

CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS: FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING UNTO THE LORD. (COLOSSIANS 3:20)

(SERMON TO THE SAINTS GATHERED AT WESTBORO BAPTIST CHURCH, TOPEKA, KANSAS, ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2021)

There has been one rule from the first child, Cain (Genesis 4:1), to the child just born, for the whole creation of mankind: **“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”** (Colossians 3:20)

Now, in whatever nation, in whatever time, and whether or not that society has recognized the sovereignty of God in all things; this has been the rule for peace, joy, and long life for all: **“Children, Obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”** (Colossians 3:20) Look at these scenes when a society doesn’t follow this simple rule; those societies which are under the curses of God and ripe for destruction and in the big fat middle of apostasy and ruin: Ancient Israel at Isaiah 3:12: **“As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.”** Ezekiel is lamenting the reprobate ways of Ancient Judah, a nation who received direct wrath from God in just retribution, at Ezekiel 22:7: **“In thee have they set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow.”** When you reach the bottom rung of the ladder of human depravity, one of the main condemning descriptions of those people found at Romans 1:18-32, is that they are **“disobedient to parents.”** (Romans 1:30) And the Holy Spirit describing the prime characteristics of the people ripe for destruction from the hand of God in our age, at 2 Timothy 3:1-9: **“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be...disobedient to parents.”** These are not idle words; and the Holy Spirit does not use hyperbole. These are perilous times; and we need good doctrine from God to help keep us in the way of righteousness. They are perilous because children do not obey their parents! Perilous means full of danger or risk, and exposed to imminent disaster or ruin. Kind of like those verses in 1 Peter 5:8-9: **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a**

roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” A roaring lion is universally recognized as “perilous times.” Ask Daniel and Paul. Daniel 6:22: **“My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.”** 2 Timothy 4:17: **“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.”**

In England, Charles Spurgeon, in the 1800s in preaching on our topic today (Colossians 3:20), described: *“Nowadays, there are some children who seem to be at the head of the family, and the parents obey them in all things. This is very foolish and wrong; and when their children grow up, and become their plague and curse, they will bitterly lament their folly in putting things out of joint, and not keeping the house as God would have it kept, the children in their place, and the father in his.”* Brother Spurgeon, you had it good compared to today.

And, followed on the heels of Colossians 3:20 exhortation to the children, is the instruction to the fathers: **“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”** (Colossians 3:21) And, truly, parents are normally to blame in most situations where the child is out of control. But, that’s a sermon for another day. Spurgeon says: *“The duties are mutual. Scripture maintains an equilibrium. It does not lay down commands for one class, and then leave the other to exercise whatever tyrannical oppression it may please. The child is to obey, but the father must not provoke.”*

Children, it is a very simple rule for your survival and success: **“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”**(Colossians 3:20)

Proverbs 4:1-2: **“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.”**

I spend a large amount of my time representing juveniles charged with crime. If I had one piece of advice for every single juvenile client (and parent, for that matter), and I do (I share; that's what I do); this is it: "**Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**" (Colossians 3:20) This practice of law with this rule of law that applies to every case at all times is the easiest in the history of jurisprudence. This advice is easier and better than Jim Carey's fictional lawyerly advice in the movie production of "Liar, Liar." In fact, my business cards, which I place in every child's and in every parent's hand, should recite these words: "**Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**" Thereby, I am the only legitimate candidate for "Lawyer of the Year." If I did not give that advice, I would be engaged in malpractice; in fact, if I failed to give that advice, I ought to mail that law license back to the Kansas Supreme Court, who gave it to me in 1982.

Where else in God's created world, but the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, would you expect to hear good doctrine from God on what children are required to do? 2 Timothy 3:16: "**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.**" Children, today's doctrine is simple: "**Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**" (Colossians 3:20). Or, put another way from Ephesians 6:1: "**Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.**" We want to do those things that are well pleasing and right unto the Lord.

"[N]ot in things sinful, which are contrary to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; in things repugnant to the duties of religion, the ordinances of the Gospel, and the doctrines of Christ, parents are to be neglected and disobeyed. God is to be regarded, and not men; but in all things good and lawful, and in all things that are of an indifferent nature, which may, or may not be done, in these things the will of earthly parents is to be attended to; of which there is a considerable instance in the Rechabites, see #Jer 35:6-10 and even they are to be obeyed in things that are hard and difficult to be complied with, and which are disagreeable to flesh and blood, as the cases of Isaac and Jephthah's daughter show." (John Gill's exposition of the Bible, at Colossians 3:20)

I can hear them now: those people at Westboro Baptist Church are fanatics. Indeed! God endorses that fanatical behavior (“**Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**”) at Jeremiah Chapter 35. We need to be fanatical. And, stop looking at us like we are the freaks. Starting about now (1:00 eastern time on Sundays through 10:00, and anywhere else that they can fill in their schedules) all across this evil country there are stadiums and most living rooms full of fanatics watching NFL football. And, you know the extent that these disobedient people will turn fanatical about almost anything and almost anytime on a dime, except not about God and his word. “**But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.**” Galatians 4:18.

More Gill on Colossians 3:20: “*For this is well pleasing unto the Lord; and is a reason sufficient to engage to the performance of the duty; for whatever is grateful and well pleasing to God ought to be done with pleasure by us, from a principle of love to him, by faith in him, and with a view to his glory; and then such an action is acceptable in his sight through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Alexandrian copy reads, "in the Lord"; and so the Vulgate Latin version.*”

As Matthew Poole says in his commentary: “*In all things; in whatsoever is agreeable to the mind of the supreme Governor, who is absolute Sovereign, #Ac 4:19 5:29.*” Acts 4:19: “**But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.**” Acts 5:29: “**Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.**”

When Paul is wrapping up his brilliant letter to the Hebrews, he offers up a prayer, second to none, earnestly asking for God’s elect, that God would: “**Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**” (Hebrews 13:21) “**And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.**” (1 John 3:22) That is our prime directive: to do those things that are well pleasing unto the Lord and well pleasing in his sight. Not only are all things naked and open unto the eyes with whom we have to do, (Hebrews 4:13), also we stand in his presence, like the prophets, Elijah and Elisha, confessed. See, 1 Kings 17:1: “**And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel**

liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.” (Also see 1 Kings 18:15; and for Elisha see 2 Kings 3:14). Servants, standing in the presence of a King, have two primary duties: to listen (your attention is rapt (completely fascinated by what one is seeing or hearing)) and obedience. You arrogant little pup—you think you have something more important to do, someone more important to listen to; and are you too smart for your own britches to obey what the Lord, your God has told you plainly to do and not do?!? You better check yourself before you wreck yourself!

Do I need to explain to you why you must obey your parents? Every day I find that I must be explaining, constantly. And, I start from this place every time: God, in his sovereignty, manifesting his great love and wisdom for and towards **you (you, personally)**, has put your parent in that position. Just think of where you would be and what trouble you would be in without them. O, the depths of deprivation and depravity in which you would be sinking, but for God’s mercy in the form of your parents. Be thankful! Be happy. Smile. Say, “thank you.” Colossians 3:15: **“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”**

If you’re not satisfied with the short version or you need some more help, I refer you to Hebrews 12:5-13: **“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make**

straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.”

Yes, that’s better. There’s at least several years’ worth of sermons in those verses. The Lord willing, we’ll get to it. And, by the way, there have been a large amount of sermonizing on these verses from this pulpit in the past. So dig in and research it. Where, you ask? See www.godhatesfags.com.

In expounding Colossians 3:20, you know I must remind you of these verses: Exodus 20:12: **“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”** And, see Ephesians 6:2-3: **“Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”** It doesn’t take a genius to figure out that not honoring your father and your mother, by obeying them in the Lord, means your days will be shortened, and that it will not be well with thee. Leviticus 19:3: **“Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.”** Our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh obeyed his parents: Luke 2:51: **“And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”** Children, this requirement is not restricted to your first 18 years. 1 Timothy 5:4: **“But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.”** Just because the Kansas legislature passed a law announcing the age of majority is 18 does not change the rules for children. This commandment is ageless. Proverbs 23:22: **“Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.”**

These are not primarily so-called minors which our Lord Jesus Christ preaches hell, fire and brimstone to in Matthew 15:4-6 **“For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.”**

Our Lord refers to the Mosaic code, where we find these rules:

Deuteronomy 21:18-21: **“If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”**

Deuteronomy 27:16: **“Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.”**

And, see Deuteronomy 5:16, below, for the primary reference.

And Solomon and Agur echo and expand upon them in at least these two places: Proverbs 20:20: **“Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.”** Proverbs 30:17: **“The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.”**

And if you think this is only Old Testament stuff, look at what our Lord Jesus Christ preaches at Matthew 19:19: **“Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”**

So, you have to ask yourself, what does Ephesians 6: 2-3’s “be well” and live long” mean? (**“Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”**) At a minimum it has to be the opposite of what we just read in Deuteronomy and Proverbs. Wouldn’t you say? The language comes from Deuteronomy 5:16: **“Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”** In expounding that verse, Gill reminds us of Absalom, whose disobedience to his father, brought him an early and violent death: 2 Samuel 18:14: **“Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of**

Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.” And, we don’t have to go any further than our next door neighbor to find a prime example of a notoriously disobedient child, who raised hell with the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ here at every chance he got, whose life was cut short in a car crash on that hilly SW 27th street next to the Topeka Country Club Golf Course just west of Topeka Blvd. That is all that child will ever be known for: disobedient as the devil; dead by the hand of God by a violent car crash. The good news: he was the sole occupant of the vehicle.

Let me cut to the chase: I suggest that the good land and the good life that the LORD thy God promises and gives to his elect is not just the temporal life on this earth, but includes that good land and that good life described in Revelation Chapters 21 and 22, ending with this description: **“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”**

I love you. Amen.