

Spirit-filled Children

Ephesians 6:1-3
Halifax: 14 September 2008

Introduction

If you have been here over the last few weeks,

- you know that I have preached a sermon to wives and a sermon to husbands,
 - encouraging wives to be Spirit-filled wives
 - and husbands to be Spirit-filled husbands.

Well today, I am going to preach a sermon to children...

- I am going to encourage you children to be Spirit-filled children in the same way I encouraged your mothers to be Spirit-filled wives and your fathers to be Spirit-filled husbands.
- So children, this sermon is especially for you...
 - But the rest of you should listen too...
 - Some of you have children and some of you will have children,
 - and you need to know what the Lord says to them in His word...
 - And even if you are someone who will never have children,
 - You still need to know what God says to the children in the church so that you can pray for them and for their parents...
 - And of course, there are always those things to apply to you less directly...
 - For example if you are a believer, you are a child of God, and you need to live in a right relationship with Him as your Father...
 - Besides that, the Bible refers to anyone who is in authority over you as a father or sorts—civil rulers, elders in the church, your superiors at work are fathers...
 - In looking at the relationship of children to their parents, you will be encouraged about the kind of relationship you ought to have with those whom God has placed in authority over you.

Okay, with that brief introduction,

- Let me give you a quick outline of what I want to speak about today...
- Children, I want to speak to you about three things the Lord has given you according to Ephesians 6:1-3...
 - First, that you are given a true place among God's people.

- Second, that you are given a commandment of utmost importance.
- Third, that you are given a special promise if you keep this commandment.

I. Children, just look, you are given a true place among God’s people.

A. You can see this because the great apostle Paul in writing to the Saints at Ephesus addresses the children as part of the church...

1. He has been speaking to different sorts of people in the church...
 - In verse 22, he says “wives,” to get their attention, and then he says something to them...
 - And in verse 25, he says “husbands,” and then he says something to them...
 - But when we get to chapter 6 and verse 1, he says, “Children.” Then he says something to them...
 - You see that he includes them as a part of the church.
 - He includes them among the people to whom he is writing...
 - This is no surprise, for in 1 Cor 7:14, Paul says that children who have even one believing parent are saints—that otherwise they are unclean.

2. And now I want you to turn back to chapter 1 and look at who it is that he is writing this letter to...
 - You know, Ephesians is a letter that Paul wrote...
 - a. He starts out by telling them who he is—
 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.”
 - He wants them to know that he is not just writing his own ideas,
 - but he is writing to them as one who is sent by the Lord to speak God’s words...
 - b. But now look at the second part of the first verse and you will see to whom he is writing...
 - It is not to all the people who live in Ephesus...
 - No, it is to a special group of people in Ephesus...
 - It is “to the saints who in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus.”
 - c. Now even Paul, as great an apostle as he was, did not know the heart of every person in the church at Ephesus...
 - 1) There were surely some there who were members of the congregation that did not know the Lord Jesus in a saving way...

- In Acts 20, Paul later warned the elders at Ephesus that there would be some who would arise from their own number who would try to lead the people away from the Lord...
 - Paul did not address his letter to them, but to the ones who were saints and were faithful in Christ Jesus...
 - A saint is someone who is holy—someone who is set apart from others by God’s saving work...
 - That is why he also refers to them as those who are faithful in Christ Jesus—
 - This can be understood to mean that they have faith in Jesus.
- 2) You can see some of the things Paul says about the saints at Ephesus as he writes on...
- In verse 3, he speaks of them as those who have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...
 - In verse 4, he says that they have been chosen to be holy and without blame...
 - In verse 7, he speaks of those who have redemption in Christ...
 - In verse 9, he says that they have an inheritance with God’s people
 - In verse 11, he says that they have believed and so were sealed with the Holy Spirit...
 - In chapter 2, he says that they were dead in sin, but have now been made alive by God’s grace...
 - In 2:12, he says that they are people who were cut off from God’s covenant but who are now brought near by the blood of Christ.

TRANS> And so you see that Paul is writing to a very special group of people at Ephesus—

- to a people who have been blessed with God’s salvation.
- And my point is that children are included among those to whom he is writing!
 - There were wives who were among the saints at Ephesus,
 - there were husbands who were among the saints at Ephesus,
 - and there were children who were among the saints at Ephesus.
 - Children, you are given a true place among the saints.
- This is not only shown from that fact that Paul addresses them in a letter that is addressed to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus at Ephesus...

B. It is also seen in the immediate context where we have his command to be filled with the Spirit.

- This command applies to children as well as adults.
 - Let's look at it...

1. Back in Ephesians 5:18, Paul commanded the recipients of this letter:

- Eph 5:18: Do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.

a. The next three verses (19-21) give examples of what you will be like when you are filled with the Spirit...

- Each verse begins with participles that describe how you will behave if you are filled with the Spirit...
- You are called to be:
 - filled with the Spirit
 - speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...
 - filled with the Spirit
 - giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...
 - filled with the Spirit
 - submitting to one another in the fear of God.

b. If you are filled with the Spirit, the Spirit will enable you to do these things...

- to worship sincerely, to live a life of gratitude to God, and to submit to those God has placed over you...
- And then Paul describes three relationships that involve submission...
 - In each, he begins with the one who is called to submit...and who will submit when he or she is filled with the Spirit:
 - wives—submit to your husbands...
 - children—obey your parents...
 - servants—be obedient to your masters...
- The only way you can live in these relationships to the glory of God is by the grace of God, working in you by His Spirit.
 - The Spirit is given to us to enable you to see Christ...
 - to see who He is and to delight in Him!
 - to see what He has done to save us so that you are amazed!
 - to see how much we need Him, both for forgiveness and to live a new life...

- And to have the grace that we need to live that new life...
 - to worship by the Spirit,
 - to live a life of gratitude by the Spirit,
 - and to live together by the Spirit, each taking the place that God has called us to in every relationship.

2. Children, do you see...

- a. It is not just your parents and the adults who are to be filled with the Spirit.
- The Lord calls you to be filled with the Spirit also!
 - You have a true place among God's people as one who is privileged and called to be filled with the Spirit.
 - John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb.
 - And in the new covenant,
 - The Lord promises to pour out the Spirit on all flesh...
 - from the least to the greatest.
 - That includes little children.
 - As unbelievable as it may seem, when Christ blessed little infants and prayed for them, He gave them His Spirit.
 - It was not just an empty ritual—
 - Jesus did not follow vain traditions.
 - His blessing meant something.
 - He blessed them as those who belonged to His kingdom.
 - Children, you are to be filled with the Spirit so that you can serve God.
- b. This is not something you can do by your own strength...
- You need God's salvation just as much as your parents do.
 - You are dead in your sin until God, by His Spirit makes you alive...
 - You are born in sin and need to be forgiven of your sin just as your parents do.
 - You need to constantly look to Jesus for forgiveness and grace to help you in your weakness.
- c. Don't ignore this...
- If God is not at work in your life, you are without hope.
 - You need to cry to out to Him to save you...
 - You can have no confidence unless you yourself are receiving God's help to live a new life...
 - And parents, you need to cry out to God for your children before they are even able to speak.

- They do not have to have a certain level of maturity or understanding to be filled with the Spirit.
- John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb.

TRANS> And now I want you to see the kind of behaviour you children will have when you are filled with the Spirit.

- We saw that Spirit-filled wives will submit to their husbands...
- and that Spirit-filled husbands will love their wives as Christ loved the church...
- But what will characterise Spirit-filled children?

II. Children, you are given a commandment of utmost importance...

- **a commandment you will keep albeit imperfectly if you are filled with the Spirit...**

A. See how Paul presents this commandment...

1. He states it in verse 1 and then repeats it in verse 2...

- In verse 1, he tells you to
 - Eph 6:1: "Obey your parents in the Lord for this is right."
- Then in verse 2, he quotes from the fifth commandment, saying,
 - Eph 6:2: "Honour your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise."
- He is essentially repeating the same commandment in two different ways.
 - To obey your parents in the Lord is the same as to honour them.
 - I will talk about what this involves practically in just a minute...

2. But first, I want you to see some of the things he says about this commandment to you...

- a. First, notice that he says that it is "the first commandment with a promise."
 - Now this is one of those sayings of Paul that is difficult to understand.
 - It is difficult because you have the second commandment that also has a promise attached to it...
 - and it comes before the fifth commandment.
 - So why does Paul call it the first commandment with a promise when it is the second commandment with a promise?
 - I am going to tell you what I think Paul means, but if you disagree with me, I won't be upset...

- There are a lot of different ways to understand it, but I hope you will at least accept what I say as true in itself—even if you do not think it is what this particular passage teaches...
 - I hope you will see that what I say is true to the analogy of scripture.
 - In other words, you may not think I am right in my interpretation of these words, but I think you should at least accept the doctrine.
 - I understand Paul to say here that this command is of utmost importance.
 - The word “first” πρῶτον does not have to mean the first in order.
 - It can also mean first in rank... or first in importance.
 - For example, in Matthew 22, Jesus is asked which is the greatest commandment,
 - and after He answers that it is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength,
 - He says:
 - Mt 22:38: "This is the first πρῶτον and great commandment.
 - And the word *first* is the same word that Paul uses in Ephesians 5:2.
 - I believe Paul is using the word *first* (πρῶτον) in the same way here.
 - He does not use the definite article in the original,
 - so he is not saying that it is *the first* or *the greatest*,
 - but that it is among the greatest...
 - that it is a commandment of supreme importance.
 - And indeed it is—especially for children!
 - Children, your parents are given to you as God’s ministers!
 - They are His representatives, and you show what you think of the Lord by the way you treat them.
 - When you are filled with the Spirit—when you are walking with God—this is a commandment that you will keep.
- b. You see that Paul says that this is something you should do just because it is right...
- It is something every child ought to do.
 - 1) After all, your parents gave you your life, so you should honour them...

- 2) God placed them over you to care for you and you are dependent on them, so you ought to obey them—
- 3) And they are your parents—surely you should love them.

TRANS> It is just the right thing for you to honour and obey them.

- When you are filled with the Spirit of God, you think rightly about things...
- c. But you see that Paul also says that you are to obey them “in the Lord.”
- This carries two implications...
 - 1) First, it means that besides the obedience that comes from the natural obligation you have toward them as your parents,
 - you are to obey them out of reverence for the Lord...
 - You are to obey them for conscience sake because God has commanded it and you want to please Him.
 - Sometimes, if your parents do not treat you well or if you have struggles with them,
 - this becomes your sole motivation—
 - You honour them because they represent the Lord and you love the Lord and want to please Him.
 - 2) The second implication of the call to obey them in the Lord is that you obey them by His grace...
 - I mean that the Lord gives you strength and ability to honour and obey them...
 - I hope you children know that!
 - I hope there are times when you find yourself starting to slip and you pray to God and then you receive His strength...

TRANS> But now as I promised, lets look at the particulars...

B. What does honouring and obeying your parents involve practically?

- What does it look like every day?
 - Just what is it that you will do when you honour them?
1. Well first of all, let me speak about obedience...
 - a. The word obey $\upsilon\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\omega$ literally means to come under what you hear—
 - Here are two particular ways this works out...

- 1) First, obedience involves receiving your parent's instruction...
 - Your parents have many things to teach you—they teach you how to do things—and you are not to resist them...
 - Especially, you are to be eager to learn from them when they teach you from God's Word.
 - Your father has been appointed by God to do this, and you are to look to God for His blessing on you as you sit under your father's instruction.
 - This is what Proverbs tells you to do over and over:
 - "My Son, hear the instruction of your Father."

- 2) Second, obedience involves observing their commands.
 - Perhaps you are playing on a new playground—
 - You are having the time of your life!
 - But then you hear your mother calling you.
 - Everything in you wants to stay!
 - You want to put up a fuss...
 - But the Lord calls you to obey your mother!
 - It doesn't matter if you like what you have been asked to do.
 - It doesn't matter if you think it is reasonable or fair or timely...
 - You are commanded to obey...
 - and you **will** obey when you are filled with the Spirit...
 - You will obey even when your parents cannot see if you are obeying.
 - You will do it because you love the Lord and He has told you to do it.
 - When you are filled with the Spirit, you will remember how much Christ has done for you and you want to do all you can to please Him...
 - even when it is distasteful.

- b. Spirit-filled obedience is very different than other obedience...
 - Here are four characteristics...
 - 1) Spirit-filled obedience is cheerful obedience...
 - You have all seen those who obey with a sullen, grumbling spirit...
 - That kind of obedience is the obedience of a child who has forgotten the grace of the Lord...

2) Spirit-filled obedience is prompt obedience...

- By that, I mean that you do what you are asked to do when you are supposed to do it.
 - In fact, you will even obey your parents before they have to say anything...
 - You will be so eager that you will try to anticipate what pleases them before they have even spoken.
 - If the trash can is full, do you really have to wait to be told to take it out?
 - If there are dirty dishes on the table, do you have to be told to clear them off?
 - If it is time to go, do you really have to be told to hurry up?
- Isn't it a much more beautiful way to live to anticipate what is pleasing to your parents and jump to it before you are even asked?
 - That is what you will do when you are truly filled with the Spirit!

3) Spirit-filled obedience is complete obedience...

- It is easy to start a job, but it is sometimes difficult to finish.
 - What if Jesus had come to earth, but never went all the way to the cross?
- Complete obedience is obedience that remembers that He went all the way to the end for us...
 - It does no good to say, "Well I was going to do it..." or "I started to do it."
 - No, you must see the job through to the end...
 - even when it has gotten boring.

4) Spirit-filled obedience is universal obedience...

- By that, I mean that you don't pick and choose what you will obey...
 - If you are told to clean your room,
 - you don't ignore the command and then boast that you did your homework.
 - It is all well and good that you did your homework,
 - but you were asked to clean your room too!

TRANS> So you see in this what is involved in obedience.

2. Now let me speak to you about honour...
 - a. And the first thing I would say is that honour includes obedience...
 - When you obey cheerfully and promptly and completely and universally,
 - you most certainly do honour your parents...
 - But there is more to honour...
 - b. Honour involves reverence and respect...
 - There needs to be that awareness in you that God is the one who placed your parents over you...
 - You are to realise that the best way, as a child, to show your reverence and respect to God is to show it toward your parents.
 - This means that you will not speak to them with disrespectful words...
 - With a whiny voice... “Mom, do I have to?”
 - With anger and frustration... “Can’t you see I’m trying?”
 - With disdain as if they are foolish or ignorant... “But Dad, you don’t understand...”
 - It means that you will not carry resentment and bitterness,
 - but will bear patiently with their weakness and even with their sins...
 - You will not curse them under your breath... for the Lord sees it.
 - Your gracious Lord has given them to you and even if they have many problems, you are still to honour them.
 - It means that you will not be ashamed of them...
 - Perhaps they are very educated or maybe they have funny habits...
 - It is not for you to mock them or to be embarrassed to be seen with them...
 - They are your parents and you are to honour them.
 - c. Honour also involves living in a way that will credit them...
 - In Proverbs, we are told about children who bring shame to their parents.
 - You have your parent’s name, and you can take that name and drag it through the mud...
 - If you live in a dishonourable way, it brings shame to them—even after they are gone...
 - Some children will also speak ill of their parents...

- Instead of covering their parent's infirmities, they broadcast them to the world!
 - They take pleasure in telling everyone about how badly their parents treated them...
 - Some do it to get attention, some do it to make excuses for their own behaviour, some do it to get pity, some even do it to make money—they actually write books to publish their parent's faults!
 - It is a sign of a very wicked ungodly spirit in you that causes you to take delight in such things.
 - The godly child will express gratitude for his parents...
 - He will speak of his love for them and of his esteem for them.
- d. Honour involves giving attention to their needs...
- Jesus accused the Pharisees of dishonouring their parents when they refused to provide for them in their old age...
 - claiming that they had dedicated their possessions to God and could not use them to assist their needy parents.
 - A Spirit-filled child will look for ways to be a blessing to his parents...
 - for things he can do to honour them.
 - He will pray for them, he will help them, he will relieve them in every way he can...

TRANS> And so you see what obeying and honouring your parents involves!

- This is a command of first importance for every child!
 - If you do not love your mother and father whom you have seen, how can you love God whom you have not seen?
 - As those who represent the Lord to you,
 - you cannot dishonour them without dishonouring the Lord who placed them over you.
 - Do not kid yourself.
- You see that this command is of supreme importance...
 - But notice that Paul also says it is a commandment with a promise!
 - I now want to turn to look at the third point, namely:

III. Children, you are given a special promise if you keep this commandment.

A. God attached a promise to the fifth commandment when He gave it at Mount Sinai.

1. It is very important to understand that the Lord gave the Ten Commandments to those He had redeemed.
 - If you look in Exodus 20, you can see that in the preface to the commandments.
 - Exodus 20:1-2: And God spoke all these words, saying: "I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
 - These commandments were not given to the world, but to the people God had chosen from out of the world to be His own...
 - They were chosen to be recipients of His grace—forgiven and empowered to live for Him.
 - He says, "I am the LORD your God..."
 - That is the essence of His covenant promise...
 - He was their God and they were His people...
 - He had brought them out of Egypt in order that they might serve Him because they were His chosen people.
2. As His chosen people whom He had redeemed, they had God's promise and covenant...
 - a. He promised to give them a place to dwell—a land flowing with milk and honey.
 - And the great thing about that land was that God promised that He would dwell among them in that land...
 - That He would prosper them and protect them and teach them and lead them and forgive them and redeem them...
 - He would be their God and they would be His people.
 - b. And He constantly showed them that their life with Him was His gift...a gift of grace
 - The whole system of the tabernacle was to show them that He is the one who provides for the remission of their sins...
 - And as they called on Him, He gave them grace to serve Him.
 - They were His people by His grace—a people of His making!
 - c. As the years went on, God's promise became more and more clear until at last Jesus came.
 - He came to bless them by redeeming them—by offering Himself for their sins...

- And by turning them away from their sins—turning their hearts to Him by pouring out His Spirit upon them.
 - The promise of the covenant is two-fold...
 - The promise of forgiveness—a people who are pardoned.
 - The promise of transformation—to be a people who love God.
3. And all along the way, He promised not only to be God to adults who believed His promise, but also to their children.
- a. When God first called Abraham,
- He told him to mark His children out with the sign of the covenant and He gave the reason...
 - Because He would be their God and that they would be His people...
 - All along, the faithful in Israel looked to God to bless not only them, but also their children with them.
 - They believed His promise.
- b. And you can see that this promise to children is reflected right here in the fifth commandment...
- 1) In Exodus 20:12, the Lord said:
- Ex 20:12: "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.
 - Living long in the land meant living under the blessing of God.
- 2) Remember, the land was the place where God promised that He would dwell in the midst of His people—to be their God.
- a) The promise to children who honoured their parents that they would live long in the land was a promise that they would continue as God's people.
- It was a promise that they would not be cut off from the covenant.
- b) You see, children who did not honour their parents *were* cut off from the covenant in a variety of ways...
- (i) They were cut off by the discipline that God commanded.
- God was very gracious in that He provided for his people's forgiveness for unintentional sins.
 - These were sins that they did in weakness rather than in presumption—sins that they regretted...
 - But if they choose to disregard God's law and to live according to the dictates of their own heart,

- they were cut off by execution...
- That is what God commanded.

TRANS> Now of course it was often the case that this discipline was not exercised by the appointed leaders in the covenant community...

- So God had a second way to cut off the disobedient...

(ii) They were cut off by the discipline of the Lord through providence.

- Sometimes He sent famines so that they starved.
- Sometimes He sent enemies who killed them...
- And at last He brought their enemies upon them to carry them into exile... to drive them from the land.

(iii) And of course there were always those (like Daniel and Ezekiel) who continued as God's people, even when exiled,

- and there were always those who enjoyed the external blessing of God's people even though they did not have God's true blessing (like King Ahab).
- This shows us that the final blessing of the righteous and the final cutting off of the wicked does not always occur in this life.
 - God has appointed a day of judgement when every thing will be brought to completion.
 - The final cutting off and the final blessing will be given at the last day.
 - That is the day we are all waiting for.
- Understand that even Moses and Daniel did not get to enjoy living in the land...
 - not during their life time...
 - but they had the promise that God would be their God and that they would His people...
 - And they believed that promise...
 - That promise was what kept them going.
 - And that promise was not completed until Jesus came.
 - In Hebrews 11, we are told this about these Old Testament Saints and how they waited for Christ...
 - Heb 11:39-40: And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God

having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

- Christ brought salvation to them and to us when He came and died on the cross...
- That was when the promised redemption was accomplished....
 - the promise that they had waited for and trusted in.
- It was not until Christ came that they were redeemed and we were redeemed...
 - And they, like us, are yet waiting for the final promise,
 - the resurrection at the last day,
 - when at last God in the very fullest sense will be our God and we will be His people.
 - Remember that they are still alive and they are still waiting until the final fulfilment of God's promise.

3) But now look at the fifth commandment...

a) This promise comes to the children of believers...

- It is the promise that they will live long in the land that God is giving to them if they honour their father and their mother...

TRANS> How does this work?

b) Now it is obvious that parents who are redeemed are going to train up their children in God's covenant...

- They are going to tell them about God's promise to be our God and to make us His people...
 - They are going to tell them what God has done to make that happen...
 - How He has provided atonement for us and how He gives us His Spirit.
 - They are going to tell them to look to Jesus in faith!

c) And I tell you that if the children of parents who keep God's covenant honour their parents,

- they will not depart from their parents teaching!
- What greater dishonour can a child bring to His parents than to reject their God?

- Than to reject their God when He is the true and living God who has graciously promised to be their God and to make them His people?
- Children who do that will be cut off...
 - but those who honour their parents will believe their parents when they tell them of their God...
 - And they will look to Him from their earliest days when their parents tell them to go to Him with their sins...
 - to look to Him for His promised forgiveness...
 - and to look to Him for grace to live a new life in obedience to Him.
 - God's promise is that such children will continue long in the land...
 - they will continue long in that place where God is their God and they are His people...

TRANS> Now some of you may accuse me of spiritualising the fifth commandment...

- But what makes you think it is not spiritual?
 - Is there any benefit in living for 80 or 90 years in Palestine if the *blessing* of Palestine is not in view?
 - If God is not your God and you are not His people?
 - Indeed, the Israelites were cut off from the physical land while they were in Egypt,
 - and the Canaanites lived in the land...
 - Did that mean they had God's blessing?
 - Of course not! It was primarily the blessing of having God as your God and of being His people.
 - That was what made the land so special.
 - It was the place where God had promised to dwell among them.

B. And this is why Paul is able to carry this promise over into the children of the new Covenant... even though the land of Palestine is no longer in view.

1. He modifies the promise a little...
 - For now it is not a particular parcel of land,
 - but the whole earth where God dwells with His people as their God and they as His people.

- He seems to speak of the whole earth rather than “the land the Lord your God is giving you.”
 - The promise now is that the meek will inherit the earth—the whole earth...
 - Those who have faith—who look to God for the life He gives—
 - will inherit the whole earth.
 - God will, at the last day, redeem the whole creation as Paul tells us in Romans 8.
 - He will make a new heaven and a new earth...
 - Not an entirely different one, but an entirely perfected one...
 - The earth will be perfected and we will be perfected and God will be our God and we will be His people.
 - The wicked will be cut off.
2. And so children of the covenant, you see the promise...
- a. If you honour your father and your mother, it will go well with you...and you will live long on the earth...
 - Your parents are saints who believe in Jesus...
 - They have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...
 - They have redemption in Jesus Christ, even the forgiveness of sin...
 - They who were dead in sin have been made alive...
 - b. And if this is so, they are earnestly teaching you about the Lord.
 - They are fervently praying for you...
 - They are telling you what Jesus had done to make us God’s people—
 - How He died to atone for our sins so that we might be completely forgiven...
 - And how through faith in Him, we are forgiven...
 - And they are telling you how He gives us the Holy Spirit to turn our hearts to God...
 - And how He keeps on giving the Spirit to us if we ask Him...
 - c. And so children, it is for you to continue in your parent’s teaching...
 - Their primary instruction to you is “believe on the Lord Jesus”
 - And when you honour them and obey them...

- You will, of all things, hear **this** instruction and it will be well with you...
- It will not be well with you if you reject this instruction...
 - If you do not believe!
 - It will be worse for you than if you had been born outside the covenant...
 - You will be judged not only for your sin, but also for rejecting the covenant that God graciously placed you under.
 - You will not live, but you will die.
- Hebrews 10:28-30 shows you that it is even worse for you than it was for children in the Old Testament who rejected because now we have fuller revelation...
 - Heb 10:28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
 - You may have read about children being stoned in the Old Testament for their rebellion...
 - But it is even worse if you rebel now that Jesus has come:
 - Heb 10:29-30: Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."

Conclusion

Dear children, how gracious the Lord has been to you!

- He might have placed you in a home where you would have never even heard of Jesus Christ...even all your life!
 - But instead, He has given you parents who are saints...
 - Parents who love the Lord Jesus Christ and who want you to love Him too.
 - Parents who are trusting God's promise of salvation and want you believe too.
- By placing you in the home of parents who belong to Jesus,
 - the Lord marks you out in this world as among His people...
 - You have been baptised at His command,
 - and if you continue in the covenant—

- If you continue in the faith of your parents, looking to Jesus alone as you are being taught that you might be God's people...
- You will have eternal life.

You cannot come to God on your own...

- You are dead in your sins just like your parents were...
 - But God promises that if you will look to Jesus and will cry out to Him for salvation, He will give you His Holy Spirit...
 - And the Spirit will work in you and cause you to continue in the covenant...
 - He will work in you so that you will honour your parents and it will go well with you.
- God promises to give His Spirit to His people and to their children...
 - In Isa 59:21, He says:
 - "As for Me," says the LORD, "this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the LORD, "from this time and forevermore."
 - In Deuteronomy 30:6, you have this promise:
 - Deut 30:6: And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.
- Now of course it is very true that not every child of believing parents who was circumcised obtained this promise...
 - There were many who were cut off by their unbelief...
 - The same is true with you who are baptised.
 - You may have the sign, but if you do not believe, you will not have the thing signified.
 - In Psalm 103, the promise is:
 - Psalm 103:17-18: But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.
 - If your parents keep God's covenant and you keep God's covenant, you will have His promise...
 - You will be Spirit-filled children.
 - God will be your God and you will be His people.