

# Family Series Part 2 (Honor, the Gateway to Blessings)

by Paul Washer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of honoring and obeying parents as a way of being submissive to God's will and honoring Christ.*

**Duration:** 51:32

**Scripture:** Proverbs 22:6, Matthew 27:46, Galatians 3:13, Ephesians 5:8, Ephesians 6:1-2

**Topics:** "Family"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of fathers spending quality time with their children, particularly on weekends. He argues that all truth is revealed truth, meaning that even young children can understand and be transformed by the Gospel if the Spirit of God reveals it to them. The preacher shares a personal anecdote about a nine-year-old boy who approached him after a sermon, expressing his deep conviction of sin and desire for salvation. The sermon concludes with a call for parents to prioritize teaching their children about the Gospel and to lead culture out of darkness.

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## Transcript

Let's open up our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 6. Stand as we read God's Word beginning in verse 1. Children obey your parents and 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.

Let's pray. Father, we come before you and ask you, Lord, to help us and to teach your people and to apply truth, Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of men and women and children. Let there be a glorious transformation in this church, beginning with the individual, spreading into the family, and finally making its way back here and on to the ends of the earth.

In Jesus' name, Amen. If you're visiting with us today, our priority in this community of faith is to bring forth the gospel of Jesus Christ. The depravity of the human race, of Christ dying on a tree bearing the sins of men, of being crushed under his father's own judgment to make a way for mankind to be saved.

He resurrected from the dead and now all men everywhere are commanded to repent of their sins and to believe the gospel. That's what we're about. But we also acknowledge the power of a thing called regeneration, that if truly a person has been saved, they are regenerated, are born again by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the evidence of that will be a transformed life, a life that is transformed and that continues to be transformed throughout all their pilgrimage here on the planet. I know that there are 65 percent of Americans who consider themselves to have a born again experience. But according to the Bible, that is simply not true.

We are well aware that even church members here could be proper members of this church and yet not born again, not truly Christian, because the evidence of our Christianity is not simply our creed or our confession or our attendance, but the evidence of our Christianity is that our lives have been and are being transformed by the power of God. And the clearest place where that is seen is in the context of the family and that it is very, very easy to love someone in China because you're not in China. It is most difficult to love the people and to be biblical with the people that are closest to you.

And that's where the rubber hits the road. The true test of your Christianity, sir, is how you love your wife. And how you care for your children.

Last week, we studied verse one, and now we're on to verse two, which says, Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. Now, I want us to notice some things very important. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Ephesus.

And we suppose as theological, as scholars and New Testament scholars would tell us that the church in Ephesus received this letter and it was probably read to many, many other churches and congregations and little house churches around the area and even beyond. But I want you to notice something here that's very, very, very important. Paul does not say in verse one, parents tell your children to obey you in the Lord for this is right.

You say, well, what's so magnificent about that? Paul wrote this portion of the Bible to children. Do you see this? He is talking directly to the children. It is very, very important to understand this.

He's saying children. Obey your parents in the Lord. For this is right now, I want you to listen to something, a few implications of this, first of all, Paul assumed and it was true up until just the earliest of decades past.

That the children would be in the main congregation, Paul assumed that. And throughout all of Christian history, it has been the same. The children were in the congregation with the adults.

I want the scholar William Hendrickson writes, were Paul to be present with us today, he would be shocked at the spectacle of children attending Sunday school, some other form of school, and then going home and not being in the main service to hear the preaching of the word of God. We have bought in. We have bought into secular philosophy that would say children cannot understand, they most certainly can understand.

Another thing that I want to say is that children, I want to iterate this, children truly can understand truth when it is preached correctly. Now, they might not be able to understand all that an adult can grasp, but they can understand truth. They can.

And that is why I told your children what I told them, except not only would I wish they would draw these pictures of something they heard in the sermon or in the scriptures, but that they would take them home and after dinner, dad would sit down with them and go over those pictures. Turn off the television set. Turn off your cultural mindset that says this is your day to rest.

And realize that for most men, the weekends is the only time you really do have with your children. And if you use that time for self. Where are your children supposed to go? Another implication is this, is that I want you to understand something.

All truth is revealed truth. Someone asked me one time, can a five year old understand the gospel and be converted? My answer was this. A Harvard professor, a tenured Harvard professor, 60 years old, cannot understand the truth unless the spirit of God reveals it to him.

In the same way, a five year old can understand the truth if the spirit of God reveals that truth to him or her. Yes, they can. We have got to return to believing not just in how to biblically outline the gospel, but the power of the thing itself and the power of the word when preached correctly to transform even the youngest of minds.

Another thing that I want us to look at, I'll never forget, I was preaching in British Columbia several years ago and preached a sermon. And a little boy after I noticed that when the sermon was over, his eyes were on me the whole time, I noticed that he followed me out into the foyer. I noticed that he was just trying to get near me.

He was about nine years old. Finally, I turned around, I said, I said, son, what's the matter with your soul? Nine years old, with clenched fists and a heart that literally looked like it was going to break in two. He said, sir, I am so wicked.

Can I be saved from this sin on my shoulders? I said. Whether you can be saved or not, son, is a thing yet to be seen. But let's look at the scripture, because there we'll find a merciful God who has done great things on behalf of the sinner.

About an hour later, he came to know Christ. The power of the word, when it is preached correctly. It can reach young minds, one of the things, the greatest problems in the church is our children know all about Noah.

They've painted all the animals they know about Joseph's multicolored coat, but they know nothing about the one that is greater than Joseph, who died on a tree and rose again from the dead. We're not to follow culture, especially a fallen culture, we're to lead it out of darkness. And we do that not by being like it, but being totally different from it.

Another thing that I want to say is. If anyone wants to bring their children into this service while I'm preaching here, you are most invited to do so. And if they cry and they squirm and they move about, I would just ask that you use discretion.

You think you're bothering people around you and they can't hear very well. Well, go into one of the rooms and when the child settles down, come back out again. But I want you to know you won't be bothering me.

And I am sure that the gospel I preach has enough power so that if your child cries, that power will not be thwarted. I hear these preachers say, if you disrupt my message, no one's going to get saved. If your

message is that weak, no one's going to get saved anyways.

So what we need to look at is simply these children. We are to raise up a godly heritage unto the Lord, and one of the things about that is simply this, my friend. They can hear truth and they can understand it.

To put it bluntly, I don't want my sons to be as dumb as me. I know how I was raised and I don't want them raised that way. I want my children to be the first generation of my people that are more influenced by Christianity than paganism.

Now, it goes on. He says in the text, honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. Now, notice that Paul is reaching back here to Exodus 20, to the law of God, the Decalogue.

It's called Decalogue because it's 10 words. The 10 commandments, he's reaching back at that and it brings great authority to his argument. Now, there's some things that are very, very important that I want you to see here.

First of all, the 10 commandments from which he gets this, there are 10 of them. Now, those 10 are divided up into two groups. The first four deal with man's responsibility directly to God.

The latter part, the latter six, deal with man's responsibility to man before God. And it is amazing that when we get into this second half where it's dealing with how men should act among men. The first commandment that is given is regarding children honoring their father and their mother.

It's the first command given, and it shows us this, that society, the entirety of society is built upon the foundation of a God fearing biblical family. And you tear that out, you can't have society and you cannot have church. You can't.

You simply can not. And that is why a cosmetic community of faith is worthless. It's powerless.

I don't know how you are doing because there seems to be more people here this morning. I will know how you are doing by your family life, by your financial life. And I don't mean giving seed money by faith.

I'm talking about getting out of credit card debt, being a prosperous family. You see, if we really, truly want to be a biblical church, we have to start off by being a biblical family and to have a biblical family, sir, you must be a biblical man. Now, since Paul is speaking directly to the children and he is using Old Testament commands, the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, it lets us in to know something here.

It gives us a biblical basis for using the Ten Commandments. To teach our children that one of the first passages of scripture that children should come to understand. Are the ten commands what they mean and how they apply.

Now, I want to say something here that is very, very, very important. Most people misunderstand the Ten Commandments and when they teach them to children, they teach them in a half right way. Most of you, when you think about the Ten Commandments, you're thinking about we need to know the Ten Commandments so that we might know, you know, kind of have a general direction of how we should live.

Well, that is one of the purposes of the Ten Commandments, but it is not the purpose of the Ten Commandments. You teach the Ten Commandments to your children, not only that they might know how to live and have a concise idea of what God requires of them, but you teach them the Ten Commandments as a means of bringing about conviction of sin. The purpose of the Ten Commandments

has never been to save people through obedience.

It's been to point out the fallenness of our nature, the sinfulness of our being and our deeds, and to cause us to look for something greater than the law, who is Jesus Christ, our Lord. So the purpose of the Ten Commandments, when I look back through the Puritans and through others, I'm seeing that the emphasis is not simply on this is a concise summary of God's will, but this is a means that God uses to show children you have not obeyed the law of your God and therefore you must look to Christ and Christ alone. Now, let's go on.

I'm going to share with you a word that might scare you a bit. One of the greatest things I think that could help the church here is catechizing your children. Now, you say catechizing.

What? You do that with a knife? What is that? Catechizing your children? You say, well, I thought that was Catholic. No. What is it? It is systematically teaching the doctrines of Scripture to your children through a series of questions and answers.

Now, I've brought an adult catechism. It's sitting out front there. You can just look at it.

I got it offline. It was the one that Spurgeon used for his adults. But there are also what we call children's catechisms, and they're they're wonderful, especially the catechism called the prove it to me catechism, because it goes something like this.

For example, in my little boy's three years old, here would be the question in who made you his answer. God made me and I say, prove it. And he says.

Genesis one one in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Theology backing it up with Scripture. Now you say, well, he won't understand the full ramifications.

Neither does his father. Maybe a friend, a man who works with me in our mission. He's our mission's coordinator, Darren Rotman.

He was Lutheran for years and years and years, up until about five years ago when he was converted, he was converted in the Lutheran Church. But he told me something that was quite amazing. He said, Paul, all my life in the Lutheran Church, we read all these creeds and all these confessions and went through all these catechisms, and I never understood any of them.

But the moment I was converted. It's like all of them came back to me with the full force of their meaning. I met a man a few years ago in St. Louis.

He was about probably around twenty eight or thirty years old, but he hadn't been he wasn't converted until he was twenty two. But the amazing thing he told me, he says, my father taught me Scripture. He taught me theology.

He taught me theology proper. We studied theology books together. We read the Bible through and through and I was lost, lost, lost.

But the moment I was saved, I knew more than most men who were in the pulpit preaching. You see the idea what's happening here, you invest truth into that child, you put truth into that child, truth into that child, truth into that child. And when that child is truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit, all those years of teaching, even as one unconverted, will be used of the Lord.

You see, let me just read to you something Charles Spurgeon wrote. He said, for my part, if you don't know who Charles Spurgeon is, one of the greatest known in most communities of faith is possibly the greatest expositor of the scriptures who ever lived. For my part, I am more and more persuaded that the study of a good scriptural catechism is of infinite value for our children, even if the youngsters do not understand all the questions and answers yet abiding in their memories.

It will be of infinite service when the time of understanding comes to have known these very excellent, wise and judicious definitions of the things of God. That little boy in British Columbia had been taught the scripture by his father and catechized since the moment he could even think he was a little boy that if you asked him, Nathan, what sin he would say lack of conformity to the law of God. And when the Holy Spirit pressed that home in his heart the day of his conversion, he was saying, can anyone save me? You see.

Oh, my dear friend, it's not enough to talk about truth. It's not enough to say we're defenders of the truth. It is to apply and practice the truth.

Now, it says here, honor children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. And then honor your father and mother. The word honor comes from the Greek word tomorrow, and it means to estimate or fix a value on something.

And children, what this means is this, is that you are to estimate your parents to be of great worth and you are to fix a value on your parents above all other values. And that's what it means to honor them. Now, I want you to look at something.

Just listen to John five. Twenty three. Jesus says so that all so that all will honor the son, even as they honor the father.

He who does not honor the son does not honor the father who sent him. The word honor here comes from the Greek word tomorrow. It's the very same word.

Jesus is saying that men should honor him in the same way that children honor their parents. Now, just think of this for a moment. The power of this.

You would shudder at the fact of dishonoring Christ, but the very Christ who expects honor from you tells you you are to honor your parents in the same way you honor him. To honor your parents is to honor Christ and to honor Christ is to honor the father who sent him. That's amazing truth.

Now, let's go on. Notice that Paul again took this passage out of Exodus 20, which is an Old Testament text, which is Hebrew language. So let's look at this word in Hebrew.

It comes from a Hebrew word Kabbalah, which literally means to be heavy or weighty. Now, what does honor have to do with something being heavy or weighty? It has this has everything to do with it. When you say that something his arguments were weighty, what are you saying? His arguments had value.

They were proper arguments. We some estimate that gold has such a worth to it, even in ancient times, because its weight was such. When we say that something is weighty or heavy, we usually mean that it is it is made well or it has value or it's worthy of our appreciation.

That's what it's saying here. The children are to estimate their parents to be worthy. Of great honor.

Now, I want you to also notice something in Proverbs 3 9, it says, honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your produce, the honor the Lord here. It is the same word in Hebrew. True.

We are commanded to honor our parents in the same way we are commanded to honor the Lord Almighty. And you can't do one without the other. Now, why is this important? Well, it's important, especially in light of verse one where it says, obey your parents.

What the apostle Paul is telling us is that obedience is not enough. But obedience must flow out of what a heart filled with great appreciation and honor. Obedience must flow from an attitude of honor.

It is not enough to take out the trash grumbling and shrugging your shoulders. You have disobeyed God. But it is to do things not only fulfill the deed itself, but to do it, giving and communicating honor to the one who commanded you.

These important truths are readily taught. But they're important nonetheless. Now, we've looked at the word obedience, we've looked at the word honor.

Now I'm going to really, really throw one at you. Children, reverence. Your parents.

Just listen to Leviticus 19, three, every one of you shall revere his mother and his father. You shall keep my Sabbath. I am the Lord, your God.

Now, this is an amazing thing. First of all, the word the word reverence here comes from the Hebrew word, which means to fear. To hold in awesome, awe inspiring respect.

Now, I have to stop here for a moment, you say, well, you know, my mom and dad, they're not perfect, they're not this, they're not that. I mean, why should I do that? Because the Lord commanded you to. See, this is not about your parents, this is about you and being submissive to God's will.

He says to reverence. Just look at this. It is an amazing, an amazing thing.

First of all, this word is used primarily, if not exclusively in regard to God. And yet in this case, we're told it applies to the child parent relationship that the child is to obey their parent. They are to honor their parent.

They're even to revere their parent. It's quite an amazing thing. Now, I want us to just listen to this text, Leviticus 19, 32, speaking to the youth and children.

You shall rise up before the gray headed and honor the aged and you shall revere your God, I am the Lord. How do you revere the God? By showing honor to the aged and how much more your own parents now, young people. We live in a day.

When manners are not even taught anymore, they're not even taught. Used to these things were even taught in school. We have a mannerless society, young person, have you ever wondered why it used to be considered terrible manners? It was an atrocity.

If two boys or two young people are talking and playing in a room and an adult walked in, if they continued playing, that was a disgrace of honor. It was. Even as a little boy, I can remember being taught and even disciplined.

If you are playing and an adult walks into the room, you stop playing, you stand up and you look at them. You acknowledge that they are there and you basically put yourself at their disposal. Where did that come from? Archaic culture of a gone away society? No, the Bible.

Men, have you taught your sons this? Men, have you taught your sons how to shake somebody's hand? They're not going to learn this anyplace else. Think about it. Well, I don't know why our culture and our families and everything else are so messed up.

I do. And I tremble. At trying to go against the force.

That is carrying most of the world away. And I know I won't be strong enough to do it by myself, but that we're going to have to raise up godly men, there's got to be godly men all around us with the same idea. That's the only way it's going to happen.

It's amazing, isn't it? All that the Bible really has for you. All the things that you thought were just, well, you know it. I mean, it's not like it's biblical or something.

Yes, it is. Now, when we talk about giving honor to parents, one of the things that is most important is whenever you give honor without sincerity, it is probably one of the greatest causes of the judgment of God being brought upon a person. Listen to what Jesus says.

And he said to them, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. Children, one of the greatest things that you must fear. Is hypocrisy.

Now, you're to obey. Don't get into the idea, well, if I don't feel it in my heart, I'm not going to do it because I don't want to be a hypocrite. No, that's not what the Bible teaches.

You do it anyways. But if it's not right in your heart, you go to the person you're obeying and tell them, my heart is not right. Will you please pray for me? Hypocrisy, religious hypocrisy is the most dangerous thing.

Now, I loved having all the children in here and still do. And I love them coming up and singing. But I would be a false prophet, a liar and a coward if I did not tell you something right now.

I thought this was just beautiful, their song, but at the same time that I thought it was beautiful, I trembled with the danger of it. You know what that is? Seeing something. That is not yet a reality in your life.

And being applauded for it, not that it's wrong to applaud, I'm just trying to point out to you the danger of something that we can turn children in to little puppets who do religious things and receive applause. But the reality is not there. Do you see what I'm trying to tell you? I'm not trying to bash or crash or say we shouldn't do this.

I thought this was beautiful. What I'm saying is there is a danger even in promoting religious activity. If.

It is taught. That that religious activity is the full force of the duty, even though there is no inward reality now. Let's go on.

Also, I want us to look for just a moment and. I wanted to do so much more today and I'm going to go it's I got like about three minutes left, but well, I'm just going to pretend this isn't here for a moment. Because no one's in children's church anyways.

All right. The vileness of dishonoring one's parents, I cannot bring this home to you enough. The vileness of dishonoring a parent, parent, not for your own sake and not for manipulation, but the vileness.

It needs to be communicated, not in a harsh way, not in a mean way, but the vileness of disobeying a parent. Now, I just want you to listen to the words of Jesus, Mark 10, 19. You know, the commandments do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.

Look. Look, dishonoring your father and mother is put in the same category with things like murder and adultery and stealing. And I would say that maybe even it's the worst of all those crimes, the most heinous of all of them, because it is the foundation of society.

And if you don't have this one thing in place, everything else will fall apart. And so it is it is a heinous thing to do. And it is also considered, at least under the law, it was considered worthy of capital punishment, not just listen to this.

Matthew 15, four, for God said, honor your father and mother, Jesus speaking, and he who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death. Now, the whole point of this is not to try to motivate you to obedience by some grotesque fear. It's just to point out the reality here of what's going on.

You see, when a fish doesn't know they're wet, we live in a culture of nothing but iniquity. How can we know that we're dirty until the word of God is revealed to us? And as the word begins to be revealed, we just stand there and go, oh, how could I be so blind to all of this? Now, it is honor your father and it doesn't stop there. It's his honor, your father and your mother, both father and mother, are to be obeyed, honored and revered.

Both now, a lot of this will depend on the parents. Fathers. Do not undermine the authority of your wife in front of the children, mothers, who, if you commit a crime, it is indulging your children.

Do not undermine the authority of the father before your children. If you have disagreements, go away somewhere and settle them. Do not settle them in front of your children.

Not only will they be confused, but they will learn to use that as a means of manipulating both of you. Do not dishonor your husband. And do not dishonor your wife anytime, but especially in front of the children, because what you're doing is undermining the authority of your partner.

Now, the chain of honor follows this way. Children, honor your mother. Honor your mother.

Because by honoring your mother. You honor your father. And by honoring your parents, you honor God.

To dishonor mother is to dishonor father, whoever touches my wife, touches me. To dishonor my wife is to dishonor me, whether you're a man outside of my family or whether you're a child within my family. Husbands, your children will honor their mother with great respect if they see that she is the most important human being on the face of the earth to you.

Now, it says this is the first commandment with a promise, the first commandment with a promise, and I want us to look now, we're going to back up for a second and look that there's three different motivations that are given to a child in order to obey in verse one, do it in the Lord. And Colossians 3:20 says, because it's pleasing to him, I shall obey my parents. The little girl said, because my master bids me to do so.

My Lord bids me to do so. To be pleasing to your parents is to be pleasing to the Lord. Another reason, do it because it's right, that's what he says, do it in the Lord because it is right.

Now, let me give you five ways in which it is right, first of all, because he says it's right. I like that one. I just kind of just kind of want to stand back like I'm going to fight somebody or something when I say that one.

Why do I need to do? Why is it right? Because he said it was right. And that's enough. See, when you're the Lord of glory and you say it's right, it's right when you made everyone.

It's right. It's right because he says it's right. That's where all right comes from.

It's right because he says it's right and it's wrong because he says it's wrong. Finished. You may have a problem with that, but you can't do anything about it because there's not going to be a changing of the administration.

There's just not. So you do it because it's right. Another reason why you do it, the child owes its very existence to its parents.

You do you owe your very existence to this person. Another reason, unless your parent is just some type of very, very sad individual, you also owe all your sustenance and care to your parents. They provide for you.

Another thing, parents are older and wiser than their children. You think your parents are dumb? Then how dumb must you be? Think about that. They're still dumb and they've been on this earth a lot longer than you.

So imagine. So if you've got to pick between two dummies, I'd pick my parents because if they're pretty dumb, you can count on the fact you're dumber than they are. Now, I know I'm trying to break it up a little here, but it's a true point.

You know, I look at people, sometimes young guys in the ministry, and I go, look, listen to me on this one. Been there, done that, got the T-shirt. Parents, by and large, all things being equal, are wiser.

When I warn my sons of certain things, I know it to be true. Because I carry some of the scars of it on my own body and in my own heart, listen to me, son, I've been there, that is a dangerous road. I'm not afraid, dad, you will be.

You will be. Also, obey your parents, because all things being equal, there's no one on the face of the earth who loves you more than they do. I can tell you this from experience, I've been away from my wife and sons for two weeks, this will never happen again in the name of Jesus, because it's not God's will.

I sit there every night and just look at those pictures, I am overwhelmed at how much I love my family, it terrifies me sometimes. I even wonder sometimes, have they become an idol? I cannot wait to get off that plane on Tuesday. Do your children know that? Do they see that in your actions, how much their father loves them? Do you tell them? Are you constantly making it proved in their eyes how much you truly love, not by giving them everything they want, not by allowing them to have their own way every time, but just by all sorts of expressions of love, everything from loving and mercy and compassion to giving commands, expecting them to be obeyed and chastising when they're not.

Now, do it in the Lord, do it because it is right and do it because God promises personal well-being to the one who does it. He says this in the text so that it may be well with you, that you may live long on the earth. Now, what does that mean? Well, let me first of all tell you what it does not mean.

It does not mean that every righteous, godly, regenerated child lives a long life and that every wicked child, evil youth has a short one. It doesn't mean that. What it's pointing out is something that you have to understand when you get into the book of Proverbs, for example.

The book of Proverbs is wisdom literature. Wisdom literature has a certain genre to it, has a certain key to it that you must understand. And it's this wisdom literature is just a wise man who's lived a long time under the direction of the Holy Spirit, writing down things he has observed in general that generally, if you do this, this will happen.

It's a generalization of wisdom. And that's what's going on here. And what is he saying? He is simply saying something that we all observe every day of our life, that someone who is given to keeping the commands of God and fearing the Lord, all other factors being equal, will live longer and have a more blessed life.

And someone who defies God and breaks his commands. Well, in general, have a shorter. And at least miserable life.

Let me give you an example. A father warns his child, child. Do not drink, do not smoke, do not take drugs, do not get involved in sexual sins.

And the child obeys. All things being equal, what's going to happen, he's going to preserve his life and also have a life that is more blessed. You take a child who hears the same commands and disobeys them, goes drinking and smoking and doing all sorts of things with wicked people and sexual sins and everything.

By and large, if you were to take the world and divide it in two groups between those who have obeyed the commands of God and those who have not, you will see a great difference. You will see longevity here and blessedness and you will see shortness of life and misery. Great.

It's just a fact. Now, I want to say something about a long life. A long life is not necessarily good.

I'm going to sound like a Puritan here. A long life is not necessarily good, because if you live a long life in wickedness, you are simply heaping more judgment upon your head every day you live. A wicked man who lives a long time will regret the days of his life and in hell will wish that they had been shortened so that less judgment would be poured out on him there.

A long life is not necessarily a blessing, but for the righteous, the righteous should desire a long life. If you're born again, if you're walking with the Lord, you should desire a long life. And let me I'm going to read an old Presbyterian scholar by the name of Albert Barnes.

This is what he said. Long life is a blessing. Meaning for the righteous, it affords a longer space to prepare for eternity.

Why should you want a longer life so that you'll have a longer time to prepare for eternity, to grow in godliness and to grow in Christ likeness and conformity to the will of God? It enables a man to be more

useful. Why do I want to live on this earth? Only that I might be useful to my master. We should desire a long life not in order to go after the things of the world, but we should desire this so that we might serve the Lord.

And it furnishes longer opportunity to study the works of God on earth. That's amazing. It just gives you a whole new perspective, gives you a whole new perspective on John 17, 3. Eternal life is not necessarily just longevity.

Eternal life is quality of life. That's why it begins the moment you're converted. Eternal life begins then your quality of life changes.

You should use the life you have to track down the glories and the beauties of Christ, because that's what you're going to be doing throughout all of eternity. And yet you sit in front of a TV and have chosen the lesser things and are teaching your children to do the same. What glory will you find there? It's like picking out speckles of food out of a garbage can.

Not a lot of meat. Whatever you do find is pretty rotten. Now, what can we derive from this promise? I want to finish this part so that tonight we can go on to the fathers.

What do we derive from this promise that a long life will be granted to you and such? First of all, God still rewards obedience. God rewards obedience. He does.

He promises to, and it's just true. Many times when people believe the things I do with regard to soteriology or the doctrine of salvation, if you believe in the sovereignty of God in salvation and you believe in the sovereignty of God in every aspect of your life, you can quickly fall into heresy. Very quick.

By beginning to just think, well, you know, if it's going to get done, God's going to do it. If I obey or disobey, it doesn't really matter because God's sovereign over the whole situation anyways. That is not Bible.

You're getting close to fatalism and antinomianism, two great heresies in the Christian church. My dear friend, let me tell you something. God rewards obedience.

Secondly, disobedience carries real consequences to it. I heard someone say one time they go, well, God's sovereign over my life and he has chosen the sovereign day that I will die. And I said, yeah, and that sovereign God can sovereignly cut short the days of your life.

He can do anything he wants. He said, well, I don't know how those two things go together. Brother, join the club.

But I'm not supposed to figure out how they go together. I'm just supposed to preach both truths. They're both there.

See, we're theologians and we're not philosophers. Philosophers look at the sovereignty of God in this aspect and the supposed free will of man over here and try to work out how both of them work together. And that's when you get into heresy because the Bible really doesn't tell us all the time how they work together.

The Bible says God is absolutely sovereign. And if you disobey, you can shorten your life. There you have it.

You say, well, that's not very scholarly. I'm not called to be a scholar. I'm called to be converted, become as a little child and believe what I'm told.

And that's what I'm told in Scripture. Now, William Hendrickson says this undisciplined children. This is another thing that we can learn.

Undisciplined children spell ruin for the nation, for the church and for society. Now you say, that's right. Those undisciplined children.

Hold it. Why are they undisciplined? Undisciplined means that the child is passive in this. You say, what do you mean? If I am being disciplined, it means I am passive and someone is acting upon me.

Someone else outside of me is disciplining me. If I am an undisciplined person, it means that that is because someone has not disciplined me. And who was in charge of that? The parents.

Finally, I just want to give you a passage from Proverbs 3, 1 through 4. And it says this. Son, do not forget my teachings. Has your son received any teachings from you? Son, do not forget my teaching.

But let your heart keep my commandments. Now look at this. He says, my commandments.

The father says, my commandments. Because God's commandments are his commandments. That's why he can say, my commandments.

He's not telling the child to do something he's not doing. He's not telling the child to submit to a Lord before whom he has not submitted himself. He says, keep my commandments for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.

In the time that God has allotted to you, you will have a spiritual peace, a spiritual prosperity. Now, do not let kindness and truth leave you. Bind them around your neck.

Write them on the tablet of your heart. So that you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man. What he's saying is, do everything in your power, son, to take these commandments I'm teaching you.

And to carve them into your heart. To bind them on your hands. Put them between your eyes.

Whatever you have to do. But listen to your father's commands. And yet most children today would answer that, what commands? I don't recall my father giving me any moral instruction.

Except, the only time he talks to me about moral things is after I've already gotten in trouble and disappointed him. Then we have a moral discussion. Teaching Scripture is preventive medicine.

So that you might not ever have to have that discussion. When your child has disobeyed grievously and brought great harm to themselves. Now if you're here today and you don't know Christ, we're not going to have an open invitation.

We are going to have the offering and such from the musicians. I'm going to ask them to come forward. If you don't know Christ today, you come and talk to me.

You come and talk to me. If there's a hundred people standing around me, you just come up and grab me. If you don't know Christ, or one of the elders, or one of the men.

And if you're sitting there going, man, this is just awakening me to a whole new world about being a father. This and that. I really want to know more.

My office is open. You give a call, we'll schedule you as soon as we can. I'm leaving, I'll be back in a week.

Men, we can't do this as individuals. Men, we have to come together. Men, we have to do this together.

Men, we have to hold each other accountable because we live in a world where none of this stuff goes on. And it's so foreign to you. As foreign as it is to the one speaking it to you.

You're not the only one here who needs help. I need you. As much as you need what I'm saying today.

Let's pray. Father, we come before you and take your word and apply it to our hearts. Apply it to our hearts.

And to our families, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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