

How to treat each other

Ephesians 6:1-9

Paul has emphasized being filled w/ the Holy Spirit & walking as Jesus walked, kids included. John the Baptist was filled w/ HS from his mothers womb, Samuel dedicated to the Lord as a child & God spoke to him & thru him as a child. First obligation for children is to obey parents and honor father & mother as Law of Moses commands. It comes w/ a promise of praise 'well done' & long life.

Roman society was not ideal for children, they were **throw-away** kids, unwanted, abused, abandon, sexually taken advantage of & even put to death. Not much different from today--movie ***Sound of Freedom*** shows the exploitation of children & could have been filmed in Paul's day.

Patria potestas--Roman fathers were all powerful & had absolute authority over his family. He could sell his child as a slave, make them work in his fields in chains if he wanted, punish them as he saw fit, even impose the death penalty. His authority lasted a lifetime as long as the father lived.

Father's could reject offspring at birth. Marriage was in freefall, partners were changed on a whim, so children born were abandoned, left in the Roman forum & became the property of the first to collect them at night to be raised & sold as slaves or put in Roman brothels. The gospel liberated children from this darkness & brought them into the light of Christ.

1 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 BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

In the Lord is key in contrast to Rome's routine form of child abuse.

Assuming mom & dad are Christians & following the biblical mandate to raise their children in the ways of the Lord.

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Proverbs 6:20 My son, observe the commandment of your father, And do not forsake the teaching of your mother; 21 Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. 22 When you walk about, they will guide you; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you. 23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life...

But in every age and society there are kids who hate God & parents...

Pr 30:11 There is a kind of man who curses his father, And does not bless his mother. Pr 30:17 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. (Their body will lie unburied for the birds to feed on)

This kind of attitude is evident in the end times right before Jesus returns 2Tim 3:1,2 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents (refuse to be persuaded), ungrateful, unholy,

J V McGee "Disobedience to parents is the last & lowest form of lawlessness to occur on this earth. Disobedience to parents is one of the characteristics of the last days. Today we hear of many cases of children rejecting parental authority & even killing their parents! This is indicative of the times in which we live."

Obey lit to hear under w/ attitude to do—**Naylene**-when the board of education was applied to the seat of learning cured the hearing problem

C H Spurgeon Faith & obedience are bound up in the same bundle. He that obeys God, trusts God; & he that trusts God, obeys God.

If we desire Christ to be a permanent guest in our life give him all the keys to your heart, don't let one closet be locked from Him, give Him access to all the rooms of your life.

Honor father & mother describes the kind of child out of which obedience is born. To obey is a duty to honor comes out of a heart of respect & love for parents. Honor is the **attitude** behind the **act** of obedience.

Mark Twain once said "It is better to deserve honors & not to have them than to have them and not to deserve them."

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With a promise of--wellbeing, good to come, prosper--a healthy society
“What happens when children receive no instruction or correction from their parents? This would be social anarchy, a sad description of much of our modern society, where the break-up of families has been accompanied by a void in the exercise of parental authority & the result is not well.”

Israel went into the bondage of Babylon because of parental dishonor **Ez 22:7** ‘**They have treated father & mother lightly w/in you (w/ contempt)**. Always a reverse of God’s blessings which are His curses when parents dishonored.

Long life is not saying that kids who died young did not honor their parents **but** the idea that a life is not merely measured by its length but by its quality. Some have lived a miserable life into their old age while others have lived a blessed life for only a short time in comparison. God kept them from a great deal of *sins trauma* while keeping them close to Himself. The lack of years were made up for by the superabundant riches of God’s presence in their life.

Isaiah 57:1 *Good people pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come.NLT..taken away to be spared from evil*

Samson & **Absalom** two examples of boys who did not follow this command & their lives were cut short. Samson, a judge, died a young man at hands of Philistines. **Absalom** rebelled against his father King David & run thru by spears while hanging in a tree by his hair. At the same time **Jonathan** obedient son of king Saul was David best friend & companion who once said ‘You will be king & I will be next to you...1Sam 23:17 was cut off as a young man in his prime of life.

4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

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Fathers who are in the Lord have their responsibility. Don't provoke the kids to anger—push to point of wrath, not let up but drive them to place of aggravation & exasperation.

Child now brooding, simmering anger that won't die, a smoldering bitterness that will never forgive, unwilling to reconcile. Pushed them to the point of no return.

Martin Luther's father was very strict, to the point of cruelty. He was so severe to Luther that all his days Luther found it difficult to pray: "*Our Father.*" The word father in his mind stood for nothing but severity.

What does a father do to provoke a child to anger: favoritism, comparison, unrealistic expectations, over-indulging, rescuing, discouragement, lack of rewards, unfulfilled promises, treating them like boarders rather than children, not admitting mistakes, ridiculing, neglecting, abusive words, sarcasm, physical abuse.

Luther used to say: "Spare the rod & spoil the child—that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple to give him when he has done well." **Rewards**

Roman historian Seneca said... "We slaughter a fierce ox; we strangle a mad dog; we plunge the knife into sickly cattle lest they taint the herd; children who are born weakly & deformed we drown." **Christians do the opposite, give more abundant honor**

J V McGee There is the story of the father whipping the little boy & saying, "*Son, this hurts me more than it hurts you.*" The boy replied, "*Yeah, but not in the same place!*" These little ones who simply will not obey need to be spanked. They need a trip to the **woodshed**. A child should never be whipped while the parent is angry; this is stated very clearly. We are never to provoke our children to wrath, which will happen if they see that we are simply venting a mean disposition on them. **But they should be disciplined.**

Bring them up...it first begins w/ the scriptures Moses writes instructions for the fathers "*And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; 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. Dt 6:6-7*

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Fathers heart condition needs to be dealt w/ first. We can tell them but we need to **own** Gods word in our life, hide it in our hearts--then give it to our kids. If you use the bible as a club don't be surprised if you drive the kids away from you & the Lord. It's always a heart issue of love & understanding. We are more sever w/ our kids when we see them doing things we did. Our sin look horrible on them.

Long ago when learning a trade, the apprenticeship began while still a young person & in the learning process, moved in w/ the teacher & worked w/ him in his profession 24/7 observing his every move & following his instruction. In so doing the apprentice learned much more than the **trade itself**, for he was being taught a whole way of life. This concept is inherent in "*bring them up*". Thru the word & personal example parents will nurture their children & bring them up to live for Christ in a practical, daily way.

Some time ago the Houston police department put a flier out called '*How to Ruin your Children*' **guaranteed 99% effective**. #1 Begin w/ infancy to give the child everything he wants. #2 When he picks up bad words, laugh at him. #3 Never give him any spiritual training. Let him wait until he's 21 yrs old & then let him decide for himself. #4 Avoid using the word 'wrong'. It may develop a serious guilt complex. #5 Pick up everything he leaves lying around, so he will be experienced in throwing responsibility on everyone else.

5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, w/ fear & trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

Application today employer & employee in their proper roles as Paul dealt w/ husband & wife, children to parents ***now our life lived by the power of Holy Spirit in the work place***. We are told Roman Empire had over **6 million** slaves & many cities in Asia Minor slaves outnumbered the citizenry. Roman citizens considered it beneath them to work, so most work was done by slaves, even in the professional fields, doctors, teachers, secretaries to Roman Emperors. Some master were kind--others cruel. Slaves were tools, had no rights, a non-person. Sold at auction to highest bidder & branded by owners w/ insignia burned into forehead. Gospel gave dignity & hope of a new life, immortality w/ eternal liberty & glory.

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Fear & trembling carries the idea of a passion to please. A sense of reverence for God as the position of a slave is a calling & mission field to win his master & household.

Eyeservice lit *eye slavery* or working when master watching & slacking when he is gone, *service for appearance sake*

Men-pleasers--trying to make an impression on others--acts only to please men. Willing to *sacrifice* integrity, *respectability* to please someone of higher rank---*people-pleaser*

McGee says it means there should not be any taint of duplicity. There should be no two-facedness. There should not be the licking of the boots of the employer when he is around and then stabbing him in the back when he is away. Such action should never be in the life of a Christian.

From the heart--center of our being, who we really are, seat of emotions out of the heart flow the issue of life, as a man thinks in his heart so is he.

7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. 9 And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

God's providence whatever condition you find yourself, slave working for a master do it as unto Lord & not to men. Serve your *hard to get along w/* boss as you would if he was the Lord

In so doing you'll receive back from the Lord. Reality in 1st C church masters and slaves worshiped together as equals.

We can't minimize good works--not for salvation, but our life as a Christian. When Jesus said *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works & glorify your Father in heaven' Matt 5:16* What you do as a Christian has an effect on those around you. And God will reward us at *bema seat*. We think BG, Chuck but faithful to what God calls us to—*84 yrs praying behind the scenes Lk 2:37. Give cup cold water....Matt 10:42*

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Masters need to be educated in the things of the Lord. *Irresponsible power* is often leads to abuse. How a master treats a slave reveals character because they can too easily mistreat them & think nothing of it.

So Paul stuck up for the slave & exhorted masters to act w/ Godly principles & not take advantage of their high position. **Boaz** *'The Lord be w/ you' & the Lord bless you'* Ruth 2:4 respectful to workers & sensitive to plight of these poor women—mutual respect instead of *threatening*

No partiality What God hates? **Pr 20:23** *Differing weights are an abomination to the LORD, And a false scale is not good.* Jesus doesn't look at a persons position, power or popularity on earth, it has no advantage in heaven—what a person sows, so shall they will reap from God. It is how we treat each other according to God's work and instruction. May we take heed & follow after Him.