

## Children And Parents

6:1-4

### EPH 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

1. "Children, obey your parents" - Children are to obey their own parents.
  - a. "children" is used in the generic sense meaning one or more.
    - 1) A child is not exempt from this commandment to obey parents by saying Paul said, "children."
    - 2) Here are some other generic uses of the word "children." (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:20, 21; 1 Tim. 3:4; 5:4, 10; Tit. 2:4).
    - 3) The word "children" is always generic [meaning one or more] as a commandment.
  - b. Children are to obey their parents.
    - 1) "Parents" is generic and children must obey parents even if there is only one parent. They are to obey parents or parent even if they disagree with them. Colossians 3:20 indicates children are to obey parents "in all things."
    - 2) "Obey" is the imperative of "hupakouo" [hoo pah **koo** oh].
    - 3) Children were required to obey parents under the Law of Moses. (Exod. 21:15, 17; Lev. 19:3; 20:9; Prov. 1:8; 10:1; 13:1; 15:5, 20; Deut. 21:18-21; Mk. 7:10).
    - 4) It is true of children under the Law of Christ. One cannot be faithful to Christ and refuse to obey his/her parents.
2. "in the Lord" - Lit. "in [the] Lord" - These words are omitted by some Greek manuscripts, but are included in most translations and are regarded as genuine being in most Greek manuscripts.
  - a. The text itself is addressing especially Christian children.
  - b. TCNT has "as children of the Lord"
  - c. It has about the same meaning as Colossians 3:20.

COL 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

- d. The children he is writing are Christians.
- e. This does not mean non-Christian children do not have an obligation to obey their parents whether they are Christians or non-Christians.
- f. Non-Christian children are expected to obey parents. (Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2).
- g. It is possible "in the Lord" could denote a Christian family in context, but for sure it denotes children who are

Christians.

3. “for this is right” - It is the right thing for you to do. It is right because God commanded it. God only commands what is good for us.
  - a. It is duty of children to obey parents.
  - b. This obedience comes from one who desires to please God and has the disposition to honor parents.
    - 1) Parents must instill this in their children.
    - 2) Children must be taught to respect their parents or they will not develop the disposition to honor them.
  - c. Those who honor parents find it much easier to obey them.
  - d. It is hard to honor those one despises.
4. Disobedience to parents is an abominable sin to God. (Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2).

ROM 1:30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, **disobedient to parents**,

2TI 3:2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, **disobedient to parents**, ungrateful, unholy,

**EPH 6:2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),**

- See Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:16.
1. “Honor your father and mother” - Both Old and New Testaments stress the father and the mother are to be honored.
    - a. “Honor” means “respect, kindness, support, obedience.” It comes from the Greek “timao” [tee **mah** oh].
    - b. It included obedience. The child disobeying his parents is not honoring them nor God.
    - c. Jesus taught that “honor” included support of needy parents. (Matt. 15:1-9).
    - d. Paul also taught one has an obligation to support needy parents. (1 Tim. 5:8).
    - e. They were not to shame parents and bring them pain.
  2. “(which is the first commandment with a promise)” - The promise is found in the next verse.

EXO 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

DEU 5:16 ' Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you.

- a. The first four commandments of the Decalogue had no stated promise attached to them.
- b. The fifth commandment promised prosperity and long life to those who honor their parents.

- c. The promise was originally made to the Israelites and pertained to their life in Canaan.
- d. Paul, by inspiration, reveals this promise applies to Christians.
- e. He changes the words “in the land’ to “on the earth,” but the idea is the same. The Greek has “upon the earth.”

**EPH 6:3 that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.**

1. “that it may be well with you”
  - a. God blesses children who obey their parents.
  - b. Children who obey their parents please God.
2. “ and that you may live long on the earth”- This is a general rule with some exceptions.
  - a. Children who obey their parents usually live longer lives.
    - 1) Their respect for parents leads to respect for God, for themselves and others.
    - 2) All of this promotes longevity, but it is not an absolute guarantee of a long life.
    - 3) There is no absolute guarantee of longevity. (Prov. 27:1; Jas. 4:14).
  - b. **There are exceptions to this promise.**
    - 1) Sometimes obedient children die from sickness or die in accidents, storms, wars, etc.
    - 2) We cannot automatically conclude that every time a child or youth dies that the child or youth was disobedient.
    - 3) This may be the case at times, but certainly is not always true or the rule.
  - c. Those who are rebellious to parents are nearly always rebellious to other authorities and this leads to all kinds of trouble and to death.
  - d. Some wicked live a normal life span, but many wicked live a short life. (Psa. 55:23).

PSA 55:23 But Thou, O God, wilt bring them down to the pit of destruction; Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days. But I will trust in Thee.

**EPH 6:4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** He is giving a mandate - not a suggestion.

1. “And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger” - Paul addresses fathers, but the language is equally applicable to mothers.
  - It may especially specify “fathers” because many fathers in the ancient world could be very harsh and severe with their children.
  - They had absolute authority over the wife and children and under Roman law could do more anything to the children or wife. Some did terrible things to the wife and children if their anger and in a desire to have their

own way.

- a. “parorgizo” [pahr ahr gee zoh] - “to provoke to anger, to make angry”
  - b. This is done by injustice, severe punishment, constant criticism, humiliation, etc.
  - c. See Col. 3:21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart.
    - 1) “erethizo” [eh reh thee zoh] “to arouse, provoke, irritate, embitter.”
    - 2) Fathers who constantly criticize their children and make unreasonable demands cause them to “lose heart.”
    - 3) Most often discouraged children rebel against God and all authority.
    - 4) Children need a lot of tenderness and encouragement and forgiveness.
    - 5) Part of properly training children is to have trust and confidence in them.
    - 6) Nearly always a child who feels he cannot be trusted will grow up to be that kind of child.
2. “but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”
- a. “ektrepho” [ek treh foh] - “to nourish, bring up, rear” - Parents are to nourish, bring up, rear their children to Christian maturity.
  - b. “paideia” [pi day ah] - “upbringing, training, discipline.”
    - 1) This training is done by example, teaching Christian values, words of exhortation and punishment when necessary.
    - 2) Paul used this word in 2 Timothy 3:16.
    - 3) It occurs 4 times in Hebrews 12:5-11 in the sense of “discipline” or “chastisement.”
  - c. “nouthesia” [noo theh see ah] - “admonition, instruction, warning”
    - 1) This word stresses the importance of parents teaching their children what is right.
    - 2) This teaching comes from word and example by parents and others.
    - 3) Others may help, but parents have the primarily responsibility to teach and train their children.
    - 4) One cannot depend on a sinful world to teach their children moral values and respect for God.

**Note:** Discipline is a very important part of rearing children. (Prov. 13:24; 19:18;22:15; 23:13, 14; 29:15,17).

3. It is imperative that parents keep in mind the instruction of Solomon in Proverbs 22:6.

PRO 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.

- a. Most children trained in the way of the Lord will remain true to Him, but there are exceptions.

- 1) Solomon was not teaching “once saved always saved” which is being taught if a child cannot fall from grace.
  - 2) We are free moral agents and can choose to accept or reject the Lord at any time in our lives.
  - 3) Some children who had godly training and remained true to the Lord for a short or long time have fallen away and remained in that state until death.
  - 4) Parents are sad and broken-hearted about this, but parents are not always responsible.
  - 5) People do change for the better or the worse.
  - 6) These changes for the better or the worse are most often outside the control of the parents. **See Note of Parents Below.**
- c. Solomon did not mean that a child raised the wrong way cannot change for the good, but it is the exception.
- 1) The Great Commission is based on the premise that men can change. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15). See 1 Cor. 6:9-11.
  - 2) Paul proclaimed the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles with the belief they could change. (Rom. 1:15,16; Acts 17:30,31). Jesus came to save sinners. (Lk. 19:10).
  - 3) Many Jews and Gentiles, not the majority, were delivered from the realm of darkness into the kingdom. (Col. 1:13). See 1 Cor. 6:9-11.
  - 4) Christians reach out to those far and near with the belief they can change and turn to God.
- d. **Note to Parents:** Some parents torture themselves if their children go astray. This is not always the fault of parents. Some of the most godly parents have lost a child or children to the world. Children are free moral agents and some reject the Christian life early while still at home and some reject it later in life for a variety of reasons. People can change for the good or the bad. Even Solomon, who had David as his father, went astray at the end of his life.

1KI 11:4 For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

- e. Solomon himself shows there are exceptions to Proverbs 22:6.

### **Some Observations**

1. Parents need to heed these inspired words of Paul and others and take the time to rear their children to love God and keep His commandments. (Deut. 6:4-9).

DEU 6:4 "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!

DEU 6:5 "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

DEU 6:6 "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;

DEU 6:7 and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

DEU 6:8 "And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.

DEU 6:9 "And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

2. Even Christian parents often seek to delegate their divine obligation to rear their children to others - babysitters,

day cares, schools, TV, etc.. It is a horrible mistake for parents not to stay actively involved in the teaching and training of their children.

3. Children should pay special attention to what God teaches about their responsibility to obey parents.
  - a. It is a serious thing to disobey parents.
  - b. Parents should be obeyed unless they require children to break God's laws. (Acts 5:28, 29).
4. The church needs to place more emphasis on what the Bible teaches about the obligation of parents and children.

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