

Family Series Part 1 (Adolescence and Obedience)

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Ephesians 6:1-4 Series

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Bible Text: Ephesians 6:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:1-2

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Let's open up our Bible to the book of Ephesians chapter six. In the past few weeks I have been speaking on the responsibility of fathers and mothers to teach their children. Now we are going to be looking at some of the things regarding the children. We are going to kind of make a general course of these studies and then hopefully go back and be much more specific and detailed in the commandments of God regarding our responsibility in our homes.

If you would stand, we will read from God's Word Ephesians chapter six.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.¹

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, I come before you this day and I pray that you would work in the hearts of the fathers, the hearts of the mothers and the hearts of the children. Lord, that you would bring families back together, that you would correct our priorities. Oh God, make every man in this place, make his wife his priority and every wife her husband. Make the parents see that their children are precious among the most and greatest gifts of God and help the children to honor, to respect, to even reverence their parents. Oh God, let us be godly where godliness truly matters. In Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. Thank you.

I have to begin with something of an introduction. This is not going to be a children bashing hour. The greatest gifts I count among the greatest gifts of my life are my

¹ Ephesians 6:1-4.

children. They are more important to me than my ministry. Just so you know. They are more important to me. The only person that has priority on the face of the earth over my children would, of course, be my wife and she has more importance to me than the ministry.

You say, “Well, seek ye first the kingdom of God.”

I am. If I was a single man I would say different things, but in the providence of God, God has given me a wife and in the providence of God he has given me children and therefore to seek first the kingdom of God is not to do anything other than obey God. And obedience, according to the Scriptures begins with my wife and my children.

Children, this is for you. It is not against you. This is for you. This is so that your life will be blessed. I am reminded of a passage of Scripture from which I taught last week. Just listen for a moment, Deuteronomy.

“O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.”²

You think, children, that when commands and wisdom and principles and precepts are set before you that it is somehow to mark out your life, to limit it, to destroy it, to burden you. Do you really have such concepts of God? Do you not know that all these things are written? They are written for you. Will you hear? Will you listen?

You say, “Well, I will listen just as much as my dad listened to your last sermon.”

Ok. There is no hope for you.

You see, this is not about what someone else does. This is not even about what your parents do. This is about you before your God. You may come from a home that is so messed up it couldn't find a biblical precept in the book of Proverbs. You may come from an abusive relationship. You may come from all sorts of things because I am not going to kid you. Families are messed up and families in this church are messed up.

But this is not about you responding to someone else. This is about you responding to God. Will you obey him, children? Will you obey God? This is not so much a question about will you obey your parents, but will you obey God for the sake of God?

Now let's look at this text.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”³

² Deuteronomy 6:3.

³ Ephesians 6:1.

Children. What are children? It is a good question. I mean, if we are going to study this passage of Scripture, we need to define our terminology. What are children?

According to the Scriptures children refers to those who are still living under the authority and the care of their parents. If that defines you, whether physically, emotionally, spiritually and economically, then you are a child because that is what a child is, some one who is still living under the authority of their father and mother and being cared for by their father and mother.

Now what is an adult? An adult is best defined in Genesis chapter two verse 24. This is what it says:

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”⁴

Now it says that he shall leave his father and his mother. This word in the Hebrew means to leave or let go, to loose, to set free. You are an adult when you have set yourself free from the authority and care of your father and your mother. When you set yourself free and become independent of your father and your mother, first of all, physically, physically able to do that, emotionally. You have grown to such a degree of character and virtue that you can stand on your own. Spiritually, if you are a Christian, you have studied the Word of God. You know his precepts. You are able to branch out on your own under God’s authority. And this is always the tell tale sign in our culture, financially. You break free from your Father and your mother and you are no longer a burden to them. Then you are an adult.

Now, one of the greatest problems in American households today is this. And if I say it is a problem among the children I want you to know that it first started among the parents, but this is the number one possible problem in households today regarding parent, children relationships and it is this. Children want to be recognized. They want to have the authority and the rights of an adult without being willing or without being able to assume the responsibility. You want your independence. You want to be free. You want to make your own decisions, do your own things, decide everything about yourself, but you are unable. You are simply unable physically, emotionally, spiritually economically to make those types of decisions.

Now I want to go on. There is one thing that is very important here that I want you to see, because there are certain teachings that are so... they call themselves strict and biblical, but they are not. They will take a passage like this, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord,”⁵ and I know many organizations that teach, ok, I am Paul Washer. I am 43 years old. I direct a mission organization. I should still obey my parents because that is what the Bible says.

⁴ Genesis 2:24.

⁵ Ephesians 6:1.

Now notice what it says. It doesn't say, "Adults, obey your children in the Lord." It says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord."⁶

Now, this is very, very important. Now as a man I am to honor, to respect, even reverence my parents. According to 1 Timothy chapter five verse four, I am to even care for my parents financially, physically and every sort of way in their elder years. I am to do that. But the moment I leave my father and my mother as a man and I go out and create a new family unit, being married, I have, indeed, created a new family unit. That is my house. It is not my dad's house. It is not my mother's house. It is my house. And when a woman in marriage, her hand is given by her father to the hand of her husband she comes under a new head and that is her house. It is not her mother's house. It is not her father's house. It is her husband's house and her house.

Now why am I saying all this? Because it is very, very important that you understand that there is a big issue here of leaving and cleaving in adulthood. And when you leave, you must leave. The most important person in my life is not my mother. The most important person in my life is my wife. I will honor my mother. I will give my life for her and I will care for her in her old age, but I am a new family unit. And that is very, very important because if you never make that break, your family will never be established. And there will never be the proper love and proper channels of authority that ought to be there. That is one thing that is very, very important.

Now children, according to the Scriptures, I want you to see something. You have two choices in the Lord. One is to live in joyful, loving, reverent submission to your parents or to leave the care of your parents and form a new family unit.

But the Bible admonishes you never to do that until it is time and until you are prepared in character and virtue and godliness.

Now I want us to look at something that is very, very important, extremely important. I am spending a lot of time on this because there is so much wrong thinking.

Now, when a person reaches a certain age, a child, they reach a certain age, desires begin to spring forth when they are 11, 12, 13, 14, desires of independence, desires of discovering who they are.

Now in our society today that is almost like a switch that turns on or that is a signal that those children should now start to seek to live independently of their mother and their father. No, that is not what that is at all. What it is, it is a signal. When a child reaches a certain age in which they start feeling the desire of independence, they begin to feel the desire to be their own person, it is a signal, not for them to become independent, but it is a signal for them to start preparing themselves in their character and godliness so that one day they can become independent. When you start feeling these desires to be your own person it does not mean you have the right to break away from mom and dad. It means,

⁶ Ibid.

more than ever, you should cleave to them and begin to grow in character and in godliness and in virtue so that you, indeed, can become a virtuous adult.

Now this is very, very important because it also works with regard to when a young person begins to recognize there are other young people on the face of the earth of the opposite sex. Now first of all every parent should know that we are not to awaken love until it is time. And because of all of the conversations you allow your children to have and the television you allow them to watch and the things you allow them to participate in, you, parents, have awakened love or allowed it to be awakened in your children long before it should be because you are not biblical and you are not wise. That is just the truth.

But when love awakes in the heart of a child, when these romantic interests awake, let's say 12, 13, 14, whenever, everyone in our society today believes, well, that is a sign. Let them start thinking about boys. Let them start thinking about girls. Let them date.

You did not get that from the Bible. What it means when these interests awake, we should not suppress them. We should not call them bad, for, indeed, they are not. What we should do is teach our children these are signs. These are signals that you need to begin now for the next several years preparing yourself in godliness and in virtue so that one day you might be able to enter into a relationship that won't turnout to be a disaster like 75 percent of them in the world and just as many in the so-called church.

Now I must make a comment here about a thing called adolescence. Adolescence is basically defined as that period of time between childhood and adulthood. Most teenagers here do not consider themselves to be children, but they consider themselves to be adolescents. It is a time, supposedly, when people, when young people begin to feel their need for independence, their need for self discovery and it is usually kind of a riotous, difficult time in the household. I want you to know that adolescence is a very, very modern day invention. It is a theory based upon a false evolutionary model of human development. It is not biblical and it is not scientific, but it has reaped absolute havoc on families.

Now my definition of adolescence is a little bit different. It goes something like this. That period of time when a young person wants to have all the privileges and rights of an adult, but they do not have the ability nor the willingness to assume the responsibilities.

Now adolescence, this entire doctrine, and that is what I am going to call it, because it is a false doctrine. This doctrine of adolescence, what has it done? It has done so much damage.

First of all, it provides an excuse for rebellion and immaturity. It provides an excuse.

Well, my child is rebelling now.

Well, how old is your child?

Thirteen.

Well, of course, they are going to rebel. They are an adolescent.

You won't find that written in old books. It provides an excuse.

So many times when I am counseling people I have to be very, very careful, because I am aware that there can be certain medical conditions in a person's life. But do you know what is amazing? So many times when a person has something that is affecting their character, affecting their lifestyle, affecting the way they are act, when it is somehow diagnosed as a medical problem they become worse. You want to know why. Because now they have an excuse for why they are the way they are.

Now I am not denying that there cannot be medical problems and things like that. But what I am saying this is the tendency of human nature to grab a hold of something and then have an excuse for why we do not have certain virtuous character traits in our lives. And that is what adolescence has done. It has given an excuse for rebellion. It has given an excuse for self will. It has given an excuse for a lack of submission and honor and reverence and all sorts of other things.

I want you to know that adolescence is simply not recognized in Scripture, nor has it been recognized through the greater part, almost all of the greater part of human history.

Now another thing. It leads to a retardation of maturity. When we say that there is such a stage as adolescence, it leads to a retardation of maturity.

Now, in most tribes today, in most civilizations down through history and not just South America, Africa, but in civilizations eastern, western European, Asian, all over usually a young man or a boy move from childhood to adulthood somewhere around the age of 12. Somewhere around the age of 12 he could start almost becoming independent from his parents. He could assume the responsibility of agriculture or of a part of the business. He could even.... it is just a few years from that date even take upon himself a wife.

But look at our society. Because of this thing called adolescence, we enter into this period. We go from boy to adolescence, but no one seems to be getting into manhood anymore, because we are getting into the 30s and 40s and still acting like children.

Whenever a lot of times back home I will bring into my fellowship young men who either they don't have a father or their father is in the same house, but he is not really a father, and I will bring him into my life and I will take him hunting. I will do things with him out in the shop, but the first thing we do when we sit down together is this. I say, "How old are you?"

You say, "Fourteen."

Ok. I am going to treat you like a man, just like a man. And I am going to expect you to act just like a man.

Do you know the amazing thing? They do. They do. That is the most amazing thing and that is the thing that we are losing.

What we have got going on here is we have got this period. It seems like it just... adolescence keeps growing and growing. Now it seems to have gone, you know, it starts out five years then 10. Now it seems like I see people that have been in this thing for 20, 25 years of wanting to have the rights and privileges of an adult, but they are not willing to assume the responsibility thereof. And so that has nothing to do with what the Bible teaches us.

Now I want us to go on. It says:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”⁷

Now in Colossians 3:20 it says, “Be obedient to your parents in all things.”⁸

Now, before we go into this I want to look at something. I realize I am teaching to a culture that is marked by havoc in the household, a culture where disruption between parent and child is quite common, a culture that because of these signs demonstrates it is under the judgment of almighty God.

Now I want you to listen to Romans 1:28-30.

“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer...”⁹

Does that make you think of anything close to us like our entire culture?

“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer...”¹⁰

Especially in education.

“...God gave them over to a depraved mind...”¹¹

God did it in judgment. A culture, a society does not want to acknowledge God, God gives them over to their lordship of themselves. They are then governed not by a holy, just, wise, loving God. They are governed by their own corrupt heart that has the potential of a Hitler.

⁷ Ephesians 6:1.

⁸ Colossians 3:20.

⁹ Romans 1:28.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

It says:

“...God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper.”¹²

Now notice in Ephesians 6:1 it says:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”¹³

Young people, many of you think it is not that proper or right to obey your parents. It is old fashioned. You are demonstrating that you are under the judgment of God because he says:

“...God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness.”¹⁴

Every form of everything that contradicts the character and the will of God, “wickedness, greed, envy, evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents...”¹⁵

You know, they say that birds of a feather flock together. And you can know someone by who they hang around with. This disobedient to parents, look what it is hanging around with.

“...wickedness, greed, evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God...”¹⁶

Disobedience to parents is a bad thing. It is in the same list as murder.

One of the most terrifying things that you can ever do is disobey your parents.

You say, “Brother Paul, are you trying to scare us?”

Yes. I am. There are some things that even a man like myself ought to be afraid of. It will save your life. Fear is a great life saver.

Now 2 Timothy 3:1-2, it says:

“But realize this, that in the last days [this terrible times difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents...”¹⁷

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ephesians 6:1.

¹⁴ Romans 1:28-29.

¹⁵ Romans 1:29-30.

¹⁶ Ibid.

A sign of the last days, a sign of the let loose of John said that there are many antichrists.

This is a horrid thing. It is not some tiny thing. It is a horrid thing to live in a culture that is marked by the children's disobedience to their parents is to recognize we live in a culture that is under the judgment of almighty God.

Now the word "obey" is a very interesting word. It is translated to listen, to hearken to, to obey. But the word is best illustrated by this. When let's say that you are laying on the floor and you hear a knock at the door and you jump up immediately to answer the door. That is what it is talking about. It is used of a porter or a doorman who sees someone coming or hears a knock and quickly opens the door. It is talking about an obedient, not only obedient response, but a quick obedience, a prompt obedience, a willing, voluntary obedience, a thing that is done with gusto. It is done quickly. It is done without dragging the feet.

Does that describe your relationship with your parents' commands? Because when God says, "Obey your parents," He is not just speaking about, oh, mom. He is talking about if you are going to do it right, it is a quick and prompt obedience.

Now also notice that the verb is in a present tense imperative in the Greek which indicates a continuous action. It is talking about a habitual lifestyle of obeying the parents.

You see, you read in your New Testament there in English:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord."¹⁸

But what he is saying to us is, "Children, God is demanding of you a habitual lifestyle of practicing obedience unto the Lord."

Now we get to Colossians 3:20. Remember what I said that it says. It says:

"Children, be obedient to your parents in all things."¹⁹

Obey your parents in absolutely everything.

Now, I love the wonderful question that I always get when I teach on this passage. Some kids tense up and goes, "Well, what if my dad wants me to make a nuclear warhead and blow up the Empire State building. Am I supposed to obey him?"

Let me ask you a question. When was the last time your dad asked you to do that? Because maybe we ought to call the authorities.

¹⁷ 2 Timothy 3:1-2.

¹⁸ Ephesians 6:1.

¹⁹ Colossians 3:20.

Your dad has never asked you to do that. Your problem is not with the fact that your dad is an international terrorist. Your problem is you do not want to do the simple commands laid out by your mother and your father. It is not a great philosophical issue about the virtue of taking out the trash.

Now I just want to stop back for a moment. I said that funny. I was hoping you would laugh. But just look for a moment. One act of not taking out the trash when you are commanded to is sin and without the blood of Christ you would go to hell for that one thing. That is how much God hates it.

Think about it. You see, sin is sin, folks. It doesn't matter how you dress it up. Sin is sin.

You say, "Well."

I remember this one pastor one time he asked his little boy to pick up some paper there in the middle of the floor. The little boy didn't do it, popped him on the bottom. Said, "I love you, son, but this has to happen. You have to learn. You don't disobey authority." Hugged him again after the little boy cried a bit. Mom came in and said, "I can't believe that you popped him on the bottom just because he wouldn't pick up a piece of paper."

The pastor said, "Darling, that is not the issue. He rebelled against authority. The paper is not the issue. The authority is the issue."

Now, I can tell you the degree to which your heart is rebellious. I can do this with your parents. I can do it with me. But today I am doing it with you, children. If the moment you hear, "Children, be obedient to your parents in all things,"²⁰ if at that moment in your mind already you are generating excuses and reasons why this verse doesn't work all the time, you are demonstrating what kind of heart you truly have. You are doing these same thing that is always done, loopholes, reasons not to obey, reasons to justify your own sin and rebellion against God.

Now, you say, "But, how does this work? Literally, what if my parents tell me to do something that is not ethical or that is not..? What are the rules? What does he mean by, 'Obey your parents in everything'?"

Well, you obey your parents in everything that is not countered by a higher authority over your parents. Let me give you an example.

In Acts 5:29:

"But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."²¹

²⁰ Colossians 3:20.

²¹ Acts 5:29.

Now be very careful here. If your dad tells you to take out the trash, don't try to use this verse, because you are claiming special revelation and I am sure God did not give it to you for this particular case.

He is talking about breaking direct commands. And then it goes on and it also tells us that a government correctly administered in Romans 13:1:

“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”²²

You are to obey your parents in absolutely everything except those things which might contradict and surely contradict a higher authority. And that is usually not the problem, because what do you wrangle most about? The virtues of a just war? No. Taking out the trash, what you watch on television, how much television you watch, whether or not you do your school work. Most importantly, once you are in your teenage years, who are you hanging around with, what are you doing, what kind of clothes do you wear, what kind of music.

Everything that you will fight tooth and nail on, that things so small could be more important to you than living in obedience to God and having his blessing upon your life is amazing.

Now how much does God... I want to write hate, but I put abhor because it is a little bit stronger. How much does God abhor disobedience of children?

I want to read a passage in Deuteronomy 21:18 through 21.

If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. "They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear."²³

Now I am not saying that this should be practiced at High Point, although I am sure I would have some parents volunteering. But what I do want you to see is this. Rebellion in the home is so dangerous to not only the individual, but the home and not only to the home, but society itself, that it was to be purged from the land completely. That is how horrid it is.

Now, children, let's talk for a minute. Some of you who are teenagers feel real uncomfortable with that term, but that is what you are. I know that you look around you

²² Romans 13:1.

²³ Deuteronomy 21:18-21.

and you see failure everywhere. You might even see it in your mom and your dad, things they do that you might think are unjust. You know whether they are biblical or not when they leave these doors. They themselves know.

Let me tell you something. If you spend the rest of your life making excuses for your disobedience, using other people's disobedience, you will be destroyed, your life will end in destruction. I can't obey the Lord simply because other people do and I don't have an excuse not to obey God just because my parents have dropped the ball. Maybe your mom has not spent a great deal of her time teaching you, training you, loving you, spending time with you. That is wrong. Maybe your dad doesn't spend much time with you. That is a sin. But that maybe he is hard, maybe he is cruel, maybe he loses his temper. All that is sin, but what I am saying is don't let the sin of other people drive you to sin. You obey the Lord. And it will go well with you and God will prosper you even when you submit to things that might be unjust. God will bless you because you have submitted to him.

Another thing, children. I want you to recognize that there has been somewhat of a reformation going on in American Christianity. It is underground, not too many people know about it, but it is true. And we are beginning to rediscover Scripture. I know that sounds strange, but it shouldn't. We are beginning to rediscover what it means to be a father and a husband. We are beginning to rediscover in Scripture what it means to be a mother and a wife. We are beginning to rediscover in Scripture all these things and what I want you to know is your parents, even though they might have been in church all their life have basically been raised on psychology and paganism. It doesn't matter what church they have been in.

We have not worked hard enough to know what the Bible declares about men, women, children and family. And what I am telling you is the same thing that my wife and I have said together several times. When we knew that we were going to have children it scared us to death because we knew that everything we knew about having children was basically handed down paganism with enough Christianity in it to make it dangerous.

But we said this. Maybe our children will be that first generation of our people, that first generation of our family that will have a chance from the very beginning to be raised in the fear and the nurture and the love of the Lord.

Now, children, I am telling you all this, why? Because it is true, but I am telling you this because the one thing the devil will do is whisper in your ear and give you all the reasons why you should not obey the Lord and obey your parents because they have failed you. That is what he will say.

They don't do it. Do you really want to live the rest of your life that way? As for me and my house, we are going to give it the best shot we have.

Now, parents, what are parents? They are God's ordained authority in the context of family. They are God's ordained authority.

Now some of you young fellows and young ladies, let me tell you something very, very important. We hardly understand authority at all. I mean, let me just say that there is... I am in the army. And there is a sergeant over me. Now I am supposed to obey him. I am going to be called on the carpet if I don't. I have to obey him.

Now if he is wrong and I don't obey him, he gets in trouble and I get in trouble. If he is wrong and I do obey him, he gets in trouble and I am exonerated. I am following the authority put over me.

You see, you are so busy on trying to discern whether or not mom and dad are right or wrong, you are so busy trying to discern whether they are old fashioned or modern or they even know what is going on nowadays. And what you have got to realize is that is not even anything you need to be thinking about, because the Bible says obey them, honor them. And if you do, even if it means you have to say goodbye to some of your friends, even if it means that you have to stop listening to certain things, even if it means you have to work on your homework longer and even if it means you have to lengthen your skirt, you will be blessed of the Lord if you will obey your father and your mother, because they are the authority that God has placed over you.

Now just... we didn't get very far, did we? We got the first two words, "Children, obey..." And we started on parents.

I finish with this one thing. I want you to listen. Notice that the word here is plural, parents. Both have authority over you. . Parents. Father and mother. And to violate one's authority is to violate them both. And, even worse, to violate one's authority is to violate God's, because God has put not only your father over you, he has put your mother over you. And if we have single mothers here or single fathers here, understand this, children. Their authority is the same. It is God's authority.

Now Proverbs 6:20.

"My son, observe..."²⁴

Which means to watch over like a watchman.

"...the commandments of your father. And do not forsake..."²⁵

That is, leave or cast off or disregard.

"...the teachings of your mother."²⁶

Never disregard the teachings of your mother.

²⁴ Proverbs 6:20.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Proverbs 10:1.

“A wise son...”²⁷

That word in Hebrew means skilful, learned, prudent.

“...makes a father glad.”²⁸

Literally causes him to rejoice.

“But a foolish son...”²⁹

The word means stupid, dull and arrogant. Most arrogant people I have ever met are stupid. Most stupid people are arrogant, just so you might know.

“... a foolish son is a grief to his mother.”³⁰

Now what does that mean? The word literally means heaviness, like a sorrow or like a burden. When a child becomes in their disobedience a burden to mom instead of a blessing.

Proverbs 15:20.

“A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises...”³¹

Hold in contempt, treats as worthless his mother.

Have you ever despised your mother? Well, let me put it in practical terms. Have you ever not listened to her? You broke this command.

Proverbs 19:26.

“He who assaults...”³²

That means also devastates or ruins.

“...his father and drives his mother away Is a shameful and disgraceful son.”³³

It literally means he is a cause for embarrassment.

²⁷ Proverbs 10:1.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Proverbs 15:20.

³² Proverbs 19:26.

³³ Ibid.

Proverbs 20:20.

“He who curses his father or his mother, His lamp will go out in time of darkness.”³⁴

They say, “Well, I wouldn’t curse them.”

Well, the word literally means to make little of or to treat as though they were of little account.

Have you ever cursed your father? Yes. Have you ever treated them as though their words and their position was of little account? You have cursed them.

Proverbs 23:22.

“Listen...”

That is the same word that we studied back a while, Deuteronomy six, the very same word in Hebrew.

“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God...”³⁵

It is important when that word comes up. So pay very, very close attention to your father who begot you and do not despise, treat as insignificant, your mother when she is old.

We see the authority in both the father and the mother, equal authority.

Now let me give all of you children a wonderful devotional verse that will just really bless you.

“The eye that mocks a father And scorns a mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.”³⁶

Now, parents, you should always be in perfect unity with regard to the convictions and standards in your house. And, sir, if you once undermine the authority of your wife in the presence of your children, you will do... go a long way in destroying your children. And, wife, if you ever undermine the authority of your husband in the presence of those children, you are doing great damage to your children. And they will learn to play one against the other and they will come to see there are no absolutes, only opinions of men. And then they will be able to justify their breaking of God’s law and not consider it a grievous thing.

We want to be unified. We want to promote. You must talk about the standards and convictions and the punishments in your house. You must be sure about them. And even

³⁴ Proverbs 20:20.

³⁵ Deuteronomy 6:4.

³⁶ Proverbs 30:17.

if something happens. Sir, if you walk in and see your wife doing something you do not agree with, with regard to your children, do not say it there. And the same way for the wife.

Now, children, understand this. Your parents, can they be wrong? Yes. Your parents will be judged by God almighty. There is someone who will take care of your parents. Entrust yourselves to a faithful Creator and pray for your parents. There will not be an idle word that comes out of the mouth of man that he will not be held accountable for. It is a fearful thing to be a parent.

Now he says, “Do this in the Lord, for this is right.”

What does it mean? Quickly, do it because of the Lord. You obey your parents not because of your parents. If you can ever learn this truth, you will just blossom. You love your enemies not because of your enemies. You love them because God commanded you to love them. You obey your parents because in doing so whether they are worthy or not, they deserve it or not, in obeying your parents you obey the Lord. And then he says this is right. This is a righteous thing before God to obey your parents.

In Colossians 3:20 it says:

“For it is pleasing to the Lord.”³⁷

It is right.

In Hosea 14:9:

“Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, And the righteous will walk in them, But transgressors will stumble in them.”³⁸

You know, one of the things that is hard about being an itinerant preacher, I go to a place and I have six days to preach, four days to preach. I walk into a church. I look at it. I listen to it for a while and I sit there and go, “I got to begin in Genesis 1:1.” And I have to do that every morning in my own life.

One of the first things that you must do as a family is recognize you are not right and you don't know. You can't get a license to drive a car without taking a class, but you can get married and drive your entire family straight into destruction without ever having to walk into a classroom. You weren't born. I was not born knowing how to be a man. I was not born knowing how to be a husband. I was not born knowing how to be a father. My wife the same. You are the same. Where do we get these things? From the Word of the Lord. Enough talking about how inspired it is. It is time to know it and live it. Live the Word of God. And you do that by taking these principles and taking them seriously.

³⁷ Colossians 3:20.

³⁸ Hosea 14:9.

Why? For the benefit of our homes, for the benefit of our children, for the benefit of our wives. And most of all of the glory of almighty God, for his glory.

Now if you are here today and you don't know the Lord, you can try to do these things, but hey are tough enough for those who know him. If you don't know the Lord, there is a Lord. And he has come and he has died for all your sins and he rose again on the third day having paid the price for every wrong thing you have ever done against the throne of God and you can be saved not by a religious affiliation, not by coming and being a member of a church. You can be saved by repenting, turning from your sins, stop fighting against God and trust in Christ. Give up all hope in your own works, your own righteousness, anything you can do. Give up and throw yourself on Christ. He who believes in Christ will be saved. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

We are going to pray and as I pray I am going to ask the musicians to come forward. We are going to have an invitation. This invitation is for people who might say, "I have need of the Lord."

Well, praise God. My invitation... someone is... my family is messed up. There is help and it is in the Word of God.

You say, "Well, I feel like I would like to join this fellowship."

We would count it a privilege.

You say, "I don't know if you could count me a privilege. I mean, I was a prostitute. I was a drug addict. I was a thief. I was this. I was that."

And my answer to you is this. And so were some of us. You are exactly the type of people we were, saved and trusting in Christ, humble and loving Christ's people.

Let's pray.

Father, I come before you in the name of your Son and I pray that you would work in your people. And it is in the name of Christ I pray. Amen.

Let's stand.