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Sermon Notes

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Spirit-Filled Children Honor and Obey Their Parents

Ephesians 6:1-3

We come in our journey in Ephesians to the final chapter, and it continues with Paul's commands to families

This is part of the Spirit-filled life that Paul is laying out for us in this amazing little book... the life that flows from salvation through faith in Christ:

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

We have been chosen from before the foundation of the world by grace... Christ atoned for our sins by his blood... we heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation... having believed, we were marked in Christ with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit; we were saved by grace through faith completely APART FROM WORKS... but now, we have a life to live for his glory... a life filled with GOOD WORKS:

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

These works build the eternal, invisible structure that Paul describes at the end of Ephesians 2:

Ephesians 2:19-22 God's household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

This amazing spiritual structure, this eternal "temple" in which God will live forever with his people by his Spirit is the CHURCH of Jesus Christ, an invisible spiritual STRUCTURE rising ever higher, ever more glorious with "living stones" put into the spiritual walls...

1 Peter 2:5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house

This magnificent, glorious structure is presently UNDER CONSTRUCTION by the advance of the gospel all around the world... every day, new "living stones" are being rescued from Satan's dark kingdom and being fitted and placed by the Spirit of God into

this spiritual temple... from “every tribe, language, people, nation” these living stones are being rescued... once they were DEAD, now they are ALIVE in Christ

Now... I believe in the end, we will find in heaven that the overwhelming majority of those living stones who have been truly and eternally saved through faith in Christ were first and primarily evangelized by their own parents to trust in Christ!! I don't know that this is absolutely true, but it lines up with my sense of church history

Missionaries go to unreached people groups and lead key bridge people to Christ... leaders in the community, perhaps, or others... not usually children, but adults. They disciple these adults and train them in the gospel, and urge them to lead others to Christ... the first people they inevitably turn to are their own FAMILIES... their parents, their siblings, their children... some hear and believe, some reject and persecute... but within two or three generations, there are thousands of Christians in that country... and by far most of them are the children of believers—converted to Christ when their hearts were tender... not converted like I was in their late teen years or still less in their thirties or fifties or nineties... but converted soundly and genuinely when they were very young:

2 Timothy 3:15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

This is, I believe, the very thing promised to Abraham at the beginning of the gospel's display through the Jewish nation:

^{NAS} ***Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

The FAMILIES of the earth! God wills powerfully to work through FAMILIES... tribes... languages... along this primary relationship—the PARENT-CHILD relationship

The healthy Christian family is a GREAT MAGNIFICENT MACHINE for the production of children of God—not in an automatic way, but in a beautiful display of the kindness of God.

So we come to Ephesians 6:1-4, in which the patterns of raising the next generation of Christians is established

Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise-- ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." ⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

I. The Blessings and Challenges of Children

A. Children are one of the greatest blessing God can ever bring

1. In our selfish, anti-child culture, we have to reestablish biblical doctrines about what an immeasurable blessing children really are!

Psalm 127:3-5 Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. ⁴ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. ⁵ Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

2. The blessings of children are similar to the blessings of godliness Paul spoke of

1 Timothy 4:8 ... godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

In a similar way children “hold promise” for both the present life and the life to come

IN THE PRESENT LIFE... children hold PROMISE

When Noah was born, his father Lamech called him “Noah” which sounds like “comfort”, saying:

Genesis 5:29 "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed."

I think also of the words spoken to Naomi when Obed was born to Ruth, her daughter-in-law:

Ruth 4:13-17 The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!" ¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. ¹⁷ The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. ...

the father of Jesus, her Savior!

3. So, children hold promise for this present life... in more ways than we can count
 - a. The joys of watching them grow up and develop... speaking their first words, taking their first steps, continuously acquiring more and more capabilities... it is a STUNNING thing to watch
 - i) I remember when Christi and I were missionaries in Japan, and we were LABORING to learn the Japanese language... meeting weekly with a tutor, learning long lists of vocabulary and studying grammar,

listening to audiotapes of proper pronunciation, stumbling along through painfully slow progress

- ii) MEANWHILE, there in my own home were our two children, Nathaniel and Jenny—Jenny in particular is in my mind, because she turned ONE YEAR OLD soon after we arrived; and by the time we left two years later, she was basically fluent in English... no vocabulary cards, no audiotapes, no textbooks, no tutoring sessions—just normal toddlerhood, and the free gift of fluency in her mother tongue!
 - iii) I bet there were some 1 year old Japanese kids in that same city of Tokushima who learned Japanese fluently over that two year period like Jenny learned English! That's NOT FAIR!!
 - iv) Actually, that's AMAZING!!
- b. So also all you parents can testify how many EARTHLY blessings come from having children... the precious moments that can never be repeated and that you treasure forever... the words they mispronounce, the artwork they do that gets put onto the fridge, the gifts they make with their own hands, the way they hug you with their sweet little arms and tell you they love you; the way they prize your approval and drink in your wisdom and heed your lessons and GROW GROW GROW before your very eyes
 - c. How they are constantly changing like a sunset's continuously changing hues—from vivid yellow and red one moment, to a deeper red and purple... you look away, and look back five minutes later and its changed again... so it is with these children God gives us
 - d. And as they move into older childhood and begin to ask you the deepest questions of life, and challenge your ability to articulate scripture, the amazing shared experiences you have—at beautiful national parks, or climbing mountains, or at the ocean—
 - e. Soon they are teens, almost adults but still wrestling with immaturity at many levels—so intelligent, so gifted, so full of promise
 - f. You are along for the ride, able to celebrate their amazing achievements in sports, or academics, or in music, or the arts, or socially
 - g. Then come the later blessings—walking your daughter down the aisle to give her away to someone else's beloved son; or to watch your son accept someone else's precious daughter as his wife... then, in the course of time, if the Lord wills, to become grandparents... I'm told you have mostly all the joys and mostly none of the challenges!!

h. SO... it is clear that children hold out promise for THIS LIFE... that's why the birth of a baby is such a WONDERFUL THING, celebrated with JOY by the family of God

4. But the REAL HOPE for us as Christian parents goes beyond all of these RICH EARTHLY blessings...it is rather for the LIFE TO COME:

1 Timothy 4:8 ... godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

5. the real hope for us Christian parents is that God will use us and others to save their souls, and that we will spend eternity in heaven with them:

3 John 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

6. My purpose in these two sermons on the parent-child relationship is to be an instrument of God's grace to strengthen and bless BOTH parents AND children for the glory of God

7. So... children ARE unquestionably a blessing

8. BUT... children are also a challenge... and honestly, some of the greatest griefs I've ever seen have been of parents over their children or even children in reference to their parents

B. The Challenge of Children

1. Honestly, the challenge of the parent-child relationship is the spiritual warfare caused by sin...

2. The Bible teaches the clear doctrine of ORIGINAL SIN... that every human baby is born "in Adam" with a powerful SIN NATURE that makes life miserable for both the parent and the child

Romans 5:12 sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned

1 Corinthians 15:22 ... in Adam all die

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

3. This sin nature may not be obvious to parents immediately when their precious little child is wrapped up in a sweet-smelling blanket, but it becomes more and more obvious the older they get—it is a "fanatical commitment to self"

Police Study in San Francisco on Juvenile Delinquency, cited by Jim Elliff:

“Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered: he wants what he wants... his bottle, his mother’s attention, his playmate’s toys, his uncle’s watch, or whatever. Deny him these and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness which would be murderous were he not so helpless. He is dirty; he has no morals, no knowledge, and no developed skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, but all children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in their self-centered world of infancy, given free reign to their impulsive actions to satisfy every want, every child would grow up a criminal, a killer, a thief, and a rapist.”

4. Along with this is the fact that the PARENTS THEMSELVES have their own sin natures... we still struggle with pride, anger, selfishness, and our own habitual sins... and our children pick up our sin patterns far more easily than they do our good habits as Christians
5. AND there is Satan’s constant attack on the family—invisible spiritual demonic attack every single day on your peace and love and joy; and the evil world system that pours acid on your efforts to raise your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord

C. The Future of American Parenting

1. I do tremble for where we’re headed in our country!!
2. We have moved quickly beyond gay marriage and those issues... we are seeing an acceleration of worldly attacks on the theological foundation of Christian parenting... the RIGHT and RESPONSIBILITY parents have to bring up their children in the gospel of Jesus Christ
3. We Christian fathers feel the authority and responsibility we have to say to the surrounding pagan world:

Joshua 24:15 if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

4. But I was on a website recently that said every child should have the freedom to choose for himself or herself what religion they will follow

Website: “humanium.org”

Listed the fundamental rights of children...

“Right to Freedom”: “Children have the right to have an opinion different from their parents... a child should not be the victim of the pressure of an adult who would try to force him/her in order to influence them in their

opinion... Children have a right to be informed, so they can make their own minds about important subjects...

“Freedom of religion”: “Children have a right not to undergo constraint or oppression which would injure their freedom of religion or other rights. Children can freely determine the religion or the conviction of their choice... a religion doesn’t have to be imposed on them.”

To that worldview, it is actually ABUSIVE for parents to train infants and toddlers on Christianity!

5. Carolyn showed me a tweet some time ago that just shocked me at how weird things are

It said effectively that it’s child abuse to name a newborn baby before they’ve had the chance to choose their own gender!! You should just use gender inclusive pronouns like “babyself” or “toddlerself” instead of himself/herself

So in the name of individual freedom, all children should be free to choose everything for themselves, and not have anything forced on them... yet it is plain that, in the Bible, parents are to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord... and we are to saturate them with the gospel from infancy:

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Basically Satan’s world system wants to pour its training into the children, and God wants us to pour His Word into them... the world is clamoring for the power to shape their minds from infancy!!

6. Along with this is the danger of an ever-encroaching GOVERNMENT and its feeling of authority to shape your kids’ minds and hearts
 - a. In Nazi Germany, it was fundamental that the kids belonged to the state, and they were thoroughly indoctrinated in Nazi propaganda in the class room, and required to take part in the Hitler Youth movement
 - b. So also in Communist countries during the Cold War, it was clear that the government considered the education of the children in their ideologies to be fundamental to their future:

John MacArthur cited a letter he received from a man in his church who had emigrated from Czechoslovakia during the Cold War:

“My wife and I experienced [the dissolution of the family unit by the Communist government] from our own experience. The godless doctrine pumped into little children’s souls brought up the most cynical generation you can imagine. Most young people do not believe in anything, not even God. ... The godless system destroyed in great part the will of the people, and produced an obeying array of cynical, indifferent, disposable robots. ... The same thing is beginning to happen to us now in this country...”
 [MacArthur, *Ephesians*, p. 310]

So, needless to say, parenting is incredibly rewarding but also overwhelmingly challenging!

The issues we face here are of infinitely vital consequence!

II. God’s Goal for Parenting: His Glory in their Salvation

A. What is the Purpose of Parenting?

1. What does God want from us as parents? What does he want from our children as children?
2. That is the vital question for every Christian to ask
3. Same purpose as what God is intending in creating the world, and in his overarching plan of redemption

The purpose of God in parenting is HIS OWN GLORY IN THE ETERNAL SALVATION of both parent and child.

God is intending HIS OWN glory in all this!

The salvation of souls is what glorifies Him the most

B. Key Verse

Mark 8:36-37 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Question: What good would it be to gain the whole world, yet forfeit the souls of your children? What would you give in exchange for the souls of your children?

Parents want to give their children so many things: good character, education, fine clothing, a comfortable lifestyle, a fruitful career, athletic success, academic achievement, acceptance at a prestigious college, all the material blessings of prosperity, good morals, a legacy and heritage, sweet memories, etc.

These earthly advantages are all blessings from God...

But what would it profit you or your child if they gained ALL OF THESE THINGS, and lost their souls on Judgment Day?

If after they have been well-fed, well-clothed, well-educated, well-employed, and worldly successful so you can boast to all your friends in your retirement home about your kids and grandkids and how awesome they are in this world... if they have to hear these dreadful words:

Matthew 25:41 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

These sermons I hope will help toward the end that GOD WILL BE GLORIFIED in the final salvation of you and your children

So, we turn to the text... to the Bible

I want to argue for the sufficiency of scripture in parenting!!

C. "You Didn't Come with a Training Manual!!"

1. My Dad used to say that!
2. It's as though we were so complex, he couldn't figure out what to do with us and was left on his own to wing it
3. BUT there was a training manual for parenting... an ancient one, fully sufficient for everything you will ever face

2 Timothy 3:15-17 from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Today: we'll focus on Ephesians 6:1-3, the command to the children; next week, God willing, the command to fathers (ultimately to mothers, too)

Today, the words come to children... but parents should listen too; because it is the parents' job to hold these commands, these words in front of their children so they obey them

If the parents don't train their children to honor and obey them, they never will! So the parents really need to embrace these words before the children do; then turn and teach them to the children

III. God's Command to Children: Obey and Honor Your Parents

Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise-- ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

A. "Children": offspring of any age who are still in their parents' home

1. Obviously the need to obey ends at some point... clearly at marriage

Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

2. But if a person is still financially dependent on his/her parents, there is still a sense of obedience to the rules of the home

Genesis 28:7 Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan Aram.

B. Obey: Literally to "hear under"

1. To listen with attentiveness and to carry out the commands

2. This is the issue of submission addressed in Ephesians 5:21

^{CSB} Ephesians 5:21 ¶ submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

3. Submission = obedience to God-ordained authorities

4. Authority = the God-given right to command

5. Parents are the first authority figures the child will ever know

6. From infancy they need to be trained to obey their parents... this is coming straight from God

a. Before they have the capacity to comprehend an invisible being who created them and whom they must obey (Almighty God), they first must submit their wills to visible beings—parents—who command them from infancy

- b. This obedience is commanded from God... to obey parents IS to obey God for the child
7. Modern parents seem squeamish about wielding their authority
- a. We'll talk more next week about the limits of parental authority
 - b. BUT parents need to accept the burdens and responsibilities of commanding their children and expecting obedience
8. Pattern of obedience:

Matthew 6:10 "May your kingdom come; may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven..."

- a. As the angels obey God in heaven!!
- b. ALL THE WAY, RIGHT AWAY, WITH A HAPPY SPIRIT
- c. All the way = full obedience... partial obedience is disobedience
- d. Right away = prompt obedience... to delay is to disobey
- e. With a happy spirit = heart-felt obedience... God loves a cheerful obeyer

Simply put, parents are going to be covering their children's daily lives with commands, and first and foremost, the PARENTS should expect their children to obey them... if the children, in their sin nature, in the ADAMIC selves, sense weakness, lack of resolve, they will whine, and evade and complain and simply rebel

So, there will be parental commands about how they eat (table manners), how they dress, what time they go to bed, what chores they do, what the standards are at church, the cleanliness of their rooms; parents can and will make schedules for their children and expect them to be carried out

AND (as we'll discuss next week), if the kids don't obey, it will be the parents' job to discipline their disobedience until they repent and change their behavior

Hebrews 12:10-11 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

9. "In the Lord"

- a. Done as CHRISTIANS... as a part of a Spirit-filled walk with Christ
- b. Done as an act of worship and submission ultimately to God
- c. The child needs to be trained that obeying Mom and Dad is a subset of obeying Christ
- d. Obviously it is vital that parents give GODLY COMMANDS... we will be held accountable for how we command our children

C. The Moral Beauty of an Obedient Child: "FOR THIS IS RIGHT..."

- 1. Paul says that children should obey their parents in the Lord BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT
- 2. Right = morally beautiful, upright

Amos 7:7-8 This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸ And the LORD asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" "A plumb line," I replied. Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel

- 3. The Law of the Lord is PERFECT... it is UPRIGHT... not crooked

Psalm 19:8-9 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

- a. A disobedient child is morally a horror to heaven
- b. A willfully rebellious child is living a crooked life, morally twisted

D. The Ten Commandments

- 1. Paul quotes the Ten Commandments here

Ephesians 6:2-3 "Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise-- ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

- 2. Children should be taught that it is GOD who is commanding them to honor their parents
- 3. Teach them how these Ten Commandments were originally given... the people assembled at Mt. Sinai, a dreadful darkness, the Lord descended from heaven in a dark cloud with lightning and a terrifying trumpet call; how the ground beneath their feet shook

4. God spoke these words WITH HIS OWN VOICE, and all the people heard it and trembled
5. This is the LAW of God! It cannot save their souls, but it has the power to condemn their souls eternally

Romans 6:23 The wages of sin is death

1 Corinthians 15:56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

6. This commandment will be the basis for your kids beginning to see their need for a Savior

Romans 1:29-30 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents

Romans 3:20-24 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹ ¶ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

E. What is the Command? HONOR your Father and Mother

1. The word “honor” is something you do with your heart... in attitude
2. The word “obey” is something you do with your body... in action
3. So, these two words cover everything: HONOR and OBEY your parents
4. Honor = to reverence, to esteem, hold in high regard, respect
 - a. It is related to WORSHIP... but obviously worship is reserved for God alone
 - b. But it is similar to it... it is a HEART ATTITUDE of reverence and respect that parents MUST TEACH their children to have for their parents
 - c. Note: the honor is equally for BOTH Father AND Mother

Application: Do you teach your children to honor both of you? Fathers, do you make certain that your children are respecting their mother and speaking words of honor toward her? Mothers, do you teach your children how important it is for them to honor their Father? Do you permit sass...

backtalk... disrespectful mutterings... dishonoring gestures? Since this is a HEART attitude, in the end it is BEYOND any parent to MAKE their children honor them... but you can expect and command obedience that shows honor; you can discipline actions that show dishonor; you can go over this command regularly, teaching it in the Bible; and you can PRAY for your children to have a genuine heart of honor toward both parents

NOTE: to honor a father or a mother does not imply they are SINLESS! Every father and mother SINS!

Genesis 9:21-23 *When Noah drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. ²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. ²³ But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness.*

IV. God's Promise to Children: Earthly and Heavenly Blessedness

Ephesians 6:2-3 *"Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise-- ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."*

A. Paul Zeroes In on the PROMISE OF BLESSING that Comes with Obedience

1. Blessedness: "that it may go well with you..."
2. Long-life: "that you may enjoy long life on the earth"
3. This language of "blessings and curses" connected with the law is well-known and a major part of the Old Covenant
4. Fascinating that Paul brings it in here in the New Covenant era
5. There is an "Old Covenant" feel to parenting
 - a. Children will have to be taught the simple fact of blessings and curses tied generally to obedience and disobedience
 - b. It is actually up to the parents to construct a system of rewards and punishments for obedience/disobedience
6. But here, God is lifting our eyes up to Him... He is saying honoring your parents is the beginning of a life that I will richly bless

B. QUALITY of Life... and QUANTITY of life: that is may GO WELL WITH YOU, and YOU MAY LIVE LONG on the earth

- a. Let's take the second—quantity of life: “That you may live long on the earth”
- b. The wages of sin is DEATH... and God does put rebellious children to death if their wickedness is not repented from and they grow wild

Genesis 38:7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the LORD's sight; so the LORD put him to death.

Genesis 38:10 What [Onan] did was wicked in the LORD's sight; so he put him to death also.

Leviticus 10:1-2 Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. ² So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

- c. God does still do this... Ananias and Sapphira died in the New Covenant era
 - d. So we want to protect our children from the WAGES OF SIN... and they begin in root form with rebellion against the parents
2. QUALITY of Life: “That it may go well with you...”

- a. God is promising a life of blessing for a child who learns early to honor his parents IN THE LORD
- b. Early conversion, early fruitfulness, early patterns of obedience transferred to Christ ultimately, having learned to obey parents... this is the BEST POSSIBLE LIFE you can live!

V. Applications

A. Delight in the Blessing of Children!!

Psalm 139:14-17 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. ¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

B. Parents: Embrace Your Responsibility to Evangelize Your Children

Mark 8:36-37 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Saturate them in the gospel from infancy

2 Timothy 3:15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Charles Spurgeon:

Some wrongly say: "Do not teach your children; they will be converted in God's own time if it be his purpose, therefore leave them to run wild in the streets," will certainly both "sin against the child" and the Lord Jesus. We might as well say, "If that piece of ground is to grow a harvest, it will do so if it be God's good pleasure; therefore leave it, and let the weeds spring up and cover it; do not endeavor for a moment to kill the weeds, or to sow the good seed." Why, such reasoning as this would be not only cruel to our children, but grievously displeasing to Christ. Parents! I do hope you are all endeavoring to bring your children to Christ by teaching them the things of God. Let them not be strangers to the plan of salvation. Never let it be said that a child of yours reached years in which his conscience could act, and he could judge between good and evil, without knowing the doctrine of the atonement, without understanding the great substitutionary work of Christ. Set before your child life and death, hell and heaven, judgment and mercy, his own sin, and Christ's most precious blood; and as you set these before him, labor with him, persuade him, as the apostle did his congregation, with tears and weeping, to turn unto the Lord; and your prayers and supplications shall be heard so that the Spirit of God shall bring them to Jesus." Charles Spurgeon, "Children Brought to Christ and Not to the Font"

C. Train Your Children Carefully SO They May Bring You Delight

Proverbs 29:17 Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

D. YOU Have to Embrace the Commands "HONOR" and OBEY" ... if you don't think they need to do this, they won't

E. Children: HONOR and OBEY!!

1. Let me speak directly to you teens
2. I know by now you are fully aware that your parents are not perfect
3. You are able to see their weaknesses, their inconsistencies, their sins
4. Those failings, however, do not excuse you from this command... to HONOR your father and mother, and to OBEY them!!

5. Remember how Noah's sons covered him in his sin and didn't dishonor him at his lowest point
6. Honor and obey !!!
 - a. This is fundamental to your own walk with Christ!
 - b. If you feel you've grown rebellious toward your parents, REPENT and ask God's forgiveness; then go to your parents and ask theirs as well
 - c. Ask God to fulfill this law in you by the power of the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Next week:

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.