

Obeying Parents

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[0 : 00] This is the evening service at Holy Trinity on the 27th of May 2001. The preacher is Steve Brown.

His sermon is entitled Obeying Parents and is from Ephesians 6, verses 1-9. Well, we don't need no one to tell us what to do.

Oh yes, we're on our own and there's nothing you can do. So we don't need no one like you to tell us what to do. We don't refer to the past when we're showing what we've done.

A generation gap means the war is never won. The past is in your head, the future's in our hand. Because I'm a brat and I know everything.

And I talk back. Because I'm not listening to anything you say. Well, what a song, hey? It's pretty rebellious, isn't it? Only a couple of weeks ago, Melissa and I took the youth group roller skating.

[1 : 10] And this song, Prisoner of Society by The Living End, came on over the speakers. And all the kids in the rink started singing, chanting, yelling out the lyrics.

You see, kids love this song. It represents their feelings towards the older generation. It communicates their frustration with their parents.

They love it because deep down, it's exactly how they feel. Kids love this song and who can blame them? Maybe the living end are right.

Maybe our parents have done a lousy job. Why should we listen to them? After all, what have they given us? What have we inherited from our parents?

We inherited the 60s from our parents. The decade of free love. No commitment. Single parent family units. Drug abuse and hippies.

[2 : 13] We have inherited the 70s from our parents. The decade of bad fashion. Disco.

More drugs. The continued dismantling of the family. We inherited the 80s from our parents. The decade of neighbours and leg warmers.

AIDS. And other sexually transmitted diseases. The destruction of our natural resources. The promotion of protected sex amongst our adolescents at school.

We've inherited the 90s from our parents. The decade of individualism. The right of the individual over the good of the community. People selfish to the core.

Worried only about themselves accumulating things. In their lives. The increase in sexual promiscuity. Ignoring the dangers of STD and AIDS.

[3 : 23] Political correctness. The blatant promotion of alternative lifestyles by loud minority groups. The question that needs to be answered is this.

Why should we bother listening to them? Why should we bother obeying and honouring them? The living end's answer is pretty simple to these questions.

We don't refer to the past when we're showing what we've done. Our generation gap means the war is never won. The past is in their head. The future's in our hand. Because I'm a brat.

Because I'm a brat. And I know everything. And I talk back. Because I'm not listening to anything you say. You see, the living end thinks that parents, the older generation, have messed things up.

They're obsolete, old hat, irrelevant, boring. And we, the young people, have got the future in our hands. So don't listen to the old.

[4 : 33] Don't obey them. Don't honour them. That's what the living end thinks. But what about God? What does God think about this whole issue?

Well, our passage tonight is Ephesians 6, 1-4. And the first three verses say this. Children, obey your parents in the Lord.

For this is right. Honour your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise. So that it may be well with you. And you may live long on the earth.

This Bible passage is challenging, isn't it? It runs against the living end. It runs against our friends and our peers. It runs against the whole trend of society.

But I want to tell you tonight that this passage goes a long way back. Before the living end. Before our peers and our friends.

[5 : 42] And before even our society. Once upon a time. Far away from here. Far away from Australia. There were some people.

And these people were handpicked. Chosen. Selected. To be special. And different from the rest. And because they were special and different.

They were given heaps of good stuff. Lots of presents. They were given their own bit of land. To live in. Free of charge. They were given cities and houses to live in.

Free of charge. They were given crops and water wells. And vineyards. Free of charge. They were given safety from other people around them. Free of charge. But in order to remain special and different.

In order to keep all this good stuff. Free of charge. They were to acknowledge the one who had made them special and different. They were to acknowledge the one who had given them all this really good stuff.

[6 : 50] You see they were supposed to always thank him. Unlike the rest. They were supposed to always worship him. Unlike the rest. They were supposed to always honour him. Unlike the rest. So Moses.

Tells. These special people. A way that they can remain. Special and different from the rest. Moses gives Israel. Some hints.

Some hints about how they can continue to remain special and different. And he gives their children. The children of these special people some advice.

If you want to turn with me to Deuteronomy 5. 16. We'll have a look at this advice for the children. Deuteronomy 5.

16. Honour. Honour. Your father and your mother.

[7 : 56] As the Lord your God commanded you. So that your days may be long. And that it may go well with you. In the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You see God thinks that these children do have something to gain from their parents. God thinks these children can inherit some good stuff from their parents.

God thinks these children will benefit from honouring their parents. And they will honour their parents. If they follow their parents' example of always thanking God.

They'll honour their parents. If they follow their parents' example of always worshipping God. They'll honour their parents. If they always follow their parents' example. Of always honouring God.

and if they do this if they honour their parents these special kids will live long in the land everything they do will work out it will go well life will be good really good but this advice from Moses is also a bit of a warning isn't it there's a flip side to it you see if they don't honour their parents if they don't follow their parents' example of always thanking God if they don't follow their parents' example of always worshipping God if they don't follow their parents' example of always honouring God then they won't live long in the land everything they do will not work out it will be frustrated it won't go well life will be hard, miserable unrewarding and painful you see our passage tonight in Ephesians says basically the same thing doesn't it the same thing for those who are special and different today for those who are special and different today for those who are Christians in a Christian family today that's the context of this passage

[10:13] Christian families children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right honour your father and mother this is the first commandment with a promise so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth Paul's advice is to Christian kids today it's relevant for you today children if you're a child here today this is relevant for you you kids here at Holy Trinity Doncaster obey your parents honour your parents follow your parents' example of always thanking God of always worshipping God of always obeying and honouring God follow your parents' example of always trusting in the Lord Jesus in his death and his resurrection follow that example because if you do you'll live long on the earth that's the promise you'll live long on the earth everything you do will work out and go well in other words you'll be blessed by God you'll be made special and different by God but some children from Christian families of course they don't do this do they tragically they follow the living end when they say and if you count to three you'll see it's no emergency you see I'm not the enemy just a prisoner of society you see they follow the living end they don't want to be special and different like their parents handpicked and protected by God they don't see the importance of trusting in the Lord Jesus in his death and resurrection it seems irrelevant to them instead they become a prisoner of society just like the rest because they fail to learn the history lesson don't they because Israel's children didn't obey their parents

Israel's children didn't honour their parents they didn't follow their example of thanking God worshipping God or obeying God Israel's children became prisoners of the societies around them because they didn't think it was important to be special and different they didn't think it was important to be handpicked selected chosen by God and they caved into society following the rest and they were punished destroyed sent into exile as a result so tonight I appeal to you children here children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right honour your father and mother so that it may go well with you and you may live long on the earth I've got an article here

Monday's paper in Herald Sun I do read the Herald Sun sorry written by Andrew Bolt and it's an interesting article and the article is about a survey which was done by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the survey claimed that fewer people are having children because they don't like the ones they see I repeat that it's fantastic isn't it fewer people are having children because they don't like the ones they see one person in the article said they children are not well mannered these days how the parents bring them up they're dreadful you see the article didn't have a dig at the kids it blamed the parents for the increase in youth crime and the problems with youth today let me quote some of Andrew Bolt's statements the childless are right we're breeding too many unlikable children and I blame the parents and then there are our tragic figures for youth suicide depression eating disorders and truancy all of these are signs of children who have not been socialised as well as they deserve no it's not the children who are failing us it's parents who are failing them that's pretty harsh on your parents isn't it but your parents will probably say to me

Steve it's hard bringing kids up in our society how are we as parents supposed to do this how are we supposed to bring them up how are we to bring our children up right with so many competing views well God's got some advice for your parents tonight Ephesians 6 verse 4 says this and fathers do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord now Paul singles out fathers here because I think that in his context fathers were responsible for this instruction and also fathers probably tend to have a bit more of a problem with frustrating their children but I think that we ought to see it as both as well I want to ask all the parents here tonight are you providing an example of always thanking

God for your children are you providing for your children an example of always worshipping God obeying God honouring God are you providing an example for your children of always trusting in the Lord Jesus in his death and resurrection are you showing them how to be special and different from the rest from our society because I mean my question is to you are you doing that because Moses also gives some hints to the parents of the children of Israel some hints about child rearing turn to Deuteronomy 6 4-9 Deuteronomy chapter 6 verses 4-9 hear O

[17:17] Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart recite them to your children and talk about them when you're at home when you're away when you lie down and when you rise bind them as a sign on your hand fix them as an emblem on your forehead write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates that's pretty full on isn't it immerse yourself in God's law in his word parents don't use your authority over your children to frustrate them don't use your authority over them to control them don't use your authority over them to dominate them a tower above them you up here them down there but instead bring them up in the instruction and discipline of the

Lord provide the example of always thanking God of always worshipping God of always obeying God and honouring him provide the example of trusting in the Lord Jesus provide an example of prayer and Bible reading for them show them how to be special and different from the rest in this society of ours finally children I come back to you you must obey do what your parents tell you honour them follow their Christian example parents you must provide that example and not frustrate them the living end wants you children to believe that there's a war going on the war between you and your parents the generation gap means the war is never won they say tonight we've seen that

God doesn't think so God thinks you have something good to gain from your parents God thinks you can inherit some really good stuff from your parents God thinks you can benefit from obeying and honouring your parents children obey your parents and the Lord for this is right honouring your father and mother so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth Andrew Bolt of the Herald Sun thinks your parents have done a miserable job God God God God God thinks you can prove Andrew Bolt wrong God thinks you can have families that are special and different from the rest God and fathers do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the

Lord we're going to have a time of confession right now let's rededicate ourselves to obeying and honouring our parents let's rededicate ourselves to bring up our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord let's pray dear Lord we confess that we have not obeyed or honoured our parents help us as children to do that help us to follow their Christian example help us to always thank God and worship God and honour and obey God trusting in the Lord Jesus in his death and resurrection help us to do that when we see our parents doing that dear

Lord we're sorry for frustrating our children help us help us help us to do help us to bring them up in a discipline and instruction of the Lord teaching them to thank God and worship God obey and honour God to trust in the Lord Jesus dear Lord we thank you so much you forgive us when we wrong you through Jesus Christ and his death on the cross help us now to do these things that we've talked about tonight Amenkan P yapt J

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