

## “My Parents – Part 3: Honor with humility”

Please turn in your bibles to Ephesians chapter 6...also grab a pen, and an outline. We have been exploring this very important word from God for you as teens and youth. Ephesians chapter 6, beginning in verse 1...

READ Eph 6.1-3

### 1. Honoring promised & defined

I say ‘promised’ because there is a promise in this passage – what’s the promise here? It will **GO WELL** for you... Does anyone want it to go well for them? We all do – and that’s what is being held out to you here, through your parents...

God wants to **ble**ss you through your parents... That person sitting next to you – your mom or your dad – they are THE most important person in your life! And ONE reason why is that God wants to uniquely **ble**ss you through your parents...

If you think of a relay race, what happens in a relay race? What’s the goal of a relay race? The goal is not just running the race – you win the race by being the first team with what? The first team with the baton to cross the line

You could think of the Christian life like that relay race... there is a baton we want to hand off to you. We want to see the baton of the gospel – the baton of the good news about Jesus Christ – passed off to you...

But that’s not going to happen through youth ministry, mainly. God wants to use your parents in a unique way to do that. He wants to hand off this most precious baton and help you run this race - through your parents!

He wants to **ble**ss you, spiritually speaking, through them. But this is a conditional promise. God is saying, I have a waterfall of My blessing – but you have to respond in some way to get under this waterfall and drink.

What do you have to do? You have to honor them. But what does it mean to ‘honor your father and mother’? This passage in Ephesians 6 is quoting words first written in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for ‘honor’ comes from the word ‘heavy’ - *meaning to give weight to.*

That’s how we could think of honoring parents – it’s **giving weight** to your parents. Last time I said, when a feather blows through the air and lands in the back yard, do you notice it? No... Does it matter much to you? Not very much... it’s a light thing – a thing of little consequence.

But if an elephant landed in the back yard, would you notice that? Would something that weighty get your attention? Yeah... an elephant standing there would matter. It would matter a lot! It would be a thing of great consequence standing there in your backyard....

That's what's like to honor parents. It means that what your parents say and want has weight for you. They aren't light and feathery things those are elephant kinds of things. They have weight – a heaviness...

But how do we do that? Certainly it involves obedience. And last time we talked about honoring through honesty – being completely open with your parents. Tonight, I want to apply this through humility. *Secondly...*

## 2. Honoring applied: honor with **humility**

I say humility, because - if honoring means to do what? To GIVE WEIGHT to your parents – one way to do that is with a humble heart that gives weight to your parents' **wisdom** and **help**.

It's having a heart of humility that says, I give weight to your words mom. I give weight to your wisdom for me dad. I give weight to your help for my life.... it's a heavy thing to me. Those are things of great consequence to me!

And this is a very biblical idea. The first section of the book of Proverbs is all about this – a Father imparting wisdom and help to his son. Again and again in the first 9 chapters of Proverbs, the father calls the son to give weight to his wisdom and help.

Here's just one example: *Proverbs 1:8-9 Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, 9 for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.*

Hear my son, your father's instruction – give weight to it... Treat my instruction like a weighty thing to you. And forsake not your mother's teaching – her teaching must not be a light, feathery thing. Make sure our instruction, our teaching are of great consequence to you...

And notice why? **Verse 9:** *'...for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.'* Now, you might not have walked in thinking – what I really need is a garland for my head... I would be stylin' if I just had a graceful garland to wear on my head – or maybe a pendant...

This might not sound initially attractive, but these are metaphors for a rich treasure of blessing from God! It's a lot like saying – it will go well for you... It's poetic way of

saying - God holds out a rich treasure of spiritual blessing to you IF you give weight to their wisdom and help for your life.

In the teen years a common temptation is to think that 'I, the teen, am wise – and my parents are not so wise'. Anyone relate to that temptation?

In the teen years you *are* growing in understanding. You *are* growing in wisdom. I acknowledge that, and your parents acknowledge that. But here's the deal... Because of that, you are vulnerable to thinking this thought: 'I know best... I don't care what they say, I know best.'

And if you think that way – and relate to your parents that way, here's what I want you to hear: then you're not honoring them, and it won't go well for you like it could and should.

Proverbs 12:15 *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.* Notice how the fool thinks.... he thinks he is right. In his own eyes, he is right – so what's he believing in his heart? "I know best..."

His heart says: 'I know best – I don't need instruction, I don't need to be taught or corrected' – and what is he really being? A fool. And I want to tell you something, Mr. Trainor still plays the fool all too often!

Just this past week, Mr. Fenska and I were meeting to evaluate last Sunday's meeting, as we do every week. So I said – tell me, what are your thoughts from last week's sermon? How might I improve on that message?

So I'm asking for wisdom, I'm asking for instruction – but then Mr. Fenska shared something he thought I could have done differently. And immediately my response was – 'well, I did that later in the message'.

I didn't ask for clarification, I didn't take time to consider what he was saying... I didn't do what the wise man does – I didn't listen to advice. instead, I was quick to disagree – I was being a fool.

And as the meeting went on I was convicted of my foolish pride, and I confessed that to Mr. Fenska and I asked for his forgiveness. Because I had been a fool! I was so convinced that I know best... I was so right in my own eyes, that I couldn't 'listen' to advice... I couldn't consider it and benefit from it.

So we can all be tempted this way. I want to grow in my own heart of humility here. But this is a particular temptation you face in these years.... It's the temptation to think, 'I know best... I don't need advice – my parents just don't get it, but I do.'

And when you think that way, God says – you're being a fool. And here's the way out of being a fool.... Here's the sure-fire way out every time: You say to yourself, 'self – I don't know best.' Please write that down – 'I don't know best...'

If in your heart you think 'I don't know best', what you will do? You will give weight to your parent's wisdom and help. You will see your need for their weight of wisdom, and you will become the wise man or woman who listens to advice.

If you relate to your parents thinking, 'I don't know best', then there will be a heart of humility. So that when your parents bring something to your attention, there isn't a sigh or the roll of the eyes.

The exasperated sigh, the impatient rolling of the eyes – those are not signs of a heart saying "I don't know best". Those are signs of playing the fool in that moment - it's a sign of saying, I am right in my own eyes, and I don't need to listen to this...

This does not mean that parents are the perfect dispensers of all wisdom. And as you do get older, your parents will help you understand their thinking and reason issues through with you at times....

But this is not a 50/50 proposition – it's not debating this out. If the discussion resembles a debate, then you're not saying "I don't know best" – and you're not become wise in that moment.

So take the advice of JC Ryle in your outline – he writes in his booklet "thoughts for young men": "Do not be too confident in your own judgment. Cease to be sure that you are always right, and others wrong. Be distrustful of your own opinion, when you find it contrary to that of older men than yourselves, and specially to that of your own parents."

Friends, that is the path of wisdom... that is the key to giving weight to your parents wisdom and help. It's not being too confident in your own judgment – but being distrustful of your own opinion.

Please ask yourself – on whose judgment do I normally rely? my own, my peers, or my parents? On whose judgment do you rely? Whose opinion do you most trust? If your answer is not 'my parents' – then you are in danger of playing the fool, and God has a better way for you...

That's the key for giving weight to your parents wisdom and help.... you live aware that 'I don't know best – and God wants to help me through my parents'. But what then should you do? How do we live this out practically?

You pursue their wisdom and help! You give weight to your parents' wisdom and help by **pursuing** their wisdom and help. You go after it... You recognize – I don't have wisdom here, and I need wisdom – and you go on a hunt for wisdom right where God has placed it for you: in your parents...

You say to your mom or your dad – I need to talk with you about something... I am struggling with something... I don't know how to think about this area of my life. Or, I'm not sure what I think about this aspect of following Christ.

Or, I'm tempted in this way right now... or I sinned in this way. Or, it could be as simple as, I've been invited to this friend's house next week – do you think I should go or would you like me to stay home?

That's how you give weight to their wisdom and help – you pursue it. Go after it my friends... it's there for you! God has blessing for you – wisdom and help – and it's located, not in your peers mainly. It's located in your parents.

Parents, I want to insert an appeal here... that you create contexts for this kind of thing to happen. We spoke at our 'age of opportunity' parents' meeting recently about having a strategy for discipleship – and that involved creating contexts in which this kind of relationship building and fellowship pursuing can take place.

Please don't hear this and think, my child just has to pursue me – given our responsibility to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, we have a responsibility to make sure this happens.

Parents, please create contexts in which to pursue this. And youth, please pursue your parents. And to help you, I've given you a list of questions you can use to hunt for wisdom...

- Where do you see me growing in my relationship with the Lord? Where do you see God at work in my life?
- Based on my conversations and enthusiasm, what would you say I most passionate about? Do you think my priorities reflect Matthew 6:33, that I am seeking first the kingdom of God in my life?
- In what specific ways would you encourage me to make my relationship with God the highest priority in my life? How would you recommend I pursue growth in my relationship with God?
- Have you observed any patterns of sin in my relationships with friends, my relationship with you, or my pursuit of the world that you have been trying to

bring to my attention? How well do I respond to you, when you try to bring these questions/concerns to me?

That's what I mean by honoring with humility – recognize that you don't know best, and then pursue your parents for their wisdom and help...

Now... is this always easy? Is this always an easy thing to do? No. Will you fail in honoring with humility at times? Yes – so let me close by pointing you to the hope and help held out to you in the gospel...

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

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 – then 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: power to honor parents. That's what this is saying... the Spirit of God fills, he empowers that you might have honor Him by honoring them...

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!