

## My Parents - Part 1: Authority

Tonight we're beginning a three part series about how God wants you, as youth, to think about and respond to your parents. And we address this issue because THE most important human relationship you have is with your parents.

Are you aware of that? That person sitting next to you – your mom or your dad – they are THE most important person in your life on the face of the planet!

You might have sports heroes or music heroes – but my hope is that you say, 'my dad is my greatest hero...' or 'my mom is my greatest hero...' That would bring much glory to God!

The issue in your relationship with your parents we want to talk about tonight is the issue of authority. If you're going to think rightly about your parents, and respond rightly to your parents, you must understand their authority in these words....

Ephesians 6, verse 1: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*<sup>2</sup> *"Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise),*<sup>3</sup> *"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."*

### 1. Parental Authority comes from God

Where do I get that from this passage? This is God's word – God speaking to us, saying – 'obey your parents'. He's saying, "I have given them a role of authority over your life.

God has all authority, but He lends out some of it... Who here has a job outside the home? Any authority there? How? Who here has a driver's license? Any authority relates to driving?

I don't know if you remember the older license plates we had here in Illinois. Well, a number of years ago they changed the plate style to the newer red and blue ones.

I don't know how it happened – but somehow I lost one of my new plates... so I drove around with the old license plates on my car. I had the new stickers on them, but the old license plates.

So I was driving to a youth meeting through Oswego, when I looked in my rear view mirror and what did I see? The flashing lights of a police car! aaahhh so I pulled over – and sure enough, the police car pulled over behind me.

The police officer was very kind, but said – "you're driving with the old license plates, so you need to have those replaced – and I have to give you a warning". And it's

humiliating to sit there while he writes up my warning, all the cars driving past looking at me...

As I'm parked there, police car behind me, lights still flashing, I see a car drive by with the license plate "*Hunsters*"... The Hunts were on their way to the same youth meeting! I tried to explain "it was just my old license plates..."

What was I encountering while driving that day? Authority... authority from God in the form of the Oswego police department. Authority is in all of life... it's just part of how God has ordered this world. So you never outgrow this... We are always under authority. That's the take-away... please write that down: I am always under authority.

Parental authority is just part of a bigger picture. It's just part of a bigger picture that all of us are always under some kind of authority... that's just how God has made this world and ordered this world.

We are under various forms of God's authority for all of our lives – and your parents' authority is just part of that bigger picture of God's ordering of this world.

## **2. Parental authority calls for (respectful) submission**

Where do I get that from? How do we see that in this passage? Right there in verse 1: "Children, obey your parents..." That's a call to submission – 'obey them...'

Don't get tripped up by the fact that it says 'children'. I realize that you're not small children – but this passage still applies to you... You're still under your parent's authority – so Ephesians 6 still applies...

And the idea here is that you "submit to your parents authority..." Submit to them - bring yourself under their authority...

- Let me illustrate what this looks like... "Simon Says"

What's the point of Simon says? The point is: Simon has authority, so submit to Simon. Bring yourself under what Simon says - and that's what God is calling for here.... bring yourself under God's authority by bringing yourself under parents' authority.

Remember, their authority is from Him... His face stands behind your parent's face... That means - you obey Him as you submit to them. That's the take-away here: Lobey God when: I submit to my parents...

And this applies to all of life.... in all of life there is to be this submitting to God by submitting to your parents. It applies to what clothing you wear. When your parents say, "dear, that outfit is not reflecting biblical modesty; I'd like you to change into something else..."

In that moment, that's not just your parents addressing – that's also God's voice you should hear. God is there, in that moment, and what does he want you to do? He wants you to submit to Him by submitting to them...

You might be tempted to say: "but all the girls are wearing this... this is the coolest, the hippest thing that everyone is wearing." That might be the case, but that's entirely irrelevant to God. He's looking to see if you'll submit to Him by submitting to them... It's not just a clothing issue – it's really a God issue, isn't it! It's a God issue...

He's looking for you to bring yourself Him by bringing yourself under them – saying: "sure mom, sure dad – I'd be glad to change. Thanks for caring for me!"

This applies to how you spend time. When your parents say, "not more than 30 minutes on the video game today, or that's enough time on the phone today", in that moment, it's not just your parents who are involved.

God is speaking there – it's a God issue in that moment.... so what does HE want you to do? It's not saying– 'I'm old enough to make my own decisions...' That might be true – you can make a lot of decisions, but that's not the issue.

NO - He wants you to submit to Him by submitting to them... And that means saying something like: "yes, mom... yes, dad – I'll make sure I get off in 30 minutes. Thank you for reminding me..."

Where else does this apply for you? In what other areas of life for you? All those issues are God issues – so you submit to Him by submitting to them. Parental authority calls for this respectful submission...

For us as parents... all those areas are obviously points of ongoing discussion for the purpose of discipleship. I don't need to tell you that how we call a two year old to submission is different from how we call a 16 year old to submission.

We're in the discipleship business... it's through ongoing conversations filled with wisdom of God in Scripture that we help our youth embrace submission to our authority.

And, there is certainly a place to allow for their respectful appeal... In "Shepherding Your Child's Heart" there is an excellent section on allowing a 'respectful appeal' a

check valve on parental authority – helping us to check against any ways we’re tempting or exasperating our children by our exercise of authority

But for our youth – see that submitting to God means submitting to your parents. Your parents’ authority comes from God, and it calls for submission ...

### 3. Parental authority seeks our good

Where do I get that from this passage? Look at verse 3: “it will go well for you...” As you submit to your parents, you will find it going well for you and not poorly! Anyone want it to go well for them?

What we learn from that is: God has given your parents authority over you *for your good!* This is very important... They’re not keeping you from real ‘freedom’ – they’re not keeping you from the good stuff – they’re doing their best to look out for your good.

In Chapter 7 of “Instructing a Child’s Heart”, entitled: Authority is God’s Plan... parents, please read that chapter as a follow up to this message. In that chapter, Mr. Tripp uses the illustration of a train...

He says: imagine we see a 60 ton locomotive running along the tracks and we say: ‘what a shame that it’s restricted to the tracks... what a shame it doesn’t have the freedom to get off those tracks and go wherever it wants to go... too bad it can’t get off the tracks and run free through the fields....”

Let me ask you – If we took the train off the tracks, would that be for the train’s good? No – why? What would happen? It would not be good – it would not be real freedom, it would be a wreck!

That’s how you need to think about your parents’ authority... it’s like a train track, laid down so that it will go well for you! Their authority is given for your own good!

Your parents love you more than anyone else in this world – do you know that? No, they’re not perfect... They’re not perfect parents, but they are the perfect parents for you. And they love you more than anyone else in the world... more than your best friend or anyone else! And out of their great love for you, they do their best to seek your good.

And if you understand that, do you know what will happen? You will gladly submit to them. That’s what God is after – hearts that *gladly* submit to parents. Hearts that appreciate the train tracks that have been laid down for their good...

I know a lot of this is review.... Maybe for some, it seems way too basic – and maybe it is... But God is after our hearts here tonight. When you have to bring yourself under your parents, what happens in your heart?

God is after hearts of glad submission to your parents.... and you'll do that.... you'll respond that way, if you recognize that your parents are seeking your good!

It's when they say, "That outfit is not modest dear... I want to change." and there isn't just an... "ok, but I won't like it." Instead, there is gladness, because you have parents who care so much about you!

It's when they say, "that's enough video game time today", and we don't grumble: "do I have to stop??" Instead, there is a gratefulness in our hearts that says, "I'm so glad I have parents who seek my good!"

That's the take away: If I believe this, then I will: gladly submit. A glad submission comes from recognizing that your parents – imperfect as they may be – are doing their best to seek your good.

Now... is this always easy? Is this always an easy thing to do? No. Will you fail in expressing glad submission at times? Yes – so let me close by pointing you to the hope and help held out to you in the gospel right here in Ephesians...

In the gospel there is payment for sin – God has provided for your sin, and he has provided a payment through His Son! Look at **Eph 1.7**...

You're going to fail at times... even if you've been born again – you still will sin. And so you need 'the redemption through his blood – forgiveness of sins'! And if you have turned to Christ and trusted savingly in Christ, you have that forgiveness!

The slate is wiped clean forever... that sin has been washed away – Jesus bore that penalty in full, but it's even more than that. The one who shed His blood not only died in your place – he also obeyed in your place.

And having died and obeyed in our place, He provides His perfect righteousness to wear before God. There isn't just removal of sin – there is the giving of Christ's perfect obedience to wear before God!!

God has provided a full and free payment for our sin in Jesus Christ! If you're not sure you have been born again.... if you're not sure you have a new heart by the Spirit of God, then flee to Jesus! Cry out to Christ to save you, and he will!

If you have been born again – you clearly have been transformed by the gospel, know that you have not used up God’s grace – it’s still available, through his blood, perfect payment!

There is hope in the gospel’s provision for our sin and there is help as well....help in the form of power – power to combat our sin. **Eph 5.18....**

Being filled has results... and the results include what we find here in chapter 6: in the submission of children to parents... The point is, the power of the Spirit is available to help you rightly relate to your parents!

That’s what this is saying... the Spirit of God fills, he empowers that you might have more and more glad submission to your parents – for all who believe! This is great hope and great help.... there is payment and there is power! Jesus died in your place, obeyed in your place, and has poured out his Spirit on all who believe!