But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

## **II. RESPONSIBILITY #2 - HONOR YOUR FATHER**

## **AND MOTHER**

It doesn't say "parents" as in verse 1, but rather it is specific and dynamic - "father and mother." There may be times when one parent may or may not be saved, or even moral, but we're to honor BOTH our father and our mother, both of them, both alike -- no matter what. We don't have to like what they are, but we better honor them.

### Exodus 20:12

<sup>12</sup> Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

### Leviticus 19:3

<sup>3</sup> Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.

### Leviticus 19:32

<sup>32</sup> Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.

### Proverbs 20:20

<sup>20</sup> Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

### Matthew 15:4

<sup>4</sup> For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

## **A. It's a command - "honor"**

"Honor" defined - it comes from a word that means precious or esteemed especially dear. No matter whether our parents are Christian or not, no matter whether they've abused us or not, no matter whether they're right with God or not, we're to consider them precious

in the sight of God (in the very basic sense of His love for them, if for no other reason). What better way to show to a lost parent the gift of Christ's love and forgiveness than to show our parents they're precious to us?!

A Harvard University study found that 6 of every 10 juvenile delinquents had fathers who drank to excess; many had mothers who did the same; 3 out of 4 lacked parental interest or discipline; and 4 out of 5 had parents who took no interest in their friends or amusements. Many wayward children came from broken homes, and few had religious training of any kind.

We, as Christian children, no matter our age, no matter our upbringing, can overcome those types of statistics, in spite of the way we were raised. And, we can recognize our parents as deserving of our honor, with the hope of influencing them for good. We don't have to agree with their lifestyle, but we are biblically duty-bound to esteem them as dear.

***B. It's got a promise attached to it in two parts:***

1. "That it may be well with thee" - in life, our actions and attitudes towards our parents will have a direct result on how "well" we do in life -- physically, spiritually, mentally, and financially.

Deuteronomy 4:40

<sup>40</sup> Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth,

which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

### Deuteronomy 5:16

<sup>16</sup> Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

### Deuteronomy 6:3

<sup>3</sup> Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

2. "Thou mayest live long on the earth" - it is apparent here that we can control our life span to some degree, and that our actions in life will, in a great way, decide how long we live.

When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years. --  
Mark Twain

Conclusion: It's a simple principle -- obey your parents (especially while at home, as well as when we get older), and honor both of them, both alike (consider them as a precious jewel). If we do this, we'll prosper and live long (in comparison to those who are disobedient and dishonoring).

What kind of a child are we?

Here is a story that may not show obedience to

parents or honoring them, but it shows what being a submissive child means, and what can happen if children do what they're told:

The story is told by a minister of a church Moody visited years before. The fame of Moody was far and wide and when it was announced that the well-known evangelist was coming, thousands came to hear. One evening a little boy came alone to the door of the large church. The usher at the door stopped the small dirty ragged boy and told him that he should go home and be in bed. When the boy explained that he wanted to see Mr. Moody the usher refused to let him come in. The little boy, downcast and disappointed, walked to the side of the building and began to weep. Just then a carriage came to the church entrance and Moody moved toward the door. He heard the crying and saw the little boy leaning against the wall. Moody walked over to him and asked his trouble. The boy looked up and explained how he wanted to hear Mr. Moody but wasn't allowed inside. Moody smiled and said, "Do you really want to hear Mr. Moody?" "Yes, Sir!" was the reply. "Well, I know how to get you in, but you have to do exactly what I tell you to." The little boy said, "I will." So, putting his coattails in the hands of the boy, Moody told him to hold on to them and not let loose until he told him to. Moody entered the building and walked to the platform. Reaching the pulpit, he said, "Well done. I told you that if you would only hold on you would get in. Now, my boy, you sit there." Moody put him on the chair reserved for himself and for the evening the boy listened to the great preacher. The minister who told the story said, "I know the story is true for it happened in my church. Yes, I know it's true because I was that little boy. I heard the great D. L. Moody

preach, but little did I know when I clung to his coattails that someday I would become the minister of that same church."

(As told by Paul Rader, Preacher & Evangelist (America's first Radio Preacher – he was pastor of Moody Church from 1915-1921)