

### **A Godly Family Pt 7: God-Honoring Authority (Eph 5:33-6:3)**

This morning we turn the corner from Ephesians 5 to Ephesians 6, in this section on the family that turns from marriage to children. And I need to say up-front like I did when we were studying the role of husbands, that I don't have this mastered anymore than the end of Eph 5, but it is growing me and I pray we'll grow together. An experienced parent once said, "Before I got married, I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children, and no theories!" My experience only took me 5 kids (or less) to figure out I don't have childrearing all figured out yet, not even in theory

There was an even less experienced pastor in mid-20's who just graduated seminary, had been married for a year, no kids, and he went to pastor his first church in a family-oriented congregation in the Midwest and right out the gate preaches a sermon called "the Ten Commandments of Parenting." Some time went by, he had his first child who soon was a toddler, and when he taught on the subject again, the title of his message was "six biblical principles for parenting." A few more years went by, and a few more children came, and his oldest was now in junior high. To one of the smaller groups he taught a message on "three suggestions for parents." The story goes on to say that after his kids went through the teenage years he stopped teaching on parenting. I think that story is a joke, but it illustrates a serious danger we all can have with our strong views on parenting in areas that are not commands from heaven, how we can tend to look down on others who don't share our personal opinions, preferences, parental paradigms or systems, but how as we go through it ourselves it is important we have humility and recognize all of us have a lot to learn. And it's critical that we have truly biblical foundations for our convictions.

I say this because I am coming to you not as a guru or expert on parenting. I'm not Dr. Phil, I'm just Phil. I'm not Dr. Dobson or Dr. Laura or Dr. Spock. I consider myself a student and a learner, and my experience is not what you need anyways, we need what the all-wise all-knowing God says. He is the authority, not me, so let's let His Word speak about honoring His authority in the home.

We ended last week in middle of Eph 5:33 "... *the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.* 6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* <sup>2</sup> *HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise),* <sup>3</sup> *SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.*

Today's title: "A Godly Family, Pt 7: God-Honoring Authority."

In teaching verse-by-verse we've studied marks of a godly family:

Part 1: Christ-centered submission and headship (5:22-24)

Part 2: A godly family loves the church like Christ (5:25)

Part 3: Being transformed by grace (v. 26-27)

Part 4: Gospel-driven love (v. 28-30)

Part 5: Covenant-keeping love (v. 31)

Part 6: Theology-applying love (v. 32-33)

Part 7: God-honoring authority (6:1-3)

*Outline: The Model, The Mandate, The Motivation*

### **First, the Model for Children**

Two areas: 1) in the family, 2) in the gathered church family. First, in the family modeled by mom and dad. We didn't have time to finish 5:33 last week, which is ok because it ties in with 6:2, honor of authority, when it says a wife in 5:33 "...*respects her husband.*" Remember there were no chapter breaks when Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians, it was a letter, and there's an important flow here to what kids are called to do that their mom is to be modeling right before it: honoring God-ordained authority in her life, her husband as head of the household, submitting and respectfully honoring him

One of the best things a mom can do for children she wants to see submit to and respect and honor authority, is her submitting to their father, her husband as her head and authority (5:22-24). Eph 5:33 says she is to see that she respects her husband, which kids need to see, not just actions ('*submit*' v. 22) but also attitude ('*respect*' 33). The same for children: actions (*obey*, 6:1) and attitude (*honor*, 6:1)

The KJV actually uses the word "reverence" for the wife's respect for her husband in 5:33, which is how that Greek can be translated. It is sometimes used of 'awe' or even 'fear' (Eph 5:21: *submitting ... in the fear of Christ*). So it's one of the highest words of honor, usually reserved for the Lord we fear and worship, but 5:33 uses it to man in his God-appointed role. The English word "awesome" is over-used, but it's ok for moms to tell their kids "dad is awesome."

And in turn, he can tell them "kids, your mom is the greatest!" Or in more biblical terms, Prov. 31:28: "*Her husband ... praises her, saying 'Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.'* [and her God adds His own praise] *a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised ... And let her works praise her in the gates.*"

She doesn't fear her husband in a servile way, but she honors her husband in every way, and it says "*the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised*" (or honored, and in that context, by her husband). Just like the word in Eph 5:33 for how a wife is to honor her own husband is a word usually reserved for the Lord she fears, the word "praise" is also usually reserved of God, but it's also appropriate for a man to praise his wife because she is a gift from God to him. As dad does it, the children rise up with him to bless her (Pr 31:28)

The Bible presents the husband and wife relationship as one that takes precedence over every other human relationship, even child-parent relationship (Eph 5:31 "*leaves father and mother and joins ...and the two become one flesh*"). The relationship with father and mother and child is changed and superseded to the new family that is formed in marriage, which is the closest most important human relationship. Marriage is the only relationship spoken of as "one flesh." Children aren't "one flesh" with parents, but couples are, and their highest love for each other is essential for the kids to see.

The pattern Paul follows in Ephesians suggests this – he spends a big section in chapter 5 building the foundation of the marriage relationship, and then moves on to a smaller section dealing with children and parenting. The clear application or reminder to us is to make sure this most important relationship is most important to us. Paul invests more time on marriage than parenting and so must we. Dr. Street has talked about how his counseling is seeing a growing number of homeschool parents that end up needing marital counsel after their kids leave home because their home was child-centered and they weren't investing in their #1 relationship with each other.

[It can happen in other homes, we parents must be careful!]

The most important thing man and wife can do for a family's most important human relationship is in 5:33, to love and honor/respect. Turn to 1 Pet 3 to see how this marital love and honor/respect goes both ways. Lev 19:3 calls children to "*fear...mother and father*" (KJV), or "*revere*" (NKJV) or "*reverence*" (NASB). Same idea for both mom and dad; another way to say "*honor father and mother.*" And 1 Peter 3 shows how they honor each other in their marriage.

1 Peter 3:1 *In the same way, you wives, be **submissive** to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup> as they observe your chaste and **respectful** behavior [same Greek root word as Eph 5:33, word for fear of the Lord, reverence, honor]*

And this is not just outward actions (v. 3), also inward attitudes:  
<sup>4</sup> *but let it be the hidden person **of the heart**, with the imperishable quality of a **gentle and quiet spirit**, which is **precious in the sight of God**.* <sup>5</sup> *For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;* <sup>6</sup> *just as **Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord**, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.* [not to be afraid of her husband but to fear, to honor God in honoring her husband as she would the Lord]

It's an ugly thing to hear how some women speak of their husband. It's a beautiful thing for children and others to see a woman with a respectful gentle spirit who submits to her husband even if he's not perfect (as Abraham wasn't) and who highly honors him in what she says about him to her children and others. The world may scoff and mock someone like Sarah in our day, it may not be politically correct in the sight of our culture, but it's precious in the sight of our God, and beautiful to godly people, and valuable to children.

<sup>7</sup> *You husbands **in the same way**, live with your wives in an understanding way* [and how does he honor her? As fine china or a fragile vessel, and Peter adds] *and show her honor as a fellow heir*

It's a beautiful picture of a man honoring his wife as a precious or costly vessel or vase, something valuable to him, and something he can break or hurt if he doesn't treat her with care, as weaker in the sense of fragile "fine china." Show honor as a fellow heir of grace. No other ancient religions/books honor women and wives like this, and nothing is more important for our kids to see in modern times.

They're not going to see it on TV. I can't even think of a TV show where a wife honors her husband – he's always the idiot and guy-bashing is what gets the laughs, parents are disobeyed, dishonored, the kids know better than mom and dad, especially dumb dad, and the respect for any authority is rarely seen in real life either. So if children are going to see this, it will have to be in Christian homes and in Christian churches lived and proclaimed: "honor authority."

[you can go back to Ephesians now]

This takes us from the 1<sup>st</sup> model to a 2<sup>nd</sup>: gathered church family. It is ideally to be modeled to children by their parents, but the church also has a role to play in modeling what that looks like to children and young people, mentoring (Titus 2) and making disciples (Mt 28:19), and also modeling honor we show to those God calls us to.

- honor marriage (Heb 13:4 *marriage is to be held in honor*)
- one another (Rom 12:10 NIV: *honor one another above yourselves, or ESV 'outdo one another in showing honor')*)
- the elderly (Lev. 19:13 NKJV “*you shall rise up before the gray-headed and honor the presence of an old man*”, Prov. 20:29 NASB “*the honor of old men is their gray hair*”)
- godly women (Pr 11:16 “*a gracious woman gets honor...*”)
- godly widows (1 Tim 5:3 ‘*honor widows...*’ church context)
- Elder/pastors (1 Tim 5:17 ‘*who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word...*’)
- masters/employers (1 Tim 6:1 ‘*All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor...*’ and he explains it’s for the honor of God’s name).  
I can assure you slaves in the first century had a tougher job than you have, but they/we must honor who the work is for)
- Romans 13:7 calls us to honor sinful government, as Paul says of the Emperor who killed Christians for sport in the coliseum, burned them alive like torches for entertainment “*If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor*” (NIV). Paul modeled respectful honoring speech before pagan rulers but he also was bold in speaking the gospel to them (Acts 22ff).
- leaders/rulers (Acts 23:5 - Paul apologized for insulting a man he didn’t know was one. Paul corrected himself saying ‘*You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people*”)
- Peter said of Nero “*honor the emperor*” (1 Pet 2:17 ESV). I don’t think Peter would say dishonoring in emails is okay?
- We can disagree without disrespecting and in a democracy with free speech we can voice views respectfully and vote (privilege we have, if not registered, there’s forms in back)
- But once a governing authority is in power, we are to honor by being subject to them as Paul also says in Romans 13:1 ‘*there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*’<sup>2</sup> *Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed...*” (ESV)
- Even pagan Pontius Pilate in the unjust trial of Jesus had an authority Jesus recognized as authority from God, Jn 19:11, and leaders will give account for his, and need prayers (and at times we can pray “let another take his office,” Ps 109:8)
- It’s easy to blast, bash, or bad-mouth our leaders, but we are called by Paul and God to pray “*for ... all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence*” (1 Tim 2:2, pray salvation, v. 4)

Now we're not to honor man above God. If obeying man means disobeying God, we obey God rather than man (Acts 4:19, 5:29 – not talk about Jesus, Daniel 3 – bow to idols, Exodus 2 – murder). In Eph 6:1 obedience is qualified “*in the Lord*” (not disobeying Him). If Scripture calls us to honor marriage but our government is dishonoring it and defining it differently that our highest authority (God) does, what do we do? That's for tonight's message on “Gay Marriage and the Gospel, Pt 1” (I hope you'll come back to hear).

When we honor God's Word and what it honors, and seek to honor above all the gospel in our society and in our marriages and in our churches (by honoring what God calls believers to, even when we don't always agree), then the next generation will see what we so desperately want them to see, what honoring authority looks like (which is what this generation so greatly needs). When mom tells her kids to obey and honor dad, there's power when they see her modeling the same, submitting though she doesn't always agree.

If they see dad submit to government and his employer and the leaders of the church and he isn't talking bad about them but he instead honors them, if they see the elderly honored by the church, mom and dad honoring each other and their church family, that can impact them more than sermons or parental lectures on the same.

That's their model (point #1), now #2: **The Mandate for Children**  
*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*  
*HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER ...*

The Mandate is also twofold: A) *obey your parents in the Lord*  
 B) *honor your father and mother*

“Obey” is the duty, “honor” is the disposition. It's possible to obey and not honor, by tone of voice, body language, facial expression, complaining while obeying, doing the action with a bad attitude. But v. 1-2 together cover both action (*obey*) and attitude (*honor*), both the duty and the disposition, and nothing less honors the Lord.

Who are the “*children*” being addressed? We can assume they're at least old enough to understand v. 1 (which our kids memorized by the age of 2, but their applying it is still in progress). MacArthur: “*children...in the Greek...doesn't mean “...babies”; it refers to any offspring under parental control. So anyone at any age living in the house...as a child of that family is to obey his parents.*”<sup>1</sup>

So if you teenagers tell me after “I don’t have to obey my parents anymore, because I don’t think I fall under the word ‘children.’” I would ask you some questions based on the text and word meaning

1. Have you “left father and mother” like Eph 5:31 says? You may be a man by biblical definition, but are you a man that left father and mother, or are you living under their roof? If you haven’t left yet, you’re not yet in 5:31 but in chapter 6.
2. If you’re away at college, are you dependent on them for support still (paying bills, cell phone, insurance, etc.)? Are you a “dependent” or independently on your own? If you are dependent, again I think you’re in Eph 6, not Eph 5:31.

There’s no age it sets, but there is a stage of life when the parental authority changes, if not sooner, when you get married, as in 5:31. When a father walks his daughter down the aisle, the minister says “who gives this woman to be married?” The father gives away his daughter, and in that moment as she transitions from his arm to the arm of this man, her headship and authority is passed from the dad to the groom, who is now responsible to be her authority and head, her new loving covering, protection, provision in every way. She and he leave the father-and-mother dependence and relationship, and the father’s job is done, all that’s left is to comfort the mother. Any debt in the future or dental work is no longer on dad’s hands.

Children are not to stay children in a dependent role on parents. I sometimes ask my little girls not to grow up because they’re doing it so fast, and they’re not such little girls anymore, but the reality is the precious relationship we have is temporary. They won’t always scream for joy when I come home and race across the room to hug me, to tackle daddy. One day their affections and submission will be given to their godly husband, God-willing. And His will for me is to teach my girls what a godly man is, and by helping my girls to submit to leadership now, it’s preparing them to be godly wives.

Our goal as parents of boys also is to “*bring them up*” (6:4) to be “*a man [who] will leave*” (5:31). That’s what the text says. As Dr. Street said, “this is not your home, you’re just a passin’ through.” A boy needs to be made a man who leaves father and mother, not still living with them into his 30s still playing video games and wearing Star Wars pajamas and sleeping in Spider-Man sheets! It is one of the serious problems of our time than men are delaying growing up and getting married 5-10 years or more longer than ever before. These children need to obey, grow up, and man up!

And as parents we need to call them to obey and not coddle them. In biblical culture a male by age 12 was considered a man and was responsible to the law and he assumed many adult responsibilities, and young women were married in their early teen years. Culture and times have changed, but that doesn't mean the American way of considering teens as "adolescents" rather than responsible adults is healthy instead of training/treating them as at least young adults. For many guys growing up today, culture's 'myth of adolescence' is something that continues into their 20s and beyond (cf. Mohler)<sup>2</sup>

Parents have a responsibility in instilling responsibility to children, and training them to manhood and womanhood (we'll study more on that in v. 4 next week), but children in v. 1-2 also have a direct responsibility to God, a mandate to obey and honor their parents.

It's pointed out: 'Christian children are addressed as responsible members within the congregation (which is noteworthy).'<sup>3</sup> Another writer adds: 'it is worth noting that children who were presumably still minors (cf. Eph. 6:4) are directly addressed; evidently they are thought of as both present in the Christian meeting where the letter would be read out and as responsible agents despite their youth.'<sup>4</sup>

There are some implications of that I've been studying and maybe we can talk about more in a future message in regards to our role as parents and the role of church and the role of corporate worship. We always need to measure our culture/tradition against the text. But for now just note children are held responsible by God's Word

And the responsibility to honor father and mother continues even when they're no longer "children" by biblical definition. Back to that in a bit, but the first mandate in v. 1 is "*obey your parents.*"

[this is the first verse we had our kids memorize as toddlers]

The mandate "obey" means to 'listen under, a conscious hearing with the intent to follow, a hearing accompanied by heeding it.' *Obey* is a stronger word than the Greek word for 'submit' in 5:22. This command to children is the word for absolute obedience in the Lord, a present tense command to continuously always obey. Col 3:20 adds "*in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.*"

How does God-pleasing obedience look? My former pastor says:

- right away (delayed obedience is disobedience)
- right actions
- right attitude (so it has to do with when, what, and how)



Disobedience is listed among the most serious sins in Scripture. 2 Tim 3 “*There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves...disobedient to their parents, ungrateful* (NIV)

Romans 1 lists “disobedience to parents” along with the sin of homosexuality and a sin which brings the wrath of God on society.

1 Sam 15:22 ‘*to obey is better than sacrifice...rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*’ (KJV)

In that context, King Saul’s failure to obey then was the beginning of the end for his reign, and by the end of that book, Saul actually consults a witch in Endor to call up the spirit of Samuel who gave him that warning years before. But the point is that when we don’t obey, when we rebel, that sin is as wicked as witchcraft to God. To disobey is like divination, it’s devilish. As important as the whole sacrificial system was, God wants more for us to obey, and looks at our heart (16:7). Stubbornness is a sin that God views like idolatry.

Earlier in the same book, Eli’s disobedient and dishonoring sons are another negative example who die as part of God’s judgment (chapter 4). Earlier in the OT the sons of Aaron disobey and are consumed by fire (Leviticus 10). Even earlier in the book of Genesis, Ham dishonored Noah and his seed was cursed (Gen. 9).

[cursing a parent in OT law received the death penalty, cf. 6:3]

Eph 6:1 continues: ‘*obey your **parents**...*’ both mom and dad, as v. 2 spells out, both father and mother equally obeyed and honored. One mother from history was honored by a minister who stayed in the home of Jonathan Edwards and observed his remarkable wife: ‘Sarah Edwards had an excellent way of governing her children; she knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully, without loud angry words, much less heavy blows. . . . If any correction was necessary, she did not administer it in a passion; and when she had occasion to reprove and rebuke she would do it in few words, without [heat] and noise . . . Her system of discipline was begun at a very early age and it was her rule to resist the first, as well as every subsequent exhibition of temper or disobedience in the child . . . wisely reflecting that until a child will obey his parents he can never be brought to obey God.’<sup>5</sup>

That’s really the key issue in v. 1: *obey your parents **in the Lord**, for this is right*. The key is not just that it’s right (moralism), the Lord is in the center of this, it’s of Christ, through Christ, to Christ.

If a child can't yield to a lesser authority in mom or dad, that child will not yield to the greater authority and Lordship of Christ. And young people here, if your life is marked by disobedience and dishonor of your earthly parents, there's no biblical reason you can be assured God is your heavenly Father, as Jesus warned Pharisees. You need to repent first and come to the Father like a prodigal son, plead for forgiveness, then do the same with earthly dad and mom.

Verse 2 says "*Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, that it may go well with you ...*"

He's quoting from the Ten Commandments, the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment, not the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 10, but the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half or 2<sup>nd</sup> tablet, the 1<sup>st</sup> of the Ten directed toward mankind; for those who have honored God in the first 5 commandments, the 1<sup>st</sup> way that is to be manifested to man is in honor to father and mother. It's the 1<sup>st</sup> commandment of the Ten *with a specific positive promise*: life and land are blessings of obedience to earthly father/mother. And for those whose life is right with their heavenly Father (1<sup>st</sup> half of the Ten), the promise is also spiritually beyond this life, we'll honor and enjoy God forever

That OT promise is transformed into a gospel promise, like Jesus in the gospel of Matthew 5:5, taking an OT principle that the meek will inherit the land, and transforming it to "inherit *the earth*." The new earth is promised to all who are "in the Lord," and the promise of v. 3 here that in the OT was for long life in the land of Canaan, it is transformed, we might even say to longer life on the earth, life that never ends in the new earth ultimately. So even if an obedient child dies young in the providence of God, this principle is fulfilled eternally, but v. 3 primarily speaks of this life, quality and quantity

A child who disobeys and dishonors his parents may still live to be 70, 80 or 90, but it won't go well with him or be an enjoyable life. Many years ago, Jaime and I were getting on an airplane flying up to Washington, and a mom sternly told her little boy to move out of the way as passengers needed to get by. He snarled back "Don't talk to me that way!" And the mom weakly said something like, "Oh, ok, I'm sorry sweetie ... but could you maybe move so this nice man can get by, if you don't mind?" I thought to myself, wow, it's pretty clear who the head of that household is, that little boy! I also think wherever that brat (boy) is today, it's not going well for him, and he is not going to have an enjoyable long life in however long he has. God save us parents from not loving kids by Eph 6:1-4

The reason it's so important for children to obey and honor mom and dad (Eph 6:1-3) is that this is the training ground for all of life in honoring authority, and not doing it dishonors God the Father. If kids don't learn it with their own flesh-and-blood mom and dad who love them, they are not going to do real well with authorities in life who don't love them (school, society, etc.) or those who do love them when they disagree (spouses, spiritual leadership). It won't go well with you, v. 3 says, if you don't learn this at home.

So if we have living parents, how do we apply this text? 3 ways:  
1st way to honor father and mother is help them in their old age. Includes providing needs practically, financially if they're in need. We know that's a command that applies to grown children with their aging parents because of how Jesus quoted that same verse.

Matt 15:4: ***“For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death.’***  
<sup>5</sup> ***“But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,”***<sup>6</sup> ***he is not to honor his father or his mother.’ ....***<sup>7</sup> ***“You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: <sup>8</sup> ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. [turn to 1 Tim. 5]***

The Pharisees tried to sound religious saying “all my money is given to God, I can't support my parents financially, I have to give to my heavenly Father who is greater than all...” Jesus says you're a hypocrite if you honor God with your lips but will not honor your parents by helping them financially or otherwise in their old age, in a time when they need help, then your heart is really far from God.

1 Timothy 5:4: *but if any widow has **children** or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some **return to their parents**; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. [another translation says “children...should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents...for this is pleasing to God.”]*

...<sup>8</sup> *But if anyone does not provide for his own [in context “his own parents or grandparents in need”], and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

In some cases it may mean taking them into your own house. John was asked by Jesus on the cross to do this for His mom (Jn 19:26).

...<sup>16</sup>*If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows [ESV 'relatives who are widows,' or another says 'in her family'], she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed [i.e., no family or means, v.4 describes them as destitute, all this is context of 'honor' in v. 3]*

Turn to Romans 1 to see another example of what honor looks like. We've been trying to teach in family worship, honor=thankfulness. Romans 1:21 says of sinful humanity who God's wrath comes to <sup>21</sup> *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks...* [this was Israel's sin toward God their Father who brought them out of Egypt, they weren't thankful, and it's the sin of many toward their earthly father or mother, not being thankful]

We can honor in 1) helping them, 2) thanking them, and 3) making them feel honored. This last one today includes actions that honor. Solomon was honored as one of the greatest kings in history, the wisest and richest, with most extensive kingdom, power, authority. People honored him from afar, bowed in his presence to honor.

John Piper writes 'How did he treat his mother in this exalted role? You recall his mother was Bathsheba. She had married his father David under very ugly circumstances...But she was his mother... it says...*Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him... the king arose to meet her, bowed before her, and sat on his throne; then he had a throne set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right.* [1 Kings 2:19]. Then they had their conversation. He rose for her. He bowed to her. And he called for a throne to be put beside his for their conversation. She was his mother. Even kings should stoop when their mothers enter the room.'<sup>6</sup>

So as we think about applications, and all of us with living parents can apply this, think of helping them, thanking them, making them feel honored (remembering their birthdays, asking for their counsel or forgiveness for your dishonor, give them honor, gratitude, note, help with practical things, rise up and call mom blessed, Prov. 31).

*We've seen the model, the mandate, what's the motivation?*

If your relationship with your parents is strained because of sin ... honor them anyways, but do it above all to honor the only perfect Father who is in heaven. Don't expect your earthly father or mom to do for you what only a heavenly Father is intended to. Repent of your sinful attitudes toward your parents because they're not God.

And repent of your trying to punish them, because you're not God. And recognize your dishonoring them hurts you and keeps you from enjoying life on the earth as Father God desires (Eph 6:3)

And look to Jesus, who is perfect but honored imperfect parents by obeying and submitting to them (Lk 2:51). He always honored His Father in heaven (John 8:41) for us. Though Jesus wasn't honored in His own hometown (John 4:44) for all who honor Father and Son in faith (5:23), the glory of the gospel is the Father honors us forever (12:26), "*honor and immortality, eternal life*" (Rom 2:7).

Obey and honor because it's right (Eph 6:1) and also because (v. 3) it won't go well with girls and their future husbands, or men and their work or church, or unmarried people in the world, but more important than all of that, if you don't learn to obey authority, you will not be obeying God's authority, and it won't go well with you spiritually or eternally as those dishonoring God receive His wrath. But if you honor God the Father in Christ, He will also honor you.

May God's Word be obeyed and honored today as we apply it and may 2 Thess 3:1 (ESV) happen with us: *pray...that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you...*

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<sup>1</sup> John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Fulfilled Family* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> See Al Mohler's articles on his website. There is also a book published with the title *The Myth of Adolescence*.

<sup>3</sup> *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer and G. J. Wenham, 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), Col 3:18–4:1.

<sup>4</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Paternoster Press, 1996), 250.

<sup>5</sup> *The Memoirs of Jonathan Edwards*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> John Piper, "Do Not Forsake Your Mother's Teaching," [www.desiringgod.org](http://www.desiringgod.org)