

1. Parents & Children

Principle – We have a life-long obligation to honour our parents, this is expressed in different ways depending on our stage of life.

Key Scripture:

Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Matthew 15:3-6 Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,' he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition..

Colossians 3:20-21 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

Comment

Honouring our parents is a life-long obligation. As a child this means obeying them. As an adult it is about showing respect and looking out for their interests. The Old Testament makes it quite clear that “cursing” our parents is punishable by death under the law. The New Testament reminds fathers not to be harsh with their children.

Application in daily life??

- ♦ Obeying as children and showing respect as adults may be very different. As children we are to obey our parents even if we disagree with them. As adults we do not have to obey our parents but we are still to honour them. This may be difficult if parents disagree with our choice of marriage partner or how we raise our children - as adults we are free to follow our choices but we are still to honour our parents – and for unsaved parents this is part of our testimony to them.
- ♦ Even if we don't like the way our parents/in-laws treat us, we are to honour them by still giving them access to our children and inviting each of our parents/grand parents to be equally involved.
- ♦ Honouring our parents is being fair about how we “interpret” them to our children, especially if we have a “favourite” set of parents/in-laws and an “unpopular” set.
- ♦ When our own children become independent adults, make it clear that they no longer have to “obey” us.
- ♦ Adult children are primarily responsible for ensuring that their aged parents are adequately cared for.

Our example?? Do we honour God by honouring our parents? Children, do we obey our parents? Adults, do we still honour our own parents whilst releasing our own adult children from the expectation to obey?