

D-LIFE BOOT CAMP

Training for a lifestyle
of discipleship.



Keeping it Real

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Dale L. Crawley Sr.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Rev. Dr. Deborah Crawley, Teacher
Sis. Tammi Brown, Asst. Teacher

PROTECTING HUMAN AUTHORITY "Authority of Parents"

Exodus 20:12 NKJV

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." NKJV

A. THE MEANING OF THE COMMANDMENT

1. The Placement of This Commandment.

20:12 The prior commandments were all concerned in one way or another with the necessity of honoring God as a basic means of keeping his covenant. Now comes a commandment that follows logically because it is concerned with honoring parents, who have the awesome role in the family of representing God to their children. Although this word/commandment requires children to honor their parents in all sorts of ways large and small, there can be little doubt that its most basic insistence from the point of view of establishing a responsibility that might otherwise be shirked is to demand that children take care of their parents in their parents' old age, when they are no longer able to work for themselves, as well as to honor whatever their parents have prescribed by way of inheritance for their children. Thus the commandment is followed by the promise of living long in the promised land. Just as parents who have lived long in their own personal lives need to be cared for at the end of those long lives, so Israel as a nation (not every individual therein) would be able to enjoy a long life in the land God was giving them.

This commandment is thus like the one that precedes it in linking the requirement to an action of God: As God rested on the creation Sabbath, so individual Israelites must do so each week in their own families; as God promises to take care of his dependents, Israel, for a long time in the promised land, so individual Israelites must take care of their dependent parents for a long time, as necessary, in their own families. The prior commandment looks back on the creation Sabbath, whereas the present commandment looks forward to the nation's tenure in the land of promise. There is not promise here of individually long life spans. Rather the promise refers to God's protection of his covenant people if and as long as they keep his covenant.¹

2. **The Meaning of "Honor."** To "honor" one's father and mother means to treat them with respect, deference, and care; also, to treat them as worthy of honor, as important and significant.
3. **The Motivation: God's Reward of a Long Life.** This commandment specifies a reward that comes with obedience:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." NKJV

An additional reason, "and that it may go well with you," is added to the commandment in Deuteronomy 5:16, but John Frame rightly observes that this aspect of the blessing was already implied in **Exodus 20:12**: "Of course, long life is not a blessing without prosperity, so as with the fourth commandment, Deuteronomy merely spells out what is already implicit in Exodus." This, then is a prominent example of what is taught in hundreds of passages in both the Old Testament and the New Testament: **God gives blessing in this life in response to our obedience to him.**

4. **New Testament Affirmation of This Commandment.** The apostle Paul quite clearly affirms this commandment as applicable to all people for all time, not only for the nation of Israel under the Mosaic covenant. For example, he says that one of the sins of Gentiles who do not know God is that they are "disobedient to parents" (Rom. 1:30; cf. 2 Tim, 3:2). When speaking of people who are "lawless and disobedient," he includes "those who strike their fathers and mothers" (1 Tim. 1:9).

¹ Stuart, D. K. (2006). *Exodus* (Vol. 2, pp. 461–462). Broadman & Holman Publishers. Excerpts from: *Christian Ethics. An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning* by Wayne Grudem. 2018 Excerpts from: *GotQuestions.org*

Furthermore, Paul explicitly quotes the fifth commandment in his instructions to the believers of Ephesus:

Eph 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

NKJV

Continuing the theme of Christian submission, Paul turned next to children. He assumed that children would be in the congregation of believers as this letter was read. By even addressing them -- a segment of society that was considered to be virtually without rights -- Paul elevated them and invested them with dignity and worth unheard of in the Roman world at the time. His command to them is simple: Obey your parents in the Lord. This is not an absolute command; when a parent tells a child to do something unbiblical, immoral, or unethical, the law of God supersedes the will of the parent. But aside from those extremes, children are to obey their mothers and fathers. This is the way God intends it. It's easy to see the immediate practical benefits of this for both children and parents because parents usually really do know best.

The Greek word for children (**tekna**) refers to young children living at home (see also Col 3:20, where the same word is used). The word "**obey**" conveys a stronger demand than the submission required of wives (5:22). God requires children to obey because children need to rely on the wisdom of their parents. Jesus himself submitted to the authority of his earthly parents, despite his authority as the Messiah (Luke 2:51). All young children will, at times, disobey and test their parents' limits. As they get older, they will understand why God wants them to obey. Obedience that recognizes parents' authority can carry over into recognizing God's authority. God's plan for his people includes solid family relationships where there exists respect, obedience, submission, and love for one another. When both parents and children love God, all of them will seek to obey and please him.

(from The Life Application Commentary Series copyright (C) 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 by the Livingstone Corporation. Produced with permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.)

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN

1. When Children Are Young, They Are Responsible to Obey Their Parents.

However, this obedience to one's parents must never take precedence over obedience to God.

Excerpts from: Christian Ethics. An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning by Wayne Grudem. 2018

Excerpts from: GotQuestions.org

2. **When Children Become Adults, They Must Still Honor Their Parents, but Are Not Required to Obey Them.** Sometimes adult Christians read Ephesians 6:1 and think it tells them to obey their parents even when they are grown and have their own house.
3. **When Parents Grow Older, Their Children Are Responsible to Care for Them as Necessary and as They Are Able.** The early church faced a problem of how to care for widows whose husbands had died and who could no longer support themselves. (1 Tim. 5:9-16; 1 Tim. 5:3-4; 8)
4. **Children Must Respect the Independence and Property Rights of Their Parents while the Parents Are Still Living.** Scripture views positively the tradition of parents leaving an inheritance to their children and even grandchildren. (Prov. 13:22)
5. **The Blessings of Obedience to the Fifth Commandment. (Deut. 5:16)** Although this blessing of long and good life in the land of Israel was specific to Mosaic covenant, in two different New Testament passages Paul also connects obedience to parents with blessings that will come to the children. In Ephesians, he directly quotes Deuteronomy 5 with the implication that the blessings --- “that it may go well with you” still applies to children in the new covenant age.

C. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

1. Love

The Bible frequently assumes that parents will love their children, although it seldom directly commands them to do this. This is evident in passages such as God’s words to Abraham, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love” (Gen. 22:2), and in David’s deep grief even over his rebellious son Absalom, when Absalom died, David compares God’s love for us to a father’s compassion for his children.

2. Discipline

a. Parents Are Responsible for Having Obedient Children

Scripture is emphatic in teaching that parents, and especially fathers, are responsible for having their children under control, not defiant of parental authority but respectful and obedient.

b. Various Forms of Discipline

Some claim that physical discipline (corporal punishment) such as spanking is the only method the Bible supports. Others insist that “time-outs” and other

punishments that do not involve physical discipline are far more effective. What does the Bible say? The Bible teaches that physical discipline is appropriate, beneficial, and necessary.

Do not misunderstand—we are by no means advocating child abuse. A child should never be disciplined physically to the extent that it causes actual physical damage. According to the Bible, though, the appropriate and restrained physical discipline of children is a good thing and contributes to the well-being and correct upbringing of the child.

Many Scriptures do in fact promote physical discipline. “don’t fail to correct your children. They won’t die if you spank them. Physical discipline may well save them from death” ([Proverbs 23:13-14](#); see also 13:24; 22:15; 20:30). The Bible strongly stresses the importance of discipline; it is something we must all have in order to be productive people, and it is much more easily learned when we are young. Children who are not disciplined often grow up rebellious, have no respect for authority, and as a result find it difficult to willingly obey and follow God. God Himself uses discipline to correct us and lead us down the right path and to encourage repentance for our wrong actions ([Psalm 94:12](#); [Proverbs 1:7](#); [6:23](#); [12:1](#); [13:1](#); [15:5](#); [Isaiah 38:16](#); [Hebrews 12:9](#)).

c. The Question of Spanking

When the subject of “Christian spanking” is broached, it must be assumed that the corporal punishment in question does not occur in an abusive way. It is not extreme nor given in anger, but proportionate to the offense and part of a loving, responsible relationship. And the fact is, spanking is efficient and can be very effective. Some children respond to spanking quickly and completely when all other types of punishment fail. Parents of a strong-willed three-year-old who loves to run out into the street understand they have two choices: spank promptly to curb the dangerous behavior right away, or confine their child to a strictly controlled environment that may disrupt the entire family and restrict the child from more pleasant activities.

d. Opposition to Spanking in Modern Culture

The Bible neither explicitly demands nor forbids the spanking of children. (Although the “rod” of [Proverbs 13:24](#) could refer to reproof in general, corporal punishment cannot be excluded as an option.) Firm, decisive discipline is vital to the well-being of a child. It provides guidance and wisdom the child will need later in life. Fathers in the New Testament bear a responsibility to rear their children “in the training and instruction of the Lord” ([Ephesians 6:4](#)). Mode of discipline is not specified.

Christian families in many nations in Europe and even on U.S. military bases are faced with the challenge of disciplining their children without the option of spanking / corporal punishment. Parents who believe that spanking is a God-ordained practice necessary for the rearing of their child may spank privately, disregarding the ban as a matter of civil disobedience. Other parents may choose not to spank, submitting to their civil authority and trusting that God is wise enough to lead them to discipline in other ways.

3. Patience and Understanding

In addition to love and discipline, the Bible specifies that parents are responsible to show patience and understanding toward their children. (Eph. 6:4)

4. Instruction

To bring children up “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4) includes teaching them about God and his ways. Much of the book of Proverbs consists of teachings from mothers and fathers to their children.

5. The Importance of Training Children

Clearly Scripture teaches that training children to know and obey God is the basis for pleasing Him and living victoriously in His grace. Knowing God and His truths begins with the child’s understanding of sin and his need for a Savior. Even very young children understand that they are not perfect and can grasp at an early age the need for forgiveness. Loving parents model a loving God who not only forgives, but provides the perfect sacrifice for sin in Jesus Christ. Training up children in the way they should go means, first and foremost, directing them to the Savior.

Discipline is an integral part of raising godly children, for we know that the “LORD disciplines those He loves” ([Proverbs 3:12](#)). Thus, we should neither take discipline lightly nor become disheartened by it as the Lord “punishes everyone He accepts as a son” ([Hebrews 12:5-6](#)). And we know that God disciplines us for our good, so that we may share in His holiness ([Hebrews 12:10](#)). Likewise, when we discipline our children, they receive wisdom ([Proverbs 29:15](#)) and they will bring us peace ([Proverbs 29:17](#)) and respect ([Hebrews 12:9](#)). In fact, even at a tender age children are able to discern that discipline is rooted in love. That is why children who grow up in homes without discipline often feel unloved and are more likely to disobey authority as they grow older. Now, the discipline administered should be commensurate with the offense and physical discipline, such as spanking (rightly motivated), is certainly condoned by the Bible ([Proverbs 13:24](#), [22:15](#), [23:13-14](#)). Indeed discipline, though it may seem unpleasant when received, will produce a “harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” ([Hebrews 12:11](#)).