

Honoring Parents

The Challenge

- A. We live in perilous times of the last days with the rise of contemporary Christianity (II Tim 3:1-5).
 - 1. We can preach the word (II Tim 4:2) and separate from them (II Tim 3:5) to follow brother Paul.
 - 2. But we can also stand against their compromise of God's word by exalting the honor of parents.
- B. Disobedience to parents is a symptom of Christians who love pleasure and only a ritual (II Tim 3:2).
 - 1. God's judgment on men and nations includes child rebellion against parents (Is 3:5; Rom 1:30).
 - 2. A form of godliness without the power thereof (authority) does not promote the honor of parents.

The Definition

- A. It is important for a full lesson to clearly distinguish between obeying parents and honoring parents.
 - 1. God's commandments are exceeding broad, and we do not want to miss anything (Ps 119:96).
 - 2. The fifth of Ten Commandments is parental honor, not child obedience (Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16).
 - 3. It is the honor of parents that has the gracious promise and reward attached (Ephesians 6:1-3).
 - 4. It is possible to obey your parents, but not honor them; but you cannot honor and disobey them.
 - 5. Honor is the fullest expression in Scripture regarding parents, so we ought to emphasize it.
- B. The Bible gives numerous connections to help us understand the nature of true honor of another.
 - 1. Honoring widows is specifically defined as financial support (I Timothy 5:3-16; Matt 15:1-6); you can see clearly that this obligation extends far beyond bare obedience to their requests.
 - 2. Observe how financial support agrees with honoring the Lord financially (Pr 3:9; I Tim 5:17-18).
 - 3. Observe that children considered here are clearly older than minors. Forget age in parental honor.
 - 4. Observe how this is called requiting parents – repaying them for work as parents (I Timothy 5:4).
 - 5. Observe that it is an article of our faith and something infidels do quite well (I Timothy 5:8).
- C. The Bible gives positive synonyms and connections to help us fully appreciate what honor means.
 - 1. Honor is connected to fear: we should fear parents in the reverent way we fear God (Lev 19:3).
 - 2. Honor is connected to respect: for the parallelism in the text compares the two (Leviticus 19:15).
 - 3. Honor is shown by rising up: for you are to stand up before old men with gray hair (Lev 19:32).
 - 4. Honor is making high: for God made Israel a high nation with a name and honor (Deut 26:19).
 - 5. Honor is connected to glory: for God crowned Jesus Christ with both honor and glory (Ps 8:5).
 - 6. Honor is connected to preferences: for honor of another is preferential treatment (Rom 12:10).
 - 7. Honor is connected to reverence: for parents are to be revered by their children (Heb 12:9).
- D. The Bible gives negative antonyms and connections to help us fully appreciate what honor means.
 - 1. Honor opposes cursing: and it was punished by death (Ex 21:17; Lev 20:9; Prov 20:20; 30:11).
 - 2. Honor opposes setting light: speaking disrespectfully was cursed (Deut 27:16; Ezekiel 22:7).
 - 3. Honor opposes despising when old: your declining mother deserves your honor (Prov 23:22).
 - 4. Honor opposes refusing to bless: so it includes the positive effort of blessing parents (Pr 30:11).
 - 5. Honor opposes mocking with eyes: disrespectful body or facial expressions are sin (Prov 30:17).
- E. We may practically apply these definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and connections to parental honor.
 - 1. Honoring your parents is figuring out unspoken desires and fulfilling them without their request.
 - 2. Honoring your parents is eagerly doing their every command, not merely cooperating with them.
 - 3. Honoring your parents is never jesting with them, to them, or about them and the parental office.
 - 4. Honoring your parents is openly communicating about everything in your life when they ask.
 - 5. Honoring your parents is giving gifts, providing service, and offering help without being asked.
 - 6. Honoring your parents is complimenting and praising them directly and before and to others.
 - 7. Honoring your parents is cheerfulness in all dealings with them, rather than begrudging respect.
- F. Consider the great honor Moses showed even his foreign father-in-law in Israel (Exodus 18:7-8).
- G. Consider how our Lord was thinking about taking care of His mother while dying (John 19:26-27).

The Importance

- A. Parental honor is the fifth commandment of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:12; Deut 5:16).
- B. Parental honor is the first commandment to which God attached a great promise (Ephesians 6:2-3).
- C. Parental honor is a commandment with capital punishment attached for violating it (Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18-21; 27:16; Proverbs 20:20; 30:17; Matthew 15:4; Mark 7:10).
- D. It is an article of our apostolic faith and something infidels even know to do, and it is to be charged upon the Lord's people so that they might be blameless (I Timothy 5:4,7-8).
- E. It is an assumption of Scripture that children honor and reverence parents (Malachi 1:6; Heb 12:9).
- F. It is a way we can adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:15-16; I Pet 2:12; 3:16).
- G. It is a way we can defy and reprove carnal Christianity in these perilous times (Prov 28:4; Eph 5:11).

The Reward

- A. Since all men want to live well and long, we should emphasize this duty with a promised reward.
- B. You can do more for your longevity and health by honoring your parents than by diet or exercise.
- C. Since we shall all one day be older, we must set an example for our children to follow toward us.
- D. Since we all want our children to honor us some day, are we sowing for this future return (Gal 6:7)?
- E. Age brings evil days without pleasure (Eccl 12:1), so we should give parents pleasure when we can.
- F. God acknowledges that supporting parents is something good and acceptable to Him (I Tim 5:4).
- G. Consider the blessing God pronounced on the honorable descendants of Jonadab (Jeremiah 35).

The Details

- A. If your father or mother is unconverted, you still owe them the full honor God expects for the office.
- B. Of course, if your father or mother is a scornful fool, you must apply wisdom in giving them honor.
- C. In-laws and stepparents are your father and mother by marriage: honor them with full rights as well.
- D. Guard against excessive familiarity. Keep some distance between parents and children for respect.
- E. There is nothing wrong with a good nursing home, as long as parental honor is completely fulfilled.
- F. Marriage is an act that ought to receive full parental blessing at any age (Genesis 27:46 – 28:9).
- G. Do your parents have any outstanding request regarding reconciliation with a sibling? A visit to see them? Visit of grandchildren? Pictures of the family? A family reunion? Treatment of the children?
- H. Do your parents have any health, financial, personal, marital, or spiritual needs you could provide?
- I. Could you creatively honor them with a card? A call? A visit? A dinner out? A gift? And so forth?
- J. Do you praise your parents to your children, with and without your parents' presence? A good test.
- K. Have you honored your parents by expressing your love, admiration, and appreciation for them?