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# **Being The Hands of Jesus In Our Families**

## **Honoring Our Parents**

### **EPHESIANS 6:1-3**

#### **Introduction**

1. How many of us in this room have parents? Notice, I didn't say "living parents," but "parents."
2. Of course the answer is, all of us.
3. Without parents, none of us would be here today.
4. How do we treat those parents?
5. Do we respect them, obey them, honor them?
  - a. No doubt there are some who may already have a question:
    - 1) Did not God say that a man was to "leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife" and that they would "become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).
    - 2) Didn't Jesus quote that passage in Matthew 19:5, and didn't Paul also do the same in Ephesians 5:31.
    - 3) Doesn't that mean that I no longer have to obey my parents since I have begun my own family?
  - b. I also realize that there are some listening to this lesson today who might say,
    - 1) "My parents do not deserve my respect."
    - 2) "I respect my mother, but not my father, he was abusive to me or he left my mother when I was young."
    - 3) "How can I obey my parent(s) when they tell me to do things I know

are wrong?"

- c. Not everyone listening to this lesson grew up in a home with godly parents?
  - d. The question you may be asking is this, "How am I as a Christian to respond to my parent(s) in such a way that I remain faithful before God in my life?"
6. As each of you think about these things, please also consider that your own children are learning from your example.
  7. As Christian parents we want to leave them a Christlike example so that they will respond to us in the same way as we age.
  8. In our text today, when Paul addresses the "children" in the church, his focus is more on relationship than age.
  9. As we will see in a moment, it can include those of us who are adult sons and daughters.
  10. We, too, are expected by God to honor our parents.
  11. So let's look at how we can be the hands of Jesus in our homes by honoring our parents.

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## **I. "Obey Your Parents In The Lord"**

### **A. WHAT DOES SUCH OBEDIENCE LOOK LIKE?**

1. What does it mean to "obey your parents in the Lord"?
2. Look with me for just a minute at this word, "obey."
  - a. It comes from two Greek words (*hupa*) "under" and (*kouō*) "to listen".
  - b. It literally means "to listen under."
3. Obedience requires conscious listening on our part.
4. If we don't really listen, then we can't really obey.
5. How many times did our parents ask us "are you listening to me?"
6. The idea is to truly listen with the intent to understand and do what we are told.

7. This does not mean that we, as sons and daughters, are to obey our parents if they ask us to do something that . . .
  - a. Is morally wrong
  - b. Goes against Scripture or
  - c. Our Christian conscience
8. Paul's point is that we, as children, are to obey our parents "in the Lord" — that is, in those things which are consistent with Christ and His Word.

**Slide 3****B. OUR MOTIVATION FOR SUCH OBEDIENCE — IT "IS RIGHT"**

1. "Virtually every culture and every society recognizes and is indeed built on the premise that children are to respect and obey their parents."<sup>1</sup>
2. When this isn't present, cultures begin to decay.
3. In Romans 1:30, Paul says that one of the traits of those who have dismissed God in their lives is that they are "disobedient to [their] parents."
4. In 2 Timothy 3:2, he includes it in a list of those things to be found in what he called "the last days," a time when a society is breaking down.
5. But here, in Ephesians 6:1, Paul reminds us that it "is right" for us as children to obey our parents in the Lord.
6. In Colossians 3:20, Paul wrote, "Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord."

**Slide 4****II. "Honor Your Father and Mother"****A. IT IS A COMMANDMENT OF GOD**

1. Our obedience toward our parents is also seen in the fact that we honor

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ*, Preaching the Word Commentaries (Crossway: Wheaton, IL, 1990) p. 198.

them.

2. Paul says that you and I should honor our parents because it “is the first commandment with a promise” (v. 2).
3. In other words, it is God’s command that we honor our parents.
4. It is the fifth of God’s ten commandments which He gave to the people of Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16).

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.” (Exodus 20:12)

“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.” (Deuteronomy 5:16)

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### **B. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “HONOR” OUR PARENTS?**

1. It means that we “revere” them, we “value” them.
2. We attribute high status to them by showing them respect.
3. Sometimes the best way to understand something is by looking at its opposite.
4. In Mark 7, we read of a time when some Pharisees and scribes had come up from Jerusalem, apparently to Capernaum, to observe Jesus and His disciples.
5. They noticed “that some of His disciples were eating with impure hands,” that is without having ceremonially washed their hands (Mark 7:2).
6. So, they asked Jesus about it, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?” (Mark 7:5).
7. Jesus called them “hypocrites” and said, Isaiah was right about you when he prophesied, “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of

men” (Mark 7:6-7, ESV).

8. He said to them, “you neglect the commandment of God, while you hold to the tradition of men” (v. 8).
9. In fact, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition” (v. 9).
10. What was the commandment of God which they set aside? Actually, there were two:
  - a. “Honor your father and your mother” (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16).
  - b. “He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death” (Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9).
11. Jesus then told them, “but you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is . . . given to God,’ you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that” (Mark 7:11-13).
12. According to Jesus, we honor our parents both positively and negatively:
  - a. Positively, we see that their needs are cared for in their old age.
  - b. Negatively, we make sure that we do not show them any disrespect.

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### **C. THERE ARE PROMISES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS COMMANDMENT**

1. Paul give us two reasons for honoring our parents.
2. First, he wrote, “that it may be well with you” (v. 3a) — In other words, it will affect how well we live.
3. Second, Paul added, “that you may live long on the earth” (v. 3b) — Simply put, it will affect how long we live.
4. All of us know that some children die early regardless of whether they were obedient or disobedient to their parents.

5. As a general rule, however, children who obey and honor their parents tend to live better and longer (cf. Proverbs 1:8-9).

“Hear, my son, your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching; indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck.” (Proverbs 1:8–9)

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6. Why is this true? There are several reasons:
  - a. When we obey our parents, we will regularly be warned against the dangers which lay before us (i.e., physical dangers).
  - b. We are spared the bad habits and bad friendships which tend to ruin and shorten our lives.

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers” (Psalm 1:1).

- c. When we obey and honor our parents, we are more likely to develop healthy character traits in our lives.

“Hear, my son, and accept my sayings and the years of your life will be many.” (Proverbs 4:10)

“The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.” (Proverbs 10:27)

“The eye that mocks a father and scorns a mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it.” (Proverbs 30:17)

## Conclusion

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1. So, what are you and I to take away from this lesson today?
2. If you are a parent yourself, and your parents are still living, remember, your

children will learn how to honor and obey you by the way you treat your parents.

3. While there may be times when you may have to disobey your parents because they have told you to do something against God's will, be sure to explain to your own children the reason for your decision and how God expects you to live.
4. Even if you must disobey them in such matters, continue to show them respect because they are your parents.
5. For those of you who as children have yet to leave home and start a home of your own, remember, God expects you to always obey your parents in those things which are consistent with Christ and His Word.
6. We live in a world that has lost its way when it comes to the way that parents are treated.
7. Let's be the hands of Jesus by showing others what godly marriages and godly homes look like.
8. If you have failed in this area of your life, please know that God is ready to forgive, if you will humbly confess your sin and seek His forgiveness.
9. If you have yet to come to Christ in humble repentance and obedient faith, asking Him to wash away your sin in the waters of baptism, why not do so today?