

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabible.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabible.org).

**Date:** July 11, 2010

**Title:** Children - Working for the Common Good

**Text:** Ephesians 6:1-3

**Theme:** Children, like their parents are to work for the common good.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

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 Theme: Children, like their parents, are to work for the common good.

#### Introduction:

When the family unit is viewed as a body or an army, I believe it changes our perspective as to how each part works for the common good. Just as a husband and wife are crucial to the overall health of a body, so also the children; together each part forms a link in an unbreakable chain forged by a common commitment to the Lord and to each other. The family's "victory" is no less attributed to the contributions of the child as are that of the mother and the father. Each individual part must play its role.

Although no one might desire to be the "water boy" on a team or the one who hands out towels in the locker room or simply participates as part of the "practice squad," each role is still a part of one team and it is the entire team working together for the common good. A child's responsibilities might seem insignificant to the child, but they are crucial to the coach and to the other players. The Psalmist captures this idea in Psalm 127.

<sup>3</sup> "Behold, **children are a gift of the LORD**, The fruit of the womb is a reward. <sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. <sup>5</sup> How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate" (Ps. 127:3-5).

Here he also duly notes how God and God alone is the sole means of causation and enablement for a family's overall health and victory (Psalm 127:1, 2). It is against this biblical background we return to Ephesians 6:1-3.

#### Our premise:

Initially when considering this paragraph, there are four significant presuppositions.

- The order is Trinitarian
- The order is worship focused
- The order works **from** position and not **for** position
- The order is **absolute**, not **optional**

#### The Problem:

1. We exist in a culture where these "fruits" are **not taught** and thus **respected** both **within** and **without** the church.
2. In the **absence** of ontological equality and functional hierarchy there is nothing but **exploitation** and **anarchy**.

I began by noting how my intent is to unpack the text. It is not to be unnecessarily abrasive or "pig-headed," but it is to be honest and open with what sits in front of us and what the implications are for us as a community of faith in ministry expressions. Without further ado, let us begin.

**Outline:**

- I. For the Family (6:1-4)
  - A. Instructions for the Children (vv.1-3)

As we look at the ideas relating to the child we must put all of it inside the larger context of lovingly submitting to the oversight or headship within the home. A child's submission to his parents is noted by obedience and honor.

- Notice the parallelism of "parents" in 6:1 and "father and mother" in 6:2.
- The only "commands" given directly to children in the NT.
- Why?
  - All children have parents.
  - All children need parenting.
  - All children should expect parenting.
  - Parents "fail" when they do not provide parenting for their children.

Let us for the moment unpack the descriptive in verses 1 and 2.

1. Obey your Parents (v.1) - The Command

Ephesians 6:1 uses the word "obey". It means, "To hear under," **hupakouo**. It is used of our Lord's authority over and obedience of storms (Matt. 8:27) and unclean spirits (Mark 1:27). It speaks of the act of believing by priests to the word of God (Acts 6:7). Saving faith or the rejection of the same is called obedience or non-obedience (2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 3:14; Heb. 5:9; 11:8). Believers should not obey the lusts of the flesh (Rom. 6:12), but should obey the voice of the Spirit (Rom. 6:16, 17). It is the type of obedience children extend to their parents and slaves toward their masters (Eph. 6:1, 5; Col. 3:20, 22). It describes the obedience Sarah gave to Abraham (1 Pet. 3:6).

What is obedience? Obedience believes that what your parents teach/tell you is correct. Notice how the obedience is marked. Obedience to one's parent never overrides obedience to one's Lord. The reason is because it is the "right" (accepted as proper).

"Paul expects children to behave in the way that is considered 'right' outside as well as inside the church. He assumes they want to grow up and live long just as their fathers wish to avoid angry scenes and the dreadful grapes of wrath." (Markus Barth, THE ANCHOR BIBLE, *Ephesians 4-6*, 756).

Why should children obey? Children should obey their parents for it is right and thus pleasing to the Lord. Colossians 3:20 tells us as much.

"Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, **for this is well-pleasing to the Lord**" (Col. 3:20).

Obedience to one's parents promotes overall well-being. Obedience is right before God and has intrinsic value. There is value in obeying your parents.

Obedience is listening to your parents and doing what they tell you needs to be done.

- Clean your room.
- Be careful around certain friends.
- Believe in Jesus Christ.
- Go to church.
- Obey the laws of the land.
- Take out the garbage.
- Do your chores.
- Finish your homework.
- Stop playing video games.
- Respect the elderly.
- Etc.

When we read the book of Proverbs it tells us what we should and should not do. Listen to the counsel of your parents.

Your obedience honors your parents. Your obedience is a credit to their instruction. Let me provide for us a caution: Just because you lead your child right does not mean they will do right. As parents we cannot force compliance, but we should do everything within our power to lead our children in the ways of God. I will bring this up with greater clarity when we speak on parenting, but for now let us note how children are under the divinely establish hierarchy and thus need to follow their parents.

## 2. Honor your Parents (vv.2, 3) - The Consequence

"Honor" = to estimate, fix the value, have in honor, count as valuable" (Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:1). In the OT economy, disobedient children were stoned! Here, the principle is that obedience brings positive results. "To honor" supports the command of verse one. **You cannot honor your parents if you are not obeying your parents.**

"The honor Paul demands is not the honor of mere lip service. The way to honor parents is to obey them, to respect them, and never to cause them pain."

"He probably means that it was the first commandment which the Christian child was taught to memorize."

### **Shepherding the Sheep: (What's the NEXT STEP)**

1. **Specifically**, children obey and honor your parents.
2. **Why?** Because it works toward the common good