



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

Modern Family - Feb. 11/12, 2017 - Greg Harris
Joyful Obedience - (Colossians 3:20)

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

My name is Greg and I am one of the pastors here. The local church is a family. We get to serve our heavenly Father as brothers and sisters in the Lord, so the next sermon series we are starting here this weekend is Modern Family. We're looking at some of the relationship dynamics that go on in the midst of the local church. We're going to be looking at topics like: parenting, marriage, divorce, singleness, and we're going to cover a bunch of topics that the bible has to say about relationships in the life of the local church. So, to start off our series though, because it's a family service, which I love that it's a family service because that means that this is one of the only services that parents who have kids and if the kids makes a noise like asking for a crayon or is opening a really loud snack, no one is allowed to turn around their heads and be like "what is that?" It's like a free weekend for parents; it's great. So, because parents are here with their kids, what the pastoral team decided we wanted to talk about here this morning is the Bible's command for children to obey their parents [laughter]. So, yeah, there you go. You're welcome. Now kids, you need to know, we didn't get any money from your parents on the side to do this. This is something our pastoral team decided was going to be a good idea because it's something the Bible commands us to do. Those of us who are kids, it's our job to obey our parents, but here is the thing I want you guys to hear as kids right off the bat: Jesus doesn't ask you to do something that He didn't already do Himself. So, to prove that to you, I want us to look at the story in Luke 2, where Jesus was a little boy and here's what happened: Luke 2 says,

"Every year, Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the passover. When He was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while His parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking He was in their company, they travelled on for a day. Then, they began looking for Him among their relatives and friends. When they didn't find Him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for Him. After three days they found Him in the Temple Court, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and His answers. When His parents saw Him they were astonished. His mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.' 'Why were you searching for me?' He asked. 'Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what He was saying to them. Then he [Jesus] went down to Nazareth with His parents and was obedient to them. But His mother treasured all these things in her heart.



So kids, can you imagine every year your family goes on a trip and every year before, when you went up with your family, you also went home with your family. But then one year you go on the same trip and your family leaves and you're left behind and your mom and dad are gone for a whole day. They've already come back home and now they're looking at each other and wondering to themselves, "Who was supposed to look after Jesus? Joseph, you were on Jesus du--" "No Mary, I'm pretty sure you were on Jesus duty this time." They're freaking out! And they start looking around their family and friends. "Is Jesus there?" No, He's nowhere to be seen, so they're like "Okay, we probably left Him." So they go back to where they spent their family time together in Jerusalem and they find Jesus. If I was Jesus in that moment, I would probably be a little bit snippy and ask them a question like "How could you forget your first born?" [laughter]. But when Jesus parents come to Him and they say "Okay, it's time to go home son," Jesus isn't snippy with them. He obediently went with them. See, Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents. Jesus doesn't ask you kids to do something that He, Himself, did not already do.

So we are going to look at two reasons why you should be obedient to your parents. The two reasons are:

- 1) Jesus enjoys obedience
- 2) Jesus joyfully obeyed

Jesus enjoys obedience and Jesus joyfully obeyed. So let's look, first, at the first reason why kids should obey your parents. Because Jesus enjoys obedience. Colossians 3:20, the Bible says,

"Children obey your parents in everything. For, this pleases the Lord."

Or, *because* this pleases the Lord. See the reason, kids, why you should obey your parents is not to make your parents happy, but because it makes Jesus happy. This is the reason your parents bring you to church on the weekend, is because they want you to know that Jesus loves you so much and they want your life to be spent acting in ways that show Jesus that you love Him too. The Bible tells us, that we should, as kids, obey your parents, because this is something that makes Jesus happy. So, I need some help from some kids in the room. What are some of the things that make you really excited to wake up in the morning? What are the things that make you really happy? [pause]. Come on, give me-- don't leave me hanging [pause]. In past services someone said food. Other people said video games. Some people said that they really liked seeing their best friends. See, my son, if he had his way, every single day, his life would be filled with the biggest bowl possible of veggie straws and endless streaming of Paw Patrol on Netflix. That would make him very excited. Here's what this passage is telling you kids, is that when you obey your parents, you make Jesus really excited. You make Him really happy to see kids who love Jesus make a part of their life obeying their parents. Okay, so now I also need some help from the kids. Maybe this time you'll actually help me out. Or leave me stranded. That's cool. If you want to play like that, that's okay [laughter]. What kind of things do your parents ask you to do? [pause]. Chores, make your bed, do the dishes, right? Come on, there's a dishwasher, people [laughter]. Your parents ask you to do all kinds of things, right? I'm the youngest boy and I have two older sister, which, if you're a psychologist in the room, you're like, "That explains a lot" [laughter]. But, when you're the youngest boy and you have two older sisters, what you learn, is not necessarily how to fight with your



fists, you learn to fight with your words. You know that your words can do a lot of damage. They can send your older sisters back to their room crying. See, my parents had a rule. The rule was that the way we used our words had to encourage each other and make each other feel good about themselves and not tear each other down. When I followed that rule as a kid, that made Jesus really happy. But when I didn't follow that rule as a kid, that made Jesus not very happy. It made Him actually pretty sad because when we obey our parents as kids, that's something that pleases Jesus.

So teenagers in the room, this command is applicable to you as well because if you're sleeping in the bed that your parents bought you and you're wearing clothes that your parents bought you and you're eating the food that your parents bought for you, the Bible would command you to obey your parents because it pleases the Lord. So when they ask you to come home at curfew on the weekend, it's not a question only of, "Do I want to make my parents happy?" but if you're a christian teenager that's here this morning, the question is: "Do I not only want to obey my parents, but do I want to do something that's going to make Jesus happy or not?" Or when your parents ask you to text them to keep them in the loop of what you're doing on long weekends, it's not just a matter of do you want to listen to your parents, it's a question of, "Do I, as a christian, want to make Jesus happy with the way I live my life?" Because look, if we're a teenager in the room and we want to go on missions trips and we want to serve Jesus, we want to worship Him, we want to be baptised, we want to follow the Lord, we want to call ourselves a Christian, and yet, in ourselves, we don't want to obey our parents, there's a disconnect there. You should be repenting of that because children need to obey their parents and this is something that pleases the Lord. It's a discipleship piece for our kids to have them be obedient to their parents.

So parents, if this is a part of discipleship, if the main reason for kids to be obedient to their parents is so that it pleases the Lord because it's something that makes Jesus happy, what that means is that your kids obedience (or disobedience) towards you is not primarily about their good behaviour or having a well managed household. Their obedience or disobedience is primarily a discipleship issue. Pastor Robyn, I was chatting with her this past week, asking her what she thought about this text and with this weekend with this family service, and she said that, "Parents need a paradigm shift. Parents need to recognize that children are able to understand, even young children are able to understand, that Jesus loves them, and so, in response to that, we should do things that make Jesus happy. Part of that's going to look like reading their Bible, part of that is going to look like praying, part of that is going to look like being kind to others, and part of that is going to look like being obedient to their parents. It's a part of their discipleship journey." So parents, what this means for us is that when our kids are disobedient towards us, discipline is a good thing, but it's not the first thing we do as parents. The first thing we do is we pray for the hearts of our kids because obedience to parents is a heart towards Jesus issue. It's a discipleship issue and not just about having a well managed household.

So kids, the first reason why I want you to obey your parents is because it makes Jesus happy. He enjoys obedience. The second reason why I want kids here to obey their parents is because Jesus joyfully obeyed. Jesus-- we already read in Luke 2, right? They go on the family vacation. The parents leave Jesus behind. They're like, "You were on Jesus duty." "No, you were on Jesus duty." They come back, their like, "Hey, we have to go home," and he was obedient to His parents. We already heard that.



But one of the coolest things about church, *the* coolest thing about church, is just how amazing this Jesus is. It's why I'm flailing my arms and why your parents bring you to church on weekends, is because Jesus is really, really amazing. He was the only person in human history who was fully human and fully God. You might be thinking to yourself, "How does that work?" Well, the good news is that you have your whole life to think about that and praise God for the fact that Jesus was fully God and fully human. But, what that means for us here this morning, is that because Jesus was fully human, he had earthly parents that he needed to follow. And because he was fully God, he also had a Heavenly Father that he needed to be obedient to as well. And as Jesus grew up in his ministry, when he was doing miracles, and he was teaching amazing sermons, and he was doing all kinds of things, one of the things he was doing through it all was being obedient to his Heavenly Father. There's some Bible verses I want to read to help show that to you. John 8 says,

"So Jesus said, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases Him.'"

John 12:

"For I do not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

And through Jesus' ministry, in his miracles and in his teaching, one of the main things he was trying to get across to people was that he was a man, but he was also God. He was God with them to save them from their sins and when some of the leaders in the community heard Jesus saying that he was God with them to save them they were getting really mad at him. So much so that they were just obsessed with wanting to kill Jesus. So, before Jesus knew he was going to die, he got away for a trip with his disciples and he spent some time on his own and in that moment, even when it was the most difficult situation you could ever imagine, Jesus still wanted to obey his Father. Here's what he said in Luke 22: it says,

"[Jesus] withdrew about a stone's throw beyond [the disciples], knelt down and prayed 'Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.'"

See, Jesus joyfully obeyed in His life. He obeyed His earthly parents. He obeyed his heavenly father, perfectly. And the reason why Jesus obeyed his Heavenly Father is because he knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he was immeasurably loved by his Heavenly Father. One of the great mysteries of Christianity, one of the great things that you kids are going to get to think about as you continue to grow older and keep going to Kidstown, and then to Youth, and then through Young Adults, and as you spend time in the local church, one of the things you get to think about more and more, is this thing called the Trinity. It's this idea, it's this truth, that the God who is there is one God, but that one God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That's three. But there's one. But there's three. And you think to yourself, "That doesn't make sense." It's because it's a mystery. It's a mystery that makes us want to worship this



God who is there. We believe it's true because it says so in the Bible, but here's what it means for us here this morning: the reason why Jesus was obedient to his Heavenly Father, was because he knew he was immeasurably loved by his Heavenly Father. Here's the cool thing about the fact that God is one and three: God didn't need to make you and me in order to have someone to love. In all eternity, Jesus experienced immeasurable love between him and his Heavenly Father, so when Jesus came as fully God and fully man and lived his life and did his ministry, he did it knowing that his Heavenly Father loves him immeasurably. So he would follow Him and be obedient to Him. Jesus was motivated in his ministry by an immeasurable love, not only that he knew he had with his father, but that he also had for you and me even know thought we did nothing to deserve it. It's what got him up in the morning each day during his life and ministry, was because he loved his Father and he loved you and me. It's why he did what he did. It's because Jesus' love for you is higher than any sky and it's deeper than every single ocean and His love for you is wider than I can stretch my arms. But I'm not very tall, so it's not a very wide wingspan for me to stretch my arms, so I'm going to need some help. Is Pastor Jonathan still here [laughter]? Okay, His love for us is wider than both of us can stretch our arms. But it's not-- your not very big. Is pastor Robyn still here [laughter]? Jesus' love for us is-- let's get this wide-- is wider than all three of us could possibly reach, but not only that. If every single person in your neighbourhood and in your school was lined up end to end holding Jonathan's hand, God's love for us would be wider than that. And if every single person in Canada was lined up hand to hand, stretching as far as they could, holding onto Pastor Robyn's hand, Jesus' love for us would be even wider than that. See, Jesus's love for us, even though we did nothing to deserve it, is wider than we could ever imagine. That's why He came. That's why He obeyed.

Here's the cool part of Jesus' ministry: he is motivated by a really wide love for you, and in his ministry he was perfectly obedient. When the bible says, "Do not lie," we lie. And when the bible says, "Do not steal," we steal. And when the bible says, "Obey your parents", we are disobedient to our parents. But Jesus, when the bible says, "Do not lie," he did not lie. When the bible says, "Do not steal," he did not steal. And when the bible says, "Obey your parents", he joyfully obeyed. So what that means, is that Jesus has the perfect obedience. He has that perfect record. In some sports, if you're the perfect person, if you're the champion of it all, you get the big championship belt. Jesus has that big championship belt of perfect following God. He's the only one to have done it, but here's the cool thing about the Gospel: how many hockey fans do we have here? Anyone like hockey? A few people. So, if you make it to the NHL and your team wins the championship, you're part of the team that did all the work to win the championship, your name gets engraven on the stanley Cup. The cool thing about the gospel is that when we come and we recognize that we have sinned, we have been the ones who broke God's law and we need someone who is perfect, who can come and save us, even though we didn't do anything to earn it, we get our name graven on the championship trophy because of what Jesus did for us. He's the only champion, but every single person who puts their faith in him gets to be called a champion, but even better they get to be called a son or daughter of God. See, his perfect obedience is a big deal. He perfectly obeyed because he loved us so much and he proved just how much he loves every single person here because he stretched his arms as far as they could go. When Jesus was on the cross, not only was he perfect in his life, but he was obedient to the point of death on the cross, so that on that cross, he could take the punishment of every single sin that we've committed. And so for anyone who comes to Jesus and says, "We need someone who's perfect to help me and I



need someone to pay for my sin. Lord Jesus, would you be my saviour,” he’s proven that he loves you enough to be that kind of a rescuer. He’s the best kind of hero because he’s a real one. And he offers a real help and a real salvation and when you accept that news, now you get to spend the rest of your life knowing you are immeasurably loved by God, and so in response you want to live a life that worships him. And part of that life that worships God is obeying your parents because it makes Jesus happy. When we realize how much we are loved by God, even though we didn’t do anything, we want to be the kind of people who want to make Jesus happy. Not so that he’ll love us, but because he has already loved us so much. So kids, the reason I want you to obey your parents, is because Jesus isn’t asking us to do anything he hasn’t done himself. Jesus enjoys obedience and Jesus joyfully obeyed.

But now I want to say a word to the adults in the room. This idea of joyful obedience isn’t just for kids. The bible is really clear in the relationships that it talks about that there are those who servantly lead and those who joyfully obey. Read the rest of Colossians 3 and you’ll find just that pattern, that the Government is supposed to be the kind of place where servant leadership takes place and where people in the country joyfully obey. The local church is a place where elders servant lead a congregation and the members of the church joyfully obey them in that. In your workplace, your boss is supposed to be a servant leader and you’re called to joyfully obey. So the question for us as adults is: how are we doing in our joyful obedience? Every single one of us is in a relationship where our calling on our lives is to be obedient. So how are we doing there? How do we treat our boss? How do we speak about church leaders when they ask you to do things like be baptised if you’re a believer? How are we at obeying? Tony Dungy is the name of a football coach (former football coach) and he wrote in a book that he wrote called *Uncommon* a story of him as a coach for a team called the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the team was owned by the Glazer family. Here is the story. Coach Dungy led his team to an okay season, but not great, and because of if, what the owners of the team wanted to see change was the offence needed to be a lot better. So the owners came to their employee, Coach Dungy, and said “I need you to fire your offensive coach.” Coach Dungy thought about it, and he didn’t really like the idea, because one, he was really good friends with the offensive coach, but secondly, the offensive coach did every single thing that Coach Dungy asked him to do. Coach Dungy thought it was a terrible idea to fire this offensive coach, but he went home after that meeting, not knowing what he was going to do, and then he thought to himself, “This is the place where God has asked me to be joyfully obedient.” He writes in his book that the Glazer family wasn’t asking him to do something that was sinful, they were just asking him to do something he thought was the wrong decision. He had to decide in that moment, “Am I going to be the kind of Christian who is disobedient to those who have authority over me, or am I going to be the kind of christian who is characterized in difficult moments by joyful obedience?” And he eventually decided to fire his friend who was the offensive coach because he realized that in that part of his life God was calling him as a disciple to joyfully obey those who had authority over him. So how are we doing with our joyful obedience? Because look, it’s a real shame for us to clap our hands when we hear that it’s a sermon about children obey your parents because we want them to obey us and yet not want to obey when those are in authority over us. The reason why I want us to be joyful obeyers is that it’s going to help us look more like Jesus and it’s going to model to our kids what it looks like to joyfully obey and to be a disciple of Jesus because joyful obedience is a Christian, Christ-like characteristic. I think joyful obedience is something that’s better caught than taught. I pray that my words were helpful for your kids in saying that they need to follow and obey you



because of what Jesus has done for them, but this message is going to be drilled home if joyful obedience is something that they also catch from you. Jesus wants us to be joyful in our obedience because he enjoys obedience and he joyfully obeyed. Let me pray for us,

Father, I'm thankful that by Your grace big truths can make sense to little hearts. So Father, I pray by Your spirit You would make big truths soak into little hearts this morning. That we would be able to grasp a new - each and every single one of us - the immeasurable love that Jesus has for us that he was willing to live and die and rise again and come back again, not because we are great, but because he is great. Father, it's my desire that by Your spirit You would help us to live this out in acts of worship, that in some places is going to look like joyful obedience to those in authority over us. Help us look and act more like Jesus as a response in worship to You because we love You and You are worthy of our worship. We pray all of this for Your fame and in Christ's name, amen.