

LifeWay Family Bible Series for May 16: Children honor parents by loving their Father_50304

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Children honor parents by loving their Father

Ephesians 6:1-4; 1 Timothy 5:1-8

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Have you ever heard the voice of God?

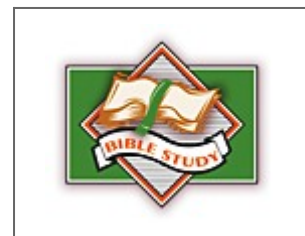
My sons have. There is a great man of God in the church I served in Stillwater, Okla. He has a deep voice, knows and employs the King James English, and always is the narrator in the Christmas and Easter musicals.

When he would speak in church, my boys would often comment, "I like it when God talks in church." He sounded like God to them. We often sat with him and his wife at Oklahoma State baseball games. "God" talked baseball with my boys. No wonder they love baseball to this day.

What does God sound like to you? I am sure the first time I heard God's voice, he sounded a lot like my mother and father. From them, I began to

learn that I lived in an environment where trust was possible.

When it comes to life lessons that inspire trust or faith, I am certain the ultimate teacher is God himself. When he began to tug at my heart, trusting him was as natural as trusting my own parents.



This is why the words of this week's lesson are so important: "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).

Why should children honor their parents? It is certainly not because they are always honorable. This text should never be employed to convince anyone to tolerate abuse. Remember, Paul began this section of Scripture back in Ephesians 5 with the command to not be drunk with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit. The parents in question are assumed to be Spirit-filled, God-loving, Christ-following disciples. Such parents should be honored.

We should honor our parents because God uses families to accomplish his purposes. He chose Abraham's family so that through them he could bless all the families of the earth. He promised them a land.

Paul quoted Deuteronomy 5:16 as the "commandment with a promise." The promise was not just long life. It included the words, "that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you." God wanted them to remain in the land a long time to serve him.

New Testament families passed along their faith at home as well. Paul commented to Timothy on his family-based faith heritage with these words: "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:5). We think of the home as being where character is formed. It is more importantly the place where faith is born.

How do we honor Spirit-filled parents? We love their Lord. I cannot think of anything I would rather my children do than to serve the Lord Jesus with their whole lives. I know it is what my parents want most for me. I have a brother who also is a pastor. I think our parents believe their raising of two sons was an act of service to God. They should be honored by their boys for pointing us to Jesus.

How do we honor Spirit-filled parents? We remember their labor of love. How can any of us repay parents for all they have done for us? I am sure they appreciated all the plaster hand castings and macaroni-covered cigar boxes we made for them during Vacation Bible School. I think they just need to know we remember their labor of love and we thank God for them. Godly parents are the heroes most needed in today's world. That is the kind of parents I had, and it is the kind of parent I want to be.

How do we honor Spirit-filled parents? We meet their needs as they met ours. My parents came running to us in the night when we had a need. They were there for us. They also took us with them when they went running to their parents in their time of need. I expect to do some running of my own when the time comes. It will not be a chore. It will be family. It will be how we honor those who gave us life and faith. What a gift!

Questions for discussion

- ◆ How do you honor your father and mother? How would you like your children to honor you?

- ◆ What are you doing in your home to ensure that your faith is being passed along to your children?

- ◆ What example do your children see in the way that you honor your parents?

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