

Fifth River -- Obedience to Parents

by Martin Knapp

The sermon emphasizes the biblical command to honor and obey parents, highlighting the consequences of disobedience and the blessings of obedience.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1

Topics: "Family Values", "Obedience To God"

Description

Martin Knapp preaches on the importance of honoring and obeying parents as commanded by God, emphasizing the significant impact disobedience to parents can have on one's spiritual journey. He highlights the promises and blessings God gives to those who honor their parents, including length of life, God's favor, prosperity, and a clear conscience. Knapp also stresses the exceptions to obedience when parents command wrongdoing, urging children to follow God's instructions in such cases. He warns of the severe consequences of disobeying parents and how it can lead to disrespect for all authority and ultimately separation from God.

Transcript

"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." -- Ex. xx, 12.

"Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother." -- Deut. xxvii, 16.

"And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death." -- Ex. xxi, 15.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." -- Eph. vi, 1 .

If you had a map of the Geography of the spiritual world, you would find one of the most terrible rushing branches of the River of Death is Disobedience to Parents.

A peculiarity of this River is that so many children fall into it, It is one of the very first Streams into which little ones fall, unless they are very carefully trained. If you have parents who have kept you from its fatal flood, you ought to shout for joy and run and give them an extra hug and kiss.

Father and mother are your natural, God-appointed protectors, teachers, and governors. How good of God to thus shield and care for you when you are unable to do so yourself! If sin had not entered the world and deranged it, doubtless children would never have felt like breaking this Commandment. God gives the

following promises to all who keep it:

Length of life; live "long upon the land." This embraces an inheritance in the "Land of Salvation," and also on earth with those of whom Jesus said:

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." -- Matt. v, 5.

God's favor -- "This is well-pleasing to God." (Eph. v, 20.)

"The consciousness of doing right." (Eph. vi, 1-16.)

Prosperity -- "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Eph. vi, 3.)

The only exception to Obedience to Parents is where they command to do wrong. In such cases the command of God is plain, and children should follow His instructions, given in Ezekiel x, 18:

"I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols."

If parents command to steal, or swear, or lie, or cheat, or murder, or to marry unconverted persons, or anything else which God clearly forbids, their authority should be kindly but firmly resisted, even if punishment or martyrdom is the result. If you obey them when they command you to disobey God, then they are your idols, and you are guilty of Idolatry.

Upon loyalty to this Commandment rests largely obedience to government and to God.

Faithful children make faithful citizens and faithful Christians.

"Without natural affection" is one of the marks of apostasy from God, while true religion "turns the hearts of fathers to the children, and the hearts of children to their fathers."

To violate this Law is to incur as severe a penalty as of any other of the Commandments.

Children break it, and fall into the River in the following ways:

By open disobedience.

By disregarding father's or mother's wishes.

By treating their counsels lightly.

By being unthankful for their favors.

By being disrespectful and saucy to them.

By calling them "the old folks" or kindred unseemly names.

By jesting about their old-fashioned ways or speeches.

By being ashamed of their company.

By neglecting them when in need.

By living so as to bring a reproach upon them.

By joining in conversation against them.

By refusing to ask forgiveness when they have wronged them.

By giving to others the love and honor and obedience which is due them only.

By being discontented with them.

By running away from home.

In these and other ways this Law may be broken, and the awful consequences brought on yourself.

Among the results of its violation are the following:

A guilty conscience.

Disrespect for all law and restraint.

Yielding to other sins.

Trouble and disappointment.

An offended God.

Unless rescued by the Life-boat of Salvation, an endless hell. A disobedient child is like--

A serpent which stings the man who saves it.

A man who turns traitor to the government which protects him.

A lunatic who would burn the house that shelters him.

A man who would sow brambles, and look to reap grain.

All who claim the salvation which makes the keeping of this and all the other Commandments a delight shall live long "upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth," and shall be like the "sun when he goeth forth in his might."

Jesus was subject to His parents when a child, and among His last acts He provided for His aged mother.

Happy are they who follow in His steps.

BENNIE

Domestic Journal

He was only ten, and small of his age, but he was a hero, and fought his battle and died a victor before his eleventh birthday. Like many other dying mothers, Bennie's had left this message, "Take care of father;" and Bennie had answered, "I will, mother."

And he kept his promise. The gaunt wolf of poverty was always lurking near the threshold of the desolate room which Bennie called "home." But the brave child would not allow him to enter. He could not do much, but he fought him off with all the strength he possessed. He helped a larger boy sell papers whenever he could get away from watching his father; he did errands; he held horses; he sold apples for an old woman who had the corner stand; in fact, he did "what he could," and trusted God for the rest. In winter's cold or summer's heat he was always to be found at night in the vicinity of a saloon which his father visited. Whether it was eight or nine or ten or eleven o'clock when his father reeled out, the faithful child was always ready to lead him home safely. His reward was usually curses, sometimes blows; but Bennie did not murmur; he would keep his promise, whatever his father chose to do.

When Thomas Dunn, Bennie's father, was sober, he seemed to care for his little boy -- once even going so far as to put his hand gently upon his head and say, with a half sob, as if realizing the child's neglected condition, "Poor boy! poor little Bennie!" But Thomas Dunn's sober intervals were getting rare.

Bennie, weary and heart-broken, began to fear that the wolf must cross their threshold, for it took all of his time now to "take care of father." He was always staggering around somewhere, or stumbling over something; he seemed to need Bennie every moment. One day, as the two were crossing the street, the staggering man fell, and Bennie's full strength was used to pull him to a place of safety. In another moment Bennie's feet were crushed out of all shape as two runaway horses drawing a heavy carriage trampled over him. He was picked up gently and taken to a hospital, whither his sobered father followed him.

Terrible days followed -- days of physical agony to Bennie; days of mental torture to his repentant father. One evening just at dusk, Bennie opened his eyes, in which the light of reason once more shone. A look of wonder was on his patient face. In the gloaming he could see the hospital surgeon sitting beside him. What did it mean?

"Why am I here?" he asked, his voice faint and trembling.

"You were injured, my boy, and we had to perform an operation," answered a gentle voice.

"What was the operation?" his voice trembling with fear.

"Your feet were amputated, my poor child."

"Cut off, sir, do you mean?"

"Yes, cut off."

"O, sir, what will become of father? I promised mother I'd take care of him, and -- and --"

"Don't think about that now, Bennie," said the surgeon, his voice shaken with sobs.

"But I must think about it, sir; father I'll be under the horses' feet, an' mebbe be killed, an' he ain't ready to die. Couldn't I have crutches, sir, an' go an' find father?"

Some one whom he had not noticed in the dusk was kneeling at the foot of the bed; the person now crept nearer, and a voice shaken with sobs said, "You don't need the crutches, Bennie, lad; father's here, and he'll never leave you."

It was even so; over the faithful child's crushed feet the dissipated father had found his way to the Cross.

Bennie died that night. His last words, looking up with a smile, were, "Mother! O mother!! kept my promise; I did take care of father."

THANK GOD FOR MOTHER

Herald and Presbyter

After one of the hard-fought battles of the war, a Confederate chaplain was called hastily to see a dying soldier. Taking his hand, he said, "Well, my brother, what can I do for you?"

He supposed the young fellow would want to cry to God for help in his extremity; but it was not so.

"Chaplain," said he, "I want you to cut a lock of hair for my mother; and then, chaplain, I want you to kneel down, and return thanks to God for me."

"For what?" asked the chaplain.

"For giving me such a mother. O, she is a good mother! Her teachings are my comfort now. And then, chaplain, thank God that by His grace I am a Christian. What would I do now if I were not a Christian? And thank God for giving me dying grace. He has made this hard bed feel 'soft as downy pillows are.' And, O chaplain, thank Him for the promised home in glory -- I'll soon be there."

"And so," said the chaplain, "I kneeled by his bed with not a petition to utter, only praises and thanksgiving for a good mother, a Christian hope, dying grace, and an eternal home in glory."

PAID IN HIS OWN COIN

If children ill-treat their parents, they may expect the results to come back upon themselves in similar acts from their own offspring.

A certain son treated his aged and dependent father very unkindly. He would not allow him to have his meals with the family, and compelled him to eat with a wooden spoon.

Seeing his own little boy whittling one day, he asked him what he was making. The innocent, though cutting, answer was:

"I 'm making a spoon for you to eat with when you get old like you make grandpa eat with now."

Surely "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you."

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