

Having considered v1 last week we come this week to vv2-3—but before we do so—let me briefly review—if you recall we considered v1 under three questions—[1] what are children to do?—and there we learned that children are to obey their parents, equally, always, quickly, heartily, and joyfully...

The [2] question was—Why are children to do it?—where I suggested three reasons for parental obedience as found within the text—natural order [children, parents], the law of God [for this is right], and the gospel of Christ [in the Lord]...

Finally I sought to help children by answering a [3] question—How are children to do it?—here I provided three simple helps to parental obedience—be sure you're in Christ, depend upon the power of the Spirit, and consider the joy that obedience brings [to yourself, parents, and Savior]...

In coming to verses 2-3, I would have you notice they comprise two parts—a command and a promise—the command is found in v2a—“honor your father and mother”—the promise is found in v3—“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth...”—we will consider the command this morning and the promise this evening...

But before I do—let me remind parents that while I will speaking to the children—keep in mind—it is your responsibility to know the duties of your children—thus you need to listen as closely as your children...

- I. The Command Explained
- II. The Command Expanded
- III. The Command Encouraged

#### I. The Command Explained

1. Most of you will know [I trust]—that Paul here quotes from the OT, and in particular the Ten Commandments...
2. These are stated in Exodus 20 and restated in Deuteronomy 5—they are the only commandments written by God's hand and spoken with God's mouth...
3. The Greek word translated “honor” literally means—“to fix the value or worth of something—to esteem something as important...”
4. Thus at its core—to honor someone is to recognize their place—to properly esteem their authority or right...
5. To understand their rightful place over you—to fix upon them their God-given authority and to thus esteem them appropriately...
6. 1Pet.2:17—“love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king...”—that is—view the king as having authority over you...
7. Put upon the king a worth or value—a worth and value not necessary because of their person—but the position they have...
8. 1Tim.6:1—“all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor that the name of God and *our* doctrine may not be spoken against...”
9. Slaves are to honor their masters by accepting their God-given right and authority over them—by respecting the authority granted them by God...
10. Thus central to “honoring” is “respecting” or “esteeming”—to have a high value or reverence for God-given authority...
11. One man described parental honoring as—“treating those in authority with the realization that they have power in your life...to behave in a way which shows value to the one deserving of honor...”
12. But it is very important to grasp the phrase—“God-given”—we honor the king, masters, and parents because they possess a God-given authority...
13. This is at the very heart of the fifth commandment—to honor all forms of authority as ordained and designed by God...

14. John Stott—“We are to ‘honor our father and mother,’ that is, acknowledge their God-given authority, and so give them not only our obedience, but our love and respect as well...”
15. Thus according to historical reformed Christianity—the fifth commandment concerns not only the honor due parents but honor due all authority...
16. Honor due civil authority—domestic authority [both parents and husbands]—and ecclesiastical authority [honor due church offices]...
17. Larger Catechism Q.124—“Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment? A. By father and mother...are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God’s ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or state...”

## II. The Command Expanded—or seven ways parental honor is expressed

### A. By receiving words as weighty

1. This can be seen back in Ex.20:12—“honor your father and your mother...”—the Hebrew word translated “honor” literally means—“to make heavy or weighty...”
2. It’s rendered “became heavy” in Ex.17:12—“but Moses’ hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it...”
3. Thus to honor your father and mother—is to consider their words as weighty—as having weight or influence to them...
4. This is true whether their words come in the form of a command, instruction, or counsel—notice [1] a command...
5. We considered this last week in v1—“children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right”—to disobey is to dishonor...
6. Notice [2] instruction—children honor their parents not only by obeying their commands but practicing their instruction...
7. Prov.4:1—“hear, my children, the instruction of a father...” Prov.13:1—“a wise son heeds his father’s instruction...”
8. While the parental instruction varies—here I especially think of religious instruction—my young friends—do you desire to honor your parents—then listen to what they teach you about God and Christ...
9. Receive their words as weighty—take to heart what they say about the nature of God, the nature of man, and the salvation of Christ...
10. On the other hand—can you imagine how dishonoring it would be for a child to reject what their parents taught them all their life...
11. What it amounts to is this—the child is calling his or her parent a liar—that what they believe is not true and unworthy of them...
12. Notice [3] counsel—but children you must not only hold the commands and instruction of your parents as weighty—but also their counsel...
13. This is another way in which you honor them—you seek out of their counsel and put it into practice when appropriate...
14. This is especially necessary for older children—before we seek the opinion of any person—we first seek the counsel of our father and mother...
15. Prov.23:22—“listen to your father, who begat you, and do not despise your mother when she is old...”—that is—despise her instruction or counsel when she gets old...
16. This is a greater temptation for older children—who may begin to look upon their parents as outdated or obsolete...
17. Yet children honor their parents—as they seek their advice and counsel—as they pursue their direction and guidance...
18. John Angell James said to children concerning their parents—“They are the guides of your youth; your natural counselors; the family oracle, which you are ever to consult, and the responses of which are to be received with pious reverence...you are young and inexperienced...they have traveled the road, and know its turnings, its dangers, and its difficulties. Go to your parents, then, with every affair; consult them on the subject of companions, books, and recreations. Let a father’s and a mother’s ear be the holder of all your cares. Have no secretes which you conceal from them...”

## B. By speaking with reverence

1. This no doubt is a large expression of parental honor—the manner in which you address your father and mother...
2. This includes how you approach and respond to them—you are to approach and respond to them with honor...
3. Lev.19:3—“every one of you shall revere his mother and his father...”—that is, they are to show a respect or reverence towards them...
4. I suggest there are at least three ways this is done with regards to our speech—[1] speak with proper words...
5. That is—you honor your father and mother—when you use proper words to address them—yes mother, no father...
6. Children—your parents are not your peers—they are not your equal—they are your parents and thus possess a God-given authority over you...
7. I have noticed within the last 30 years a gradual shift in the manner younger people approach older—it used to be that a young person would also address an older person as sir or mam...
8. They would refer to older persons by their last name—Mr. or Mrs. Waters—but not so anymore—teenagers now address people old enough to be their grandparents by their first name...
9. Notice [2] speak with proper tone—children—did you know that even if you address your parents with proper words you can still dishonor them with an improper tone...
10. For example—you might say to them—yes sir, or no mam—in a harsh or disrespectful manner—in a tone that communicates a lack of submission...
11. 1Tim.5:1—“do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father...”—that is—speak to him with honor as a father...
12. The implication is—fathers are to be addressed in an honorable way—pastors are to speak to older men with respect...
13. Notice [3] speak with proper expression—that is—you are to speak to them not only with proper words and tone—but also expression of face...
14. For example—think of a young child you answers his mother—yes mam—with a respectful tone—but rolls her eyes...
15. Prov.30:17—“the eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it...”
16. The backdrop to this text is the death penalty imposed upon disobedient children under the old covenant economy...
17. They would be put to death by stoning and then left within the valley to be eaten by ravens and other birds of prey...
18. But what I want you to notice is the manner of disobedience here described—“the eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother...”
19. The child is described as mocking or disobeying his parent by his “eye”—that is—he mocked his parents with his eye...
20. Thus children—you must honor your parents by speaking to them with reverence—for you can dishonor them with improper words, tone, or expression...

## C. By submitting to discipline

1. As we will see when we get to v4—discipline is a major means of child rearing—this of course will take many forms...
2. Yet with regards to younger children especially—it will largely be administered by the use of the rod or spanking...
3. Children honor their parents by submitting to this discipline, Heb.12:9—“...we have had human fathers who disciplined us, and we paid them respect...”
4. Notice [1] children must submit before discipline—by this I mean there should be no arguing, debating, or bartering for a lesser sentence...

5. Children you honor your parents as you take your place before them as a guilty child—not blaming your behavior on your siblings...
6. But owning your behavior as yours—owning your sins humbly—this honors your parents—to stand before them in submission...
7. This can be illustrated in our Savior, Isa.53:7—“as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth...”
8. Our Savior never defended Himself before His accusers—but even more importantly—He stood submissive before His heavenly Father...
9. Although He was innocent of any sin—He never opened His mouth—but submitted Himself to the rod of His Father’s wrath...
10. Oh my young child—if the Savior endured the blows of His Father without complaining—how much more should you...
11. For He was innocent of any sin—He did nothing to deserve such treatment—but you when you are disciplined are guilty...
12. Yet—you must stand before your parents in submission—owning your sins—owning your guilt—owning your chastisement...
13. Notice [2] children must submit during discipline—by this I mean you should never squirm, wriggle, or twist while being spanked...
14. To submit yourself to their discipline honors them—you are telling them—that they know better than you what you need...
15. You are submitting your will to theirs—you are submitting to their God-given authority—you are in fact submitting yourself to God...
16. Notice [3] children must submit after discipline—by this I mean you are not to harbor any resentment against your parents...

D. By overlooking weaknesses

1. Another way parental honor is expressed—is that we refuse to expose their sins and shortcomings to others...
2. This is common way in which many children dishonor their parents [especially older children]—they repeat their failures to others...
3. But in opposition to this—an honorable son or daughter—never speaks about their parents but to praise or honor them...
4. For example—think of this scenario—two teenaged children are talking about their parents—one says something like this...
5. My father and mother are so outdated—they never let me do anything—they never give me what other teenagers have...
6. Or else—one of them begins to expose a certain sin or fault within their father—he was fighting with my mother—he yelled at my sister...
7. Young people—one thing is very obvious—your parents will sin—and they will sin often and even greatly...
8. But you dishonor them if you repeat their sins—you are never to lie and portray your parents better than they are...
9. But you are to do two things—[1] cover over their sins—and again by this I simply mean—you are to never expose their sins...
10. This can be illustrated in Noah’s two oldest sons, Shem and Japheth, in Gen.9 Noah planted a vineyard, became drunk, and fell asleep uncovered...
11. V23—“but Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father’s nakedness...”
12. What an honorable thing this was—here was their father, whose behavior was shameful and sinful, and yet his two sons cover over the shameful of their father...
13. Notice [2] forbear with their faults—by this I mean—deal with their sins patiently—reminding yourselves that you too sin often...

14. Heidelberg Catechism Q104—“What does God require in the fifth commandment? A. That I show honor, love, and faithfulness to my father and mother and to all who are set in authority over me; that I submit myself with respectful obedience to all their careful instruction and discipline; and that I also bear patiently their failures, since it is God’s will to govern us by their hand...”
15. Notice [3] magnify their virtues—this means—you are to speak positively of them—praising them to others...
16. Obviously I am not here advocating lying or bragging—but it honors your parents to speak well of them to others...
17. Prov.31:28—“her children rise up and call her blessed...”—they rise up before others and speak well of their mother...

#### E. By helping with responsibilities

1. A lazy child fails to honor their parents—but here I go behind the general responsibilities of the home—such as cleaning your room, taking care of your pets, mowing the lawn, or taking out the garbage...
2. But I’m especially speaking to the older children, who have the privilege of honoring their parents by going beyond mandated duties, and assist with other areas in the home...
3. For example, young ladies helping their parents with the younger children, or with some of the domestic responsibilities of the home...
4. Young men, assisting their fathers by asking them for ways they can help, to assist in the overall maintenance and well-being of the home...
5. But in contrast to this a child who fails to go beyond what’s expected or demanded—a child who does just enough to get by...
6. But this form of honoring continues even after you’re married and have a family of your own—honoring them by assistance...
7. Matt.15:1-6—“then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, 2 "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." 3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 "For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' 5 "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me *is a gift to God*" -- 6 'then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition...”
8. 1Tim.5:3-4—“Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God...”
9. Here the apostle uses the word “honor” as equivalent to “material assistance”—the church are to honor widows as defined by v5...
10. But notice the church is not to support widows if they have able children or grandchildren—“let them first learn to show piety at home [that is true and practical religion]...”
11. This is to be shown by—“repaying their parents”—that is—the child or grandchild is to honor their widowed parent by assisting them...
12. Thus while this text refers to honor shown a widowed parent—there is a larger principle—children honor their parents by assisting them in any way possible...

#### F. By responding with gratitude

1. Children must be mindful of all that their parents have and are doing for their benefit—an unthankful son or daughter does not honor their father or mother...
2. Let me illustrate this by two scenarios—think of the young child who chronically complains of what their mother cooks...
3. They complain about breakfast, they complain about lunch, and they complain about supper—is such a child honoring their parents...
4. Or think of an older child—who complains because their parents are unable or unwilling to purchase for them some of the extras...

5. What a dishonor it would be for a young lady to complain, that she hasn't designer dresses as does her friends...
6. But in contrast to this think how honoring it is for a child to receive the provisions of their parents, with gratitude and thankfulness...
7. My wife attempts to instill this principle into our children by reminding them their possessions have been purchased by the sweat of their father's brow...
8. But the same could be said of the mother—children, I trust you know something of all that your mother endured in bringing you into this world...
9. As the apostle could say in Gal.6:17—"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus..."—so mothers can say—I bare on my body the marks of child-birthing...
10. We could in fact, refer to these as marks of honor and valor—think of a soldier who returned from Iraq, having received several large scars from the war...
11. Think of the honor such a young man would deserve—what a tragedy it would be, if he were received with ingratitude and treated with dishonor...
12. But my young friends you don't need to wait for our troops to return from Iraq to find a soldier to honor, for you have a hero in your father and a heroine in your mother...
13. They bear upon their bodies and souls, the scars of a battle in many ways as fierce as the war in the Middle East—oh honor thy father and thy mother...

#### G. By showing tangible affection

1. While it is true that the concept of "honoring" has similarities regardless if it's slaves honoring masters or citizens honoring governing authorities...
2. When it comes to parental honoring there are additional elements—for example—children honor their parents by loving them...
3. Children—did you know you honor your parents when you express love towards them—either verbally or physically...
4. This can be illustrated in our responsibilities towards pastors, 1Thess.5:12—"we urge you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake..."
5. In short you are to honor them—but notice how—respect them—esteem them—and love them—because of their work on your behalf...
6. Well children—if your pastor is to be esteemed highly in love for his work on your behalf—how much more your parents...
7. You are to respect them—you are to esteem them—but you are to love them—and you are to express that love tangibly...
8. Let me clarify—to merely attempt to honor them by showing love without these other things is hypocrisy...
9. There are occasions in our household when a child will tell me she loves me—and I will exhort her to show it by obeying me...
10. But children—listen to me very carefully—tangible expressions of affections are a very important part of parental honoring regardless of your age...

#### III. The Command Encouraged

1. Here I want to end with a few quick encouragements to parental honor—[1] honoring parents is a divine commandment...
2. V2—"honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise"—that is—the first of the Ten Commandments with promise...
3. The command to honor father and mother is the fifth commandment written by God's hand and spoken with His own mouth...
4. Thus you should honor your parents because it is the command of God—children—it is never wrong to obey because you commanded...

5. But remember what we learned last week—you should want to obey because you are in the Lord—thus the law comes as the law of Christ...
6. Jn.14:15—“if you love me, keep my commandments...”—children should honor parents out of love for Christ...
7. Notice [2] honoring parents is a command with promise, v2—“honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise...”
8. What is the promise, v3—“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth”—that is—that it will be eternally well with your soul on the new earth...
9. Do you want to know the essence of this promise—it is heaven—and all the happiness that is associated with it...
10. Does this mean—we go to heaven because of our obedience—do we live forever in heaven because we honor our father and mother...
11. NO—of course not—we go to heaven because we have Christ—but when we have Christ we obey His commandments...
12. And if we don’t obey His commandments—then it’s apparent we don’t have Christ—our obedience reveals the condition of our souls...
13. But what I want you to notice is this—in order to encourage you to honor your parents—Paul reminds you of this blessed promise...
14. If you are obeying your parents in the Lord—that is attached to Christ by faith—and you are honoring them because it is right...
15. If you are obeying the commandments of God because you love and trust Him—this will end in eternal and everlasting happiness...
16. Thus we obey His commandments not to earn the promise—but we obey His commandments because He has graciously given us the promise...