

Eph. 6:1-3 The Necessity of Parenting

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[0 : 0 0] A God, the God of creation, the God of redemption, is a God of order. God is in the business of bringing order out of chaos.

And to go in the direction away from order into chaos or to disorder is straying from God's purpose. And in the home, in the household, to stray from God's purpose or to go in the direction of disorder and chaos is to stray from God's calling for households.

And we've seen within the household or the household code God's calling for husbands and wives. So the duty for husbands and the reason given why and then the duties for wives and the reason given why.

And after having dealt with the duties of husbands and wives, he then comes to the duties of children or the relation between children and parents.

Now, you may have noticed that in our services, we have children present. And this isn't because of a lack of having a volunteer to take them out and preoccupy them with something else.

[1 : 1 3] It is quite intentional that we have children in our services in the means of grace and as such, children hearing the word of God. And having children in the service, they're present to hear the word of God this morning.

And in this text and in this sermon, we will see what is more or less the discussion of the why of parenting. The why of having orderly child-parent relations or, if you will, the necessity of orderly children.

Now, again, our text is Ephesians 6, 1 to 3, but we will begin our reading in 5.15. Ephesians 5.15.

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

And do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always in all things to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.

[2 : 3 6] Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body.

Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that he might present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

This is a great mystery when I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

[4 : 02] Children, obey your parents and the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.

Lord, again, we thank you for your word, that we have divine testimony.

We thank you for what your word says, and we pray that by your spirit you would lead us into all truth, that you would illuminate your word to us, and help us to know and understand, and that you would not only grow us in knowing your word, but in living it out and doing your word.

We thank you for the gift of children. I pray, Lord, that you would help us to rightly understand your order for child-parent relations.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So our text this morning, again, is verses 1 to 3 of chapter 6, and in these three verses, we see that God's household order of child-parent relations has temporal and eternal significance and implications.

[5 : 20] So we will look at what our text says about children's duty, as well as natural law and reasons for obedience, reasons for children's obedience.

So first of all, the child's duty, or the duty of children. Now, notice how our text starts off. When we've looked at the household code, when speaking to husbands, it starts off by saying husbands, and then the husbands are to understand their duty and the reason for it, and then also as wives, addressing wives and then their duty and the reason for it.

And notice who is now being addressed in verse 1 of chapter 6. It starts off by saying children. Now, this is quite significant, and we don't want to pass over it too quickly, but here children are directly addressed as being present in the congregation.

That means that children are expected to be present in the service and in the means of grace. Not only are children expected to be present, but children are expected to be paying attention.

To address children and to give them specific duties and reasons, they are to be present and paying attention. Not only so, but participating in the means of grace.

[6 : 44] The child's presence in the service is not merely just filling a seat, but paying attention and participating and hearing the word, hearing the word read, hearing the word preached, and singing the word, and in the praying of the word.

So they are present and participating and paying attention in the congregation. So the children are here addressed. So if you are here this morning in this church service, and you are a child living with your parents under the authority of your parents, then when you hear in this text where it starts off by addressing children, then you can hear insert your name.

You are being addressed in this text. God is speaking to you through this text. So this should perk up your interest and attention as God is here speaking to you and addressing you.

So where it says children, insert your name, and then understand what is addressed to you. So children are here addressed, and they are expected to be at church to hear this.

This is significant because there is nothing more important in the world than the means of grace. So for children who are here and who are hearing this, understand that there is, you might even wonder at times, why do I have to sit here through this service?

[8 : 10] Maybe you've seen other churches where they dismiss the children in the service, so the children aren't there. So you might wonder, why do we sit through the service? Why do we not have a child's program?

Why is it so important that I be in the service and that I sit still and that I pay attention? Nothing is more important in the world than the means of grace.

This means that playing sports with your friends is not more important to your soul than the means of grace. This means that taking a nap is not more important to your soul than the means of grace.

And this means that going for a walk to get away from the service is not more important than the means of grace. Nothing is more important than the faithful preaching of the word of God in the assembly of the saints, in the Lord's house, on the Lord's day.

There is nothing more important. So this is important for you children to understand that this is the most important thing in the world and that is why it is so important to be here and not be doing other things.

[9 : 15] Perhaps you know of other Christians who are absent for other reasons. But understand that there is nothing more important for your soul than to be present in the assembly of the saints, in the Lord's house, on the Lord's day, to hear the faithful preaching of the word of God.

So, children are here being addressed. Children are present in the service. They hear them being addressed with children. You can insert your name.

And then follows the duty, which starts off by saying, Obey. Now, if you remember the greater context of what we're looking at and even what we read earlier in verse 21, chapter 5, verse 21, it's in the posture of submission.

But, here, the duty that's given is a stronger word than submission. It is obey. Now, obedience, while it certainly involves submission, it is more.

It is obey your parents. And that obedience is in everything. Now, obedience is to be subject to them and to follow their instructions. Now, I've never heard anybody do this, so I don't have anybody particular in mind here, but you've probably been in Walmart, maybe, and you've seen a parent or a mother do this, where they give their child instruction, the child does not obey, and then the parent counts to three.

[10 : 40] Now, what's going on here is that this should never be done because the parent is condoning disobedience on at least three counts.

Obedience, remember, is to be subject to parents and to follow their instructions. If the parent gives the child instructions and the child does not obey, and then the parent says, One, that's one count of disobedience that's been condoned.

And the child has learned they don't have to obey, so the child doesn't obey. And then the parent says, Two, and there has then condoned two counts of disobedience, and the child has learned that this still means they do not have to obey.

And then the parent says, Three, and the child still doesn't obey because they've learned that obedience isn't important. They don't have to promptly obey. So, the practice of counting to three has already condoned disobedience and should not be practiced.

Obedience is being subject to your parents and to follow their instructions. Now, it says to obey, but who does it say to obey?

[11 : 48] Who does God say that you have to obey? It says, Obey your parents. Now, this is following out of the greater context of the nature of marriage.

And we looked at the nature of marriage and the parties of marriage and the fruit of marriage is having children. Marriage, if you remember from the nature of marriage, is man and woman leaving their parents, cleaving together, and being fruitful and multiplying, having being fruitful and multiplying, and blessed with children.

This is now the relation that is under examination. The relation between parents and children. The children are the fruit of procreation.

That is the natural course of life. And you'll also notice that you are to obey parents plural. This includes both parents.

Now, it's interesting because in verses 1 to 3, it states, Obey your parents. And then in verse 2, it says, Father and mother. And then in verse 4, it specifically states fathers.

[12 : 58] But the parents are included in the obedience of the child and their duty to obey them. And this is contrary to the feminist movements of intentional single parenthood, where a woman would seek to intentionally enter into single parenthood.

Mind you, this is a sin-cursed world, and not everything goes perfectly. So there are cases where it's against the intention of the mother, where there is a period of single parenthood.

But the idea of intentional single parenthood goes against God's good design and order for families, for parents.

And the children, under their parents, belong in the family, under the authority of parents. It is under the realm or the sphere of the family that children are under the authority of their parents.

So children owe honor and obedience to their parents. Not only so, but parents, therefore, must command obedience and justice.

[14 : 08] So, again, for all the children here, this is a significant thing to grasp. Because you may not always understand why your parents are asking you to do what they're doing or why they're following through, why there's authority or why there's teeth behind their instruction, which is not being followed.

So, children owe honor and obedience to their parents and parents must command obedience and justice. And this obedience, you'll notice, the text says, in the Lord.

A parent cannot command their child to sin. This would not be in the Lord. Aside from that, the duty is clear, obey your parents in the Lord.

So, what does that mean? What does that look like? What does that work out to? Here, children are to rule their passions and conform them to the light of nature as well as the word of God.

Now, if you're not familiar with that word, passions, passions is the motion of the soul. That is where your soul is in movement towards what is perceived to be good.

[15 : 27] Now, it's not necessarily what is good, but what is perceived to be good. And the passions of the flesh are the responses of a corrupted will choosing evil because it is perceived to be good.

The will is deceived into perceiving evil to be good and there is movement or motion of the soul towards what is perceived to be good.

So, I'll make that statement again. Children are to rule their passions and conform them to the light of nature as well as the word of God. So, that means that they are not to follow their passions into what they perceive to be good and that will make sense shortly, but instead they are to conform, rule their passions and conform them to reason and to the word of God.

And the parent-child relation and household order are God's ordained means of discipline and admonition to that end, to the end of children ruling their passions and conforming them to the light of nature as well as the word of God under the authority of their parents.

What is the extent of this obedience? Well, we understand that it is obedience in the Lord, but children might be asking, well, what if my parents make up what seems to be arbitrary rules and I don't agree with them?

[16 : 53] Must I still obey them in these things? Well, there's a parallel text in Colossians 3, 20 to 21 and it says, the same duty is given, that the extent is in everything.

Children are to obey their parents in everything. So, keeping in mind that children are to rule their passions and perhaps your passions is your flesh is deceiving you into, the passions of your flesh, your will is deceived into thinking that something which is not good is good and that is what you want, but that's not what your parents' instruction is.

Okay? So, some examples. What if, if your mom made a nice, a really nice dinner and it was a big dinner for everybody to eat and she went ahead and she made beans or maybe she made broccoli and believe it or not, she didn't ask you if you were okay with it.

And I don't know, maybe you do like beans and broccoli, but let's say, okay, I see somebody doesn't like it. So let's say you don't like those things, you weren't asked, your mom made it, it's laid out in front of you and you don't want to eat it.

Instead, you would prefer your own meal, something that's different from what everyone else is making and you think that it would be right for your parents to, I don't know, maybe give you a bowl of gummy bears and chocolate and you perceive that that would be good, not what your parents have made you, but that that would be good.

[18 : 26] And your parents give you the instruction that you will eat the food that is prepared for the whole family. Do they have the authority as your parents to instruct you to this?

Well, again, the answer is clear. The extent of the authority is in everything. So that's yes, your parents do have the authority to instruct you to the food, even the food in which you eat because you might not necessarily comprehend that what they have decided is good, not what you perceive to be good.

Another example, perhaps well, perhaps a Saturday evening and what you perceive to be good would be to stay up late watching cartoons all night and you perceive that would be good.

That's what would be good. But your parents instruct you that you will not. Your parents instruct you that you will go to bed at a reasonable time and get a good night's sleep and perhaps the reason they have for it is a good reason that is that you'd be well rested for the Lord's Day to be able to be sitting up straight and paying attention in the service.

But you perceive that staying up late and watching cartoons would be good but that's not what your parents have instructed you. Do your parents have the authority to instruct these things?

[19 : 43] The answer is yes. Obey your parents in everything. And one final example is perhaps a girl who has become a teenager and she sees that the celebrities are wearing clothing which the world is wearing which is immodest.

And she wants to dress in such a way that the celebrities are dressing because she thinks then she would be accepted, admired and seen as beautiful and she perceives that that would be good but her parents give the instruction in which the clothes she's to wear and she's not to wear and she does not agree with it.

Do the parents have the authority to even tell their child clothing standards which they must wear? And the answer is yes. Obey your parents in everything.

So what is the extent of parental authority? What is the extent to which the duty of children are to obey their parents? In everything. Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right.

Now, you might be asking why? And I'm sure as parents you've heard that a lot when you give instruction to your child you hear the response of why. Why must I obey my parents?

[20 : 58] Well, a simple and short answer is that justice requires it. And this, while it might seem to be a small concept by the end of the sermon we will see is a far bigger picture than the mere moment itself.

But justice requires the child's obedience and that is duty according to divine law. In God's word in this very text we've read we have written the command to children to obey your parents and furthermore without getting ahead of ourselves it is not only written it is also right.

So, a child's obedience to their parents why? Justice demands it. It is written and it is right. Now, according to nature it is right and according to divine law it is written.

Therefore, children, when you disobey your parents it is not only disobeying your parents it is rebelling against your parents' authority it is also rebelling against light of nature and is also rebelling against your creator the almighty God and such rebellion whether in action thought or speech is straying or entering into a place of danger and destruction.

So, when you perceive something which is disobedient to your parents to be good you may not see that that is straying into a place of danger and destruction but your parents probably do which begins to paint the bigger picture of the significance of the child's obedience to the parents and this is not just an action it is not just physically with your body carrying out the instructions that your parents give you it is also in speech and in thought the thoughts which you think about your parents and your gratitude towards them as well as your speech the way in which you respond to your parents when they give you instruction.

[23 : 06] Because your parents love you they labor without compromise to bring you back to the safety of obedience. now there's two pictures for this which we'll get into shortly but it's important to understand that considering the fact that when you disobey your parents you're disobeying God you're disobeying what is written and you're disobeying what is right it is leaving a place of safety and going to a place of danger and destruction and it is loving of your parents to bring you back from that place to a place of safety and obedience.

Secondly God's orderly child to parent relations is revealed by both divine testimony and natural law.

By divine testimony it is written and by natural law it is right. So our second point is that of natural law and the fifth commandment is here appealed to in our text.

The fifth commandment there are moral principles behind the fifth commandment. The fifth commandment the moral principle is preserving the honor and performing the duties belonging to everyone in their several places and relations and here specifically in our text it is child to parent relations.

So according to the fifth commandment preserving the honor and performing the duties forbids the neglect of doing anything against the honor and duty belonging to children in their places and relations.

[25 : 01] As such it's important to recognize that disobeying and dishonoring parents is sin. Disobeying and dishonoring your parents is a terrible sin and it is rebelling against God's command and God's order for children.

Now having said that the fifth commandment is here appealed to that draws our attention to the decalogue.

The fifth commandment is of course the fifth of ten commandments which is the decalogue being the ten commandments The ten words and the decalogue of the ten commandments is natural law.

That the principles behind the ten commandments is hardwired into all of God's image bearers. Every human being has natural law the principles the moral principles of the natural law hardwired into them.

It is the ten commandments at Sinai the ten commandments were codified but that was not the enactment of the ten commandments rather we see prior to Sinai a recognition of the moral principles of the ten commandments.

[26 : 11] The ten commandments were the only law that was written on stone and the ten commandments are the only law which was written by the very finger of God. The ten commandments is natural law which is for all people of all time and it is hardwired into all of God's image bearers.

Now having been hardwired into all image bearers that means that even the heathen understand the duty of obeying and honoring authority and child parent relations.

Those who have not had any exposure to any education and have not heard the gospel who have not heard a single word of scripture even they understand by natural law hardwired on them as image bearers of God even they understand the duty of obeying and honoring authorities and child parent relations.

Children obeying their parents it is right. Rejection of this authority is a rejection of God's order and that's what sin is.

Sin is our desire for autonomy. Sin is our desire to not be under the authority of anybody but to be under the authority of ourselves and of course ultimately to not be under the authority of God to be autonomous from God.

[27 : 29] Now it doesn't just say to obey it also says to honor. Now to honor means that there is weight to it.

It is a weighty thing. That obedience to parents is a weighty thing. It is not something that is to be taken lightly. That it is to be seen with much value to revere and to respect parents.

To honor parents. Now we know that a child left to himself will bring shame or dishonor to his mother. Why is that? Why is that that the natural consequences of a child left to himself is bringing shame or dishonor to his mother?

What comes, what is the natural progression, what comes of, we will compare two things. One, allowing self-indulgence versus training to be self-controlled.

What are the natural consequences, what comes of allowing a child to be self-indulgent? versus on the other hand, what comes of allowing a child to be trained to be self-controlled? Or, what would come of where the natural consequences of allowing a child to be worldly versus what would come of having a child be well-ordered?

[28 : 48] And thirdly, what would come of training a child to be ruled, to rule their passions, to be ruled by their passions, versus to rule their passions, to be ruled by reason and scripture?

What is the progression? What comes of it? What is the natural progressions of the two options of each? There are patterns of ignoring authorities.

So, to work it out, what comes of allowing a child to be self-indulgent versus what comes of training a child to be self-controlled, there are patterns to this.

And as such, in the very home, children, when you disobey your parents, or when you even have a posture of not honoring your parents, there are patterns that come of this.

There are patterns that come of ignoring authority. which work out into more significant things in the world. So, you might wonder, why are my parents so insistent that I obey?

[29 : 57] When they give instructions, why is their teeth behind their instruction when I don't disobey? Because of the patterns which naturally follow when a child learns to ignore authorities.

When a child learns to ignore authorities, there ought to be consequences in the home, but when those tendencies have become deep-rooted and they then enter into society and they ignore the authorities of society, there are natural consequences for disobeying those authorities and those authorities do not treat you as lovingly as your parents do when you disobey the authority of your parents.

parents, it is important to remember that the chief end of man is not a child's subjection.

While certainly we are called to discipline and train our children, this is not the chief end. The chief end of man is not a child's subjection.

So what is the chief end of man? Has anybody learned the catechism question? The chief end of man is to glorify God.

[31 : 18] So in the child-parent relations, parents, our chief end in the stewardship of our children is to seek the glory of God.

God. And in seeking the glory of God in child-parent relations, we must consider then the normative use of the natural law.

We cannot use the natural law to save our children. But parents are still called to a right use of the law, both law and gospel.

So children, you need to understand that your obedience of the natural law, so your obedient obeyer parents, your obedience of your parents does not save you.

When you disobey your parents, there is enmity in your relationship which needs to be repaired. So as when you disobey God, there is enmity between you and God which needs to be reconciled.

[32 : 22] So, considering law in its right use, parents are still called to the right use of the law, and we have the normative use of the law. which is a norm that defines the way of righteousness for the regenerate.

So, as parents, parents who are saved are still called to uphold the moral law of God, because we are saved from sin in order to obey God.

And when our children are saved, they are not saved so that they can disobey the moral law of God, rather they are saved in order to obey God. we need to keep the correct perspective of natural law, and there is the right place of law.

Our text says to obey and to honor. So, children, when you are to obey and honor your parents, what does that mean to honor them? It is to have a weighty posture, a disposition, not taking it lightly, a disposition of ready submission to receive instruction.

instruction. When your parents speak and give you instruction, you are to have a ready disposition, ready to receive instruction, and to submit to it.

[33 : 34] To submit to it with joyful obedience. If it is not joyful obedience, it is not obedience. And we say posture, what that means, to have a weighty posture of honoring your parents, is that when your parents speak, everything comes to a stop.

If your parents are trying to talk to you and to give you instruction, and you just ignore them and walk away, or you continue to do what you're doing, you are not truly honoring your parents. Honoring your parents is to value their instruction, to revere and respect them as God's given authorities over you for your good.

When parents speak, everything you're doing stops. You listen attentively with a desire to obey and to respond. thankfully. Now we all should really stop and pause and think about this, of how a child is to honor their parents, and how everything stops, they are in a posture of ready obedience, to receive instruction, to listen attentively, and desire to obey and respond.

thankfully. And we all should ask ourselves, is that our posture before our Heavenly Father? Is this your posture? Are you attentive with reverent stillness to hear your Heavenly Father speak?

And thirdly, children are born with a sin nature, and a failure to correct leads to their destruction. So that brings us to our third point, reasons for obedience.

[35 : 21] Now I don't want this statement to be misunderstood, so parents, it's crucial to understand that you cannot save your child. children. The statement that I made was, children are born with a sin nature, and a failure to correct it leads to their destruction, but parents cannot save their children.

That being said, the results may belong to the Lord, but the duty is still yours. It is God who saves, and it is true that God, by his marvelous grace, saves even the chief of sinners, as we have seen even the the prodigal son.

The results may belong to the Lord, but the duty is still yours. However, this part of the sermon, this part of the text, is addressing children. So children, parents, by discipline and admonition, are drawing you back from danger and destruction, back to safety.

This is very important to understand, so that in the moments when you are not perceiving it to be good, understand that parents, by their discipline and admonition, are drawing you back from danger and destruction, back to safety.

Now, the fifth commandment was quoted, and the Baptist Catechism, it speaks about the Ten Commandments, and the fifth commandment, it talks about the reasons annexed. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, according to the Baptist Catechism, a promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep his commandments.

[37 : 08] Now, if you're familiar with Pilgrim's progress, you will probably remember Mount Morality. Before the Wicked Gate, Christian encountered Mount Morality and thought that that would be the way to the celestial city, but it wasn't.

It only increased his burden. So again, we need to have a right understanding of the law-gospel distinction, and that this promise of long life and prosperity to all such as keep this commandment does not mean that obeying God's law will lead to our salvation.

That requires perfect, exact, entire, perpetual obedience. And everybody who's here can put up their hand and say, I have not kept God's law perfectly, exactly, entirely, and perpetually.

So children, if you have at any time in your life disobeyed your parents, you have therefore sinned against the fifth commandment. And having sinned against the fifth commandment, all sin, as we read earlier, all sin deserves God's condemnation and wrath.

that means that our obedience, while we are still called to obey, our obedience cannot save us. That being said, there is a promise in the fifth commandment of long life and prosperity to all such as keep this commandment, the fifth commandment, to obey and honor your father and mother.

[38 : 42] Now, what it's getting at here is that there are temporal benefits of prosperity and long life. Now, if you read the Ten Commandments, where it's given at Sinai, you'll notice there's a brief difference.

It says, in the land, whereas here, in Ephesians, it says, on the earth. In a post-theocratic world, in this church age, where the elect are scattered across the earth, not living in a theocratic nation, the application of the promise here is on the earth.

That is a promise of long life and prosperity. Now, we might read that, we might think of this differently as the first century families would have when they read it.

We might think, oh, long life, perhaps that means our children will live into their 90s. In the first century, the infant mortality was approximately 50%.

So that means that, on average, of the families, approximately half of the children would die before they reached the age of five. So to hear a promise of long life and prosperity would be of great significance when there's such a high mortality rate of 50%.

[40 : 10] But, this is not a guarantee of long life because this is not a state of glory.

We still exist, we still live in a sin cursed world. This promise is not a promise that every child will have a long healthy life.

Rather, it means avoid the ills that naturally befall the foolish. In Proverbs 15, 10, it says, he who hates correction will die.

But the child who hates correction and does not submit to it that the natural consequences is his destruction, it is his death. There are natural, logical consequences of disobeying authorities.

So children, this should really help to drive the point home of the significance of obeying our parents because there are natural, logical consequences for disobeying authorities.

[41 : 13] And in disobeying the authorities, it is foolish and it leads to the ills that naturally befall such folly. Now, we need to recognize that when children are born, children are not a clean slate of innocence.

They are not innocent and free of sin. We would reject the Pelagian heresy that people have the ability by their own nature to become essentially perfect, to become sinless.

We affirm original sin. Original sin is that by being the prosperity of Adam because of the fall, all of Adam's prosperity are born with a sin nature.

That means that children are not born with a clean slate of innocence but are born with a sin nature. Original sin is moral corruption by nature.

Which means we are born with a disordered soul. We are born with our souls disordered by moral corruption.

[42 : 31] And while a child is not born engaged in all sin, the desire and ability to sin is there in seed form. And Jeremiah 17, 9 says, the heart is deceitful above all and desperately wicked.

Children are born with a sin nature. And parents are called by Scripture to drive the folly of sinful, rebellious behavior far from them.

Spare the rod, spoil the child. Proverbs 13, 24 says, he who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

So children, this is very important to recognize is that when you disobey your parents, and you might think, why don't they just let me get away with it? I see other families in Walmart where kids get away with it.

Why won't my parents just let me get away with it? Why are they so insistent to discipline me promptly? You can see that it is out of love for you and for your good.

[43 : 35] A child left to himself brings shame or dishonor to his mother. It is for the child's good that parents drive the folly far from them. This is good, it is right, and it is loving to bring a rebellious child back from the course of destruction.

If you can get this picture, children, in your heads, then truly, when your parents give you instruction, you will desire to obey them, and when you don't desire, you will understand the importance of why they are disciplining promptly.

So, children, obey your parents. It is right. Nature requires it. Children, obey your parents. It is written. Divine testimony requires it. And, in the greater context, when children become saved, those whom are saved, those who have been called into marvelous light, are to walk worthy.

The greater context of conduct in Ephesians. To walk worthy. Christ delivers believers from the power of sin, not so that they can continue in sin, but that they are freed to obey.

And, finally, remembering that we are not in a state of glory. We are not in a state of perfection, where we are incapable of sinning. However, to live blessedly in this life, or to live a life of prosperity and long life, the fifth commandment, the way to view the promise is as a general rule.

[45 : 11] It does not put children into a state of glory. In a sin-cursed world, with remaining corruption, or those who are not yet saved, there is, as a general rule, prosperity and a long life, as we have seen.

Because there are destructive consequences for disobeying authority. If you become comfortable with disobeying the authority of your parents, you will become comfortable with disobeying authorities in society, in government, in the world, and probably against the authority of God, and there are destructive consequences for such.

So, having drawn out what the text says, let's consider some concluding uses. First one is that there's a promise here given for those who obey their parents, a promise of long life and prosperity.

So, what do we make of the reason annexed to the commandments, and such cases where children who don't live prosperously, or who don't live long on the earth?

So, first of all, we need to understand that this is a sin-cursed world. Being in a sin-cursed world, there is sin, there is pain, there is suffering, and there is death.

[46 : 32] Because there is sin, and God's judgment is over this world. That does not necessarily mean, sometimes, folly will result in death, but that does not necessarily mean that pain, or suffering, or death is an immediate consequence for a specific sin.

But, the consequences of sin is death. So, what do we make of the reason annexed to the commandment in cases where children don't live long on the earth?

We need to recognize and understand that divine providence, and there is divine providence and prerogative of election and regeneration. God saves whom he saves, and it is his divine prerogative.

Not only that, but God is the God who has created all things and the author of all life, and the days of every life belong to God as the creator of all things.

And it is his prerogative to number the days of each life. We do not necessarily always understand why. However, when God does, when God is God, our response is to trust him and to worship him.

[47 : 56] So, what about in cases where it seems contrary to the promise contained in the fifth commandment?

What if children do obey their parents and parents are being faithful stewards according to God's word, but yet there are still cases such as miscarriages, or there are cases such as infant mortality?

The Second London Confession in chapter 10, 3, helps us to really to be at peace in these situations.

Now, there is a distinction between the universal church and the local church. The universal church are all those who are united to Christ. And you could think, for example, the thief on the cross would enter the universal church although it was at the very last moment of his life, so he wasn't a member of the local church.

The local church, where it is a visible manifestation of the kingdom on earth as an embassy, as it were, in a foreign land, the church is to affirm the confession of somebody claiming to be a believer to admit them into membership into the church.

[49 : 17] And then, of course, with the keys of the kingdom, should they discredit that confession than to put them out of the church. Now, this direction, the keys of the kingdom, is for admittance into the church.

But faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and the church affirms the profession based on the public profession that's given. So, what about when somebody is deaf?

Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Does that mean a deaf person cannot be saved? No, that is not the case. Or what about those who are mentally disabled and cannot articulate true faith?

Or what about when a child is too young to be able to express or to demonstrate credible professions of faith? does that mean that they cannot be saved?

Again, the confession truly does help us to be at peace with this. What it says is this, elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how he pleases.

[50 : 30] So also are all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word. So the significance of the first two words, elect infants, we understand that we do not, our affirmation of a profession doesn't mean that only those are those who are saved.

For example, those who are incapable of articulating it or of children who elect infants dying in infancy. But we acknowledge that God has divine prerogative over whom he regenerates.

Children are not born innocent, they are born with a sinful nature. So all who are to enter the kingdom of God are required to be regenerate. Those whom God regenerates, he has the prerogative to do so.

And so, really, we leave it in his providence of whom he saves. and that those whom die before being capable of articulating it or of demonstrating or of confessing it, we acknowledge that those whom God elects, including infants, elect infants, who die in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how he pleases.

So also are all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word. Secondly, children, children who grow up going to church, children who grow up in a home with believing parents, understand that you cannot ride the coattails of your parents' faith into heaven.

[52 : 07] By merely being born into a Christian home, by merely having parents who believe, you cannot ride their coattails of faith into heaven.

Because justice requires payment. And that is why it's so significant to understand the perspective that when you disobey your parents, there's discipline.

When we disobey governing authorities, there's consequences. There's that natural understanding that there's consequences to disobeying God-ordained authorities. Justice requires payment for disobedience, which is why you cannot ride the coattails of your parents' faith into heaven.

Divine justice requires consequences to disobedience. So, have you ever disobeyed your parents? I don't, well, I know that there is nobody that can say, I have always perfectly obeyed and honored my parents with a ready submission to hear their instruction and joyfully obey it.

And you cannot say that. Everybody has disobeyed their parents. Everybody then has sinned by violating the fifth commandment of God. Everybody has sinned against what is written and what is right, and all sin deserves God's condemnation and wrath.

[53 : 29] Which is why it's so important that a right understanding of orderly child-parent relations, that we have that understanding in our mind.

Because in current contemporary, well, at least under the umbrella of evangelicalism, there is a rejection by some of what is called penal substitutionary atonement.

Penal substitutionary atonement is penal, a penalty, substitutionary, of course, in our place, an atonement making us right with God. So Christ's death on the cross was paying the penalty in our place to reconcile us to God.

So why would anybody reject penal substitutionary atonement? Well, because it pleased the Father to send the Son who willingly went and died on the cross. And this, some, in nominal or pseudo Christianity, call cosmic child abuse.

Now, why would somebody ever call it cosmic child abuse? Because they can't grasp the concept that it is right and that it is just when there are consequences for disobedience.

[54 : 49] We might not like that idea, but that is who God is. God is holy. God is just. God demands perfect, exact, entire, perpetual obedience of the law. We have not done that.

We have not obeyed perfectly, exact, entirely, perpetually. So there is consequences. Disobedience requires justice. It requires payment.

The payment which we owe for our sin is too great for us to pay. That is why it pleased the Father to send the Son who took on our nature, who took to himself a body, who assumed our nature, and in our nature lived perfect, exact, entire, perpetual obedience, that which we did not do, that which we failed to do, and paid the payment which we owed.

He suffered and died in our place, substitutionary, to pay our penalty, penal substitutionary, to reconcile us to God, that all those who look to the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved, all who receive Christ, all who rest on Christ alone for salvation.

Penal substitutionary atonement is not cosmic child abuse. It is the height and perfection of love, and justice demands penalty. And this is why diligent correction from your parents points to divine justice, and is necessary for understanding satisfaction of divine justice.

[56 : 15] Let's pray. Our great God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the blessing of children. We thank you for your calling of stewardship of children in obeying parents and parents and lovingly instructing and disciplining and admonishing children.

I pray that you would help us to indeed see the greater, bigger picture that it is written that children are to obey parents, that it is right according to natural law, and that there is a promise of prosperity and long life as there are the natural consequences of those who rebel against their parents and rebel against authority.

It leads to their destruction, and ultimately, Lord, to see that those who rebel against the authority of your authority, your divine authority, leads to destruction.

We thank you for the gospel. We thank you for the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, who died in our place, in the place of his people, of the body of his bride, to pay the penalty that we might be reconciled with the holy and just God.

We pray that you would help us in our duties as children who are under their parents, and as parents under their children, and all of us whom are children of God.

[57 : 43] We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll stand and sing Gloria Patrick.