

Honor Your Parents

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." **—Ephesians 6:1-3**

God could have added this word of promise to any of the commands, but He chose this one, thus giving an added incentive for keeping this command.

I find this sobering. In the light of this I ask, how long can I expect to live, based on this promise and my attitude toward my own parents? So if this command is true, and the promise is relevant, how long may you expect to live?

You could call this commandment a proposition. God makes a deal with His people. Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

Parental respect must be taught in the home and in the church. It is the teaching of gratitude. We need to be taught gratitude, and that means to be thankful and respectful to our parents. And yet I must admit that this teaching will be easier for some than for others. Not all have good parents. My heart goes out to anybody who struggles here. I was once pastor of a church in which there was a lady who was abused by her father; her father had sexual intercourse with her as far back as she could remember. It messed up her life to no end.

Perhaps you have a father who was cruel and insensitive. Perhaps you had a mother who was not very loving. And now you are told to honor them, and you say, "I can't." I sympathize. I can echo the sentiments of David in Psalm 16:6: "The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance." That also means that I am without excuse. If you too have a father and mother who did

not abuse you but who loved you, did their best for you, and loved the Lord, you ought to be very thankful.

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