

## BIBLICAL EMANCIPATION FROM PARENTAL AUTHORITY

A curious question often posed by those who either misunderstand or oppose the *Biblical model of the family* and *Scriptural Patriarchy* is, “*Where in the Bible is it taught that parents have authority over their adult children?*” For those who genuinely believe the *Scriptures* and consider the *Bible* to be the Christian’s highest doctrinal authority, our only objective standard for truth and practice, this should not be the question at all. Such an inquiry is often thinly-veiled in unbelief and rebellion and is akin to something like, “*When it is established that I indeed have enemies, how long must I continue to love them?*” As Christians, ‘*loving our enemies*’ is a well documented command that *Jesus* offered without qualification (*Matt 5:44; Lk 6:27, 35*). To disingenuously ask ‘*how long we must love our enemies?*’, is presuming, contrary to *Scripture*, that there is no *Biblical* command for *loving our enemies*. Likewise, *parental authority* over children is an established *Biblical absolute*...

“*Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.*” —*Leviticus 19:3*

“*My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.*” —*Proverbs 6:20-23*

“*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*” —*Ephesians 6:1-3*

“*Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*” —*Colossians 3:20*

These verses, along with many others, irrefutably establish *parental authority*. According to the *Bible*, children are to *fear, obey, and honor* their parents. Hence, rather than blindly presenting an ill-informed and presumptuous question implying *parents forfeit authority simply because of the age of their children*, it would behoove the questioner to first establish such a premise via *Scripture*. As we’ve carefully noted above, the *Bible* clearly teaches parents have authority over their children. If there is a point when parents’ authority over their children is limited, *when* and *how*, according to the *Scriptures*, does this take place? Of course, it’s self-evident that the vast balance of *children* leave *home* and live essentially independently, even righteously so, of their parents’ authority, but this is not necessarily because they have reached a certain age. In this article we endeavor to *Scripturally* expound on this often-neglected topic.

## Introduction

Christians submit to the world that actually is, the world that was manifestly created and ordered by a *Creator*. This *creation* implies *authority* because *authority* implies an *Author*.

*“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse...” —Romans 1:19-20*

According to Scripture, God’s authority is self-evident. It is apparent via the *Creation*. In essence, the One who *authored creation* obviously has complete and exhaustive authority over it all. Not only did He authoritatively speak it into existence in the beginning (*Gen. 1:1*), but His Word continues to uphold all things that exist (*Heb 1:3*). This means that God’s authority is the foundation for everything that exists. However, sinful men, in rebellion, refuse to recognize or honor His authority, yet they are without excuse.

## God-Ordained Authority

First, it’s important we address *authority* in general. The first level of government and authority in the Christian worldview is *self-government*. Nonetheless, self-government in a fallen, sinful world is relatively impossible apart from the grace of God. In our natural, fallen state man is enslaved to his sin and passions. He is dead to God and righteousness. The *Apostle Paul* describes our former state well in *Titus*: ‘*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another*’ (*Tit 3:3*). Accordingly, *Jesus* declared we can neither *see* nor *enter* the kingdom except we be *born-again* (*Jn 3:3-6*). We are born-again when we repent, exercise faith in the finished work of *Christ* on the cross, deny ourselves, take up our own cross, and follow *Jesus*. When the old man is crucified with *Jesus* and raised to new life, it is the *Spirit of the resurrected Christ* that takes up residence in the believer, and it is the Spirit that begins to govern the individual, giving the gift of self-control, or self-government (*Gal 5:22-24*). This is the foundation for all biblical authority and government. This regenerate life, and all other human power, is a gift from God; thereby this establishes the basic and foundational Christian assumption that all power and authority is from God. There is no true authority, no true power apart from God. All true authority is *delegated* or *derived* authority and consequently, no man can have any real authority if he refuses to be *under* authority (*Jn 19:11*). So, the first and most fundamental reformation that must occur before we can order ourselves aright with God’s authority is conversion, or the regeneration of the individual.

The Scriptures also teach there are three primary *realms of government* God has sovereignly established. In these realms He has given men *authority* so as to judicate *justice* and promote *order*. Hence, after *self-government*, God has ordained three *Institutional Spheres of Authority*, namely...

1. Household (*Family/Marital/Parental authority*).
2. Church (*Ecclesiastical/Spiritual authority*).
3. State (*Civil authority*).

These three categories could be sub-divided into lesser spheres, for example, *vocational authority, etc.*, but these three encapsulate God's sovereign *Institutional Authority*. These, and these alone, are '*the powers that be*' and '*they are ordained by God*', there is none other (*Rom 13:1*). Make no mistake, these *God-ordained Institutions* and the authority represented therein are neither contrived nor the result of social constructs. They cannot be realistically eliminated or abolished. They are completely unaffected by cultural norms or man's opinion. They simply *are*. Consequently, those who refuse, ignore, or oppose God's ordained *authorities* are both unwise and morally reckless as they are not merely resisting *human authority*, but *God Himself* behind that *authority*. Ultimately, those who obstinately resist *God's* order of authority will *receive damnation* (*Rom 13:2*).

Who has authority in each *Institution*? God has invested authority in specific human offices within each sovereign sphere, namely—in the *Household* are *fathers* and *parents*, in the *Church*, God has provided *pastors* and *elders*, and in the *State*, it's the *civil magistrates*. In each God-ordained *Institutional Sphere* there are jurisdictions that define the influence and limitations of that *authority*.

1. In the *Household*, *husbands* only have authority over their own wives. *Fathers* only have authority over their own *households* and those under their care. Likewise, *parents* only have authority over their own children.
2. In the *Church*, the authority of *pastors* and *elders* only extend to matters related to the life and practice of their respective local churches.
3. Regarding the *State*, *civil magistrates* are limited to authority in civil matters of the particular region, state or country of their rulership.

These jurisdictions are not absolutely isolated. Simply meaning, sometimes one may overlap into another affecting and influencing other spheres (*for example, the State may institute a tax that has ramifications for both the Family and the Church*), but generally speaking, the lines are clear and the jurisdictions are distinct.

In each of these *Institutional Spheres* the ruling heads are responsible, according to Scripture, to maintain *order* and to promote *justice*. To do this, God has granted these offices, within their respected jurisdictions, both the right and responsibility to punish evil-doers (*Rom 13:3-4*). Yet, for each jurisdiction there is a maximum level of punishment or penalty...

1. Household—*the rod*
2. Church—*excommunication*
3. State—*the death penalty*

## The Rejection of Authority

The essence of sin is rebellion against *God* who is the *Ultimate Authority*. Indeed, He is the source and foundation for all *authority*. Thus, if there is one heart motivation that summarizes the spirit of the *fallen world* it's a *rejection of God's authority*. So, it should not be surprising that today in America, we live in a culture that utterly despises *valid authority*. Yet, contrary to their stated philosophy, many are obsessed with power and power disparities. The modern world professes to distrust power—e.g., *power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely*—and of course, there is no shortage of examples of power misused, authority abused. However, the current modern '*egalitarian gospel*' is the *lie* palmed-off as the good news of no more authority, no power disparities. This is the whole point of the *Socialist, Marxist* impulses of the political left: *if we can just flatten out all the supposed privilege and power disparities between majorities and minorities, male and female, rich and poor, black and white, etc.*, then everybody will stop fighting, stop taking drugs, and peace and harmony will break out all over. The problem is, in order to arrive at that *utopian fantasy* of absolute equality, these arrogant, sin-blinded *social engineers* must use coercion. People rarely give up their power and privilege unless forced, which means in order to get to their *non-authoritarian utopia*, they must exercise, um, what shall we call it? *Authority*. All of this is a longish way of saying that *authority* and *power* are really inescapable. *Authority* is; someone will have it and someone will not. It may be foolishly ignored or denied, it can be forfeited, but it cannot be eradicated. The *powers that be*, indeed, are the *powers that are*. This is unavoidable. Men falsely and dishonestly claim *authority* is inherently evil, but the Scriptures plainly teach *authority* is good for it is God-ordained. If men claim '*power corrupts*' then how can these same men shamelessly use *power* to destroy *power*? If *authority* is inherently evil, then how can they use the *authority of elections* or the *authority of the law* or the *authority of politicians* or the *authority of science* or the *authority of anything* to accomplish the *dissolution of authority*? Such disingenuous and sinister men, by their actions, must rationally admit that *authority* can function as '*good*' because they use it for their own ends. However, it's apparently only good when it's used to undermine valid authority resulting in a less authoritarian state. Yet, this is like saying that light is only good when it brings darkness—a rather obvious intellectual contraction and a glaring example of brazen hypocrisy.

The real question is not, '*Is there valid authority?*', but rather, '*Do I recognize God's ordained authority and am I properly submitted thereto?*' In most cases, as Christians, we cannot choose our *authority*. We do not choose our parents. We are born, by the sovereign choice of God, into our immediate families. Likewise, we do not choose where we attend church. As Christians, it is God who has planted us somewhere in the *Body of Christ* per the local church and leads us accordingly (*1 Cor 12:18*). We may establish new families via marriage, but as followers of *Jesus*, the selection of our spouses, our family planning (*how many children we have*), where we work, where we live, etc. should all be determined by *God* and realized by the practical application of the Scriptures and the leading of *God's Spirit*. Even sinners, who are commanded to repent and submit to *Christ* but are in rebellion, will answer for the authority of God in every sphere. Thus, every person, whether they recognize it or not, has been sovereignly placed under these God-

ordained *Institutional Spheres of Authority* as well as under their respective heads or rulers. Moreover, each will give an account to God for how they respond.

## Parental Authority

Regarding *parents*, the Scriptures generally teach *parents*, as long as they are *parents*, have *parental authority* and *children*, as long as they are *children*, are obligated to *obey* and *honor* their *parents*. *Parents* do not lose their God-ordained authority merely because their children grow older and reach a certain age. Of course, legally speaking children are considered independent citizens at the age of eighteen here in America. However, nowhere in the Scriptures is it taught that age alone emancipates a son or daughter from their obligation to obey and honor their parents. In the Bible, examples abound of godly adult children submitting to their parents. Among the *Patriarchs*, we have the record of *Isaac*. As an adult man of forty years old, he still is living under his father *Abraham's* authority. His submission to his father in determining his mate, *Rebekah*, by the leading of God's Spirit is unmistakable (*Gen 25:20*). Among *Issac's* adult children the pattern of godly submission follows. *Jacob*, whom the Scriptures tell us was under God's love and favor (*Rom 9:13*), submitted to his father, but *Esau*, who rejected his birthright, rebelled...

*“When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram; And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.” —Genesis 28:6-9*

*Eli*, the *High Priest*, was condemned by *God* because he restrained not his adult sons, implying he had parental authority he failed to righteously use (*1 Sam 3:13*). The *Rechabites*, as fully grown men, were commended for being submitted to their father (*Jer 35:1-6*). Throughout the Bible such examples are plentiful and self-evident.

As we turn to the *New Testament*, may we more carefully consider one of the key passages confirming *parental authority*...

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” —Ephesians 6:1-3*

Allow me to make a few interesting observations about this exhortation:

1. Notice, there are two commands yoked together and directed to children, namely, to *obey* and *honor* their parents.

2. The second *command* is specifically and irrefutably linked to an obvious life-long promise (*if the applied promise results in longevity of life, the promise must be applicable for the entirety of a person's life*).
3. As the promise, so is the command (*granted, with qualification*).
4. It stands to reason, if children are not obligated to *obey* their parents simply because they reach a specific age, why would they be required to *honor* them seeing these two commandments are given in conjunction with one another?

Allow me to explain it this way, if God stood before us in bodily form and commanded...

*"You are to obey and honor your President"*

This hypothetical charge clearly indicates as long as there is a *President*, we would be obligated to obey and honor him. It would be illogical to assume our obligation to *obey* the *President* expires at some point, but our obligation to *honor* is irrevocable, apart from a clear and authoritative divine qualification. The fact is, while examining every Biblical text or command that addresses *parental authority*, it's impossible to legitimately formulate the concept that children are not obligated to obey their parents *simply* because they reach a particular age. This false idea is merely a *tradition of man* and is simply not taught anywhere in the Scriptures.

### **There Are Only Four Biblical Ways Parental Authority Can Be Negated**

If the *Bible* does not teach that *age* alone emancipates children from the obligation to strictly obey their parents, what does it teach? The Scriptures do address this topic and reveal there are four situations, two absolutely permanent and two that are conditionally either permanent or temporary:

1. Death.
2. Marriage.
3. Sin or Heresy.
4. Parental Delegation *or* Transfer.

I will briefly address each.

First, *death*—it is self-evident that if a parent dies their children are no longer under their authority. Granted, a godly, deceased parent may leave a legacy of sound instruction and an example of godliness that their posterity should honor, but an on-going relationship demanding strict obedience is not possible.

Secondly, *marriage*—God is the author of marriage. Marriage, of course, is ordained by God and is under the *Institutional Sphere of the Family*. For Christians, the selection of our spouses should be by the direction of God, His Word, and His Spirit. When parents give their children to be

married they are releasing them from the authority of the immediate family (*their parental authority*) to establish their own under *Christ*...

*“And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?” —Matthew 19:5*

Even though *Jesus* specifically addresses *male children* here, it stands to reason a husband could not have full authority over his wife, as the *Scriptures* indicate and command, if his wife was still under the authority of her father after marriage (*Eph 5:22-24, 33; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1*).

In *Numbers 30*, the *Scriptures* outline the law governing vows (*binding decisions*) both of male and female. Of course, we’re not discussing ‘vows’, but the passage is deeply relevant to the topic at hand because it addresses both the authority structure in families as well as one of the only possible transfers of that authority. This chapter clearly teaches men who make binding decisions are solely responsible for their words and are required to soberly keep their vows, while men in authority over women, namely *fathers* and *husbands*, can disannul (or cancel) their own daughters and wives binding agreements. It also teaches widows and divorced women, like men, are solely responsible for their vows. What does this mean? What is the significance of this passage to our discussion? If you read *Numbers 30* you immediately notice there are only four possible classes of women—*daughters, wives, widows, and divorced women*. Only one is under the parental authority of their fathers, *daughters*—the other three, *wives, widows, and divorced women*, via marriage, are no longer under their father’s authority. This reveals *marriage*, not *age*, is a release from parental authority. Moreover, it’s important to note that *marriage*, by far, is the primary means whereby children are released from their *parents authority*.

Next, *Sin*—the great Scriptural qualifier for submission to all delegated authority is expressed by the *Apostle Paul* under divine inspiration in *1 Corinthians 11:1*...

*“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” —1 Corinthians 11:1*

No one is obligated to submit to any human authority if that submission causes them to sin against God. This is an absolute and is applicable for every situation of submission to human authority. For example, this is demonstrated for us in *Acts 5* when the *Apostles* were brought before the *High Counsel* which demanded they refrain from preaching. However, this conflicted with the expressed will of God. *Jesus*, in the *Great Commission (Mark 16:15)*, had commanded them to *go into all the world and preach the Gospel*. Therefore, the *Apostle Peter* as well as the other *Apostles* answered the counsel with the following words ...

*“...we ought to obey God rather than men.” —Acts 5:29*

This Scriptural principle, ‘*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*’, is what I often refer to as, the *golden rule of submission to authority*. Our first obligation, of course, is to

honor, obey, and love God, not man. Thus, no child is required to obey a parental command that causes them to clearly violate the Scriptures.

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” —Ephesians 6:1*

To disobey a parental command on the ground it causes sin would constitute only a temporary and isolated suspension of *parental authority*. Children would still be obligated to obey all valid commands. If an adult child lived with a parent(s) who became so vile, wicked, and opposed to their Christianity, that adult child could possibly be justified in removing themselves from his parents' authority.

Finally, *Parental Delegation or Transfer*—Delegation of authority is practiced throughout the Scriptures (*Ex 18:13-26; Deut 1:15; Acts 6:1-5*). Parental authority, like all valid authority, is given by God. It should be considered a divinely delegated stewardship and every parent will give an account to God for how they use this stewardship. Like all God-ordained authority, God has sovereignly invested this authority in parents. They have it, it is their's to ignore, use for good, give away, or mishandle, but make no mistake, all will give an account. Hence, parents have the right to delegate or transfer their God-given authority. For example, part of parental responsibility, according to the Scriptures, is the education of their children (*Deut 6:7; 11:19, etc.*). Parents can delegate this responsibility to public or private school teachers, but they will give an account for everything their children hear, see, experience, and learn. In America, most parents essentially release their children from parental authority by default when they're eighteen, when they leave the home, or when they graduate college. This release is real and effectual, nonetheless, the parent will give an account to God if this release is either too early or ill-advised. So, parents can release their children from parental authority at their discretion, but preferably under the *Lordship of Christ* by the leadership of *God's Spirit*.

### **The Essential Purpose of Parental Authority**

Authority is granted to parents so they may effectively admonish, exhort, rebuke, correct, train, nurture, and raise up a godly seed in the fear of the Lord who will submit themselves to *Jesus Christ* (*Prov 22:6, 15; 29:17; Mal 2:15; Eph 6:4; 2 Tim 3:15*). So granted, the goal would naturally be for godly parents to release their mature and thoroughly converted children under the leadership of the Holy Ghost, if not at marriage at an *acceptable time* when they reach full maturity. It's also true that this transfer, if you will, would almost assuredly culminate with children growing into adulthood but could be different ages for different children and at the discretion of the parent as led by God's Spirit. Certainly, parental oversight of a ten-year-old should be vastly different than parental oversight of a twenty-five-year-old. As children grow into adulthood, there would naturally be a loosening of the protective boundaries, a drawing back on the parental reigns, and an allowing of more independent decisions so as to promote maturity. There would also be an obvious difference between male and female, with unmarried females remaining far more dependent on their fathers even in their adult years (*especially, if the parents*

are godly). Once parental transfer of authority takes place, the moral obligation of *strict obedience* and *honor* to parents transitions to simply *honor*. We see this example in the *Lord Jesus Christ*. The Bible says in *Galatians 4:2* He was ‘*under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father*’. In the *Gospel of John*, we read that even *Jesus*, who is deity, *God manifested in the flesh*, was subject to his parents at age twelve (*Lk 2:51*). At the age of approximately 30 years old, the earliest acceptable age to fully qualify for the priesthood (*Num 4:3*), *God’s Spirit* came upon *Jesus* and anointed Him for ministry at His baptism by *John the Baptist* at the *river Jordan* (*Jn 1:29-43*). He had fulfilled all righteousness and passed every test. There is little doubt his parents (if *Joseph* was still alive) recognized and honored this, implying a release from their authority to fulfill His purpose under the authority of God. We know this is true as *Mary*, *Jesus’ mother*, followed Him throughout His ministry and beyond (*Jn 19:26-27; Acts 1:14*). Then, in the very next chapter of the *Gospel of John*, we see *Jesus* at the *marriage of Cana* where He honored His mother’s wishes regarding turning water into wine (*Jn 2:1-9*). Thus, He was *subject* to his parents until His baptism, or *release*, and thereafter He displayed *honor*. This was not because of His *age*, but because He was matured and sent out (*a time appointed determined by the Father*). This is the pattern especially for single, adult children but there is no specific age this takes place.

### **The Repercussions of Rebellion Against Parental Authority**

It’s important to note, according to Scripture, the consequences for rebellion against parental authority are grave...

*“If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.” —Deuteronomy 21:18-21*

*“Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.” —Deuteronomy 27:16*

*“Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.” —Proverbs 20:20*

*“The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.” —Proverbs 30:17*

*“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” —Romans 13:1-2*

- Power: (Greek) ἐξουσία—The office, power, and influence of divinely appointed authority.<sup>1</sup>

*Romans 13* is often erroneously interpreted to apply to *civil magistrates* alone, but there is nothing in the text to suggest such a limited application. On the contrary, considered in context, verse one states, ‘*For there is no power (authority) but of God: the powers (authorities) that be are ordained of God*’. The exclusiveness of this verse makes the rest of the passage that follows clear. This is plainly speaking of *all* valid authority as ordained by God—*Family, Church, and State*. If not, and this only addresses the *Institutional Sphere* of the *State*, then God has not invested any *authority* in the spheres of *Family* and *Church*, which is plainly not true according to Scriptures. Thus, we conclude a sound exegesis of *Romans 13* renders the application to *all God-ordained authority* in general. Any unlawful resisting of that authority, including parental authority, will ultimately result in damnation (*Rom 13:2*).

### **Rebellion Against Parental Authority Is Always Associated With Sin, Apostasy, and Hypocritical Religion**

*Jesus* reproved the *religious hypocrites* of His day for undermining the obligation to honor parental authority...

*“For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” —Matthew 15:4-9*

In the fantasy of an *authority vacuum*, it’s impossible for anyone to be a rebel. If there is no one in authority, there is no absolute obligation to obey, meaning rebellion is impossible. *Rebellion* demands *authority* to act against; all rebellion is to resist valid, God-ordained authority. The Scriptures clearly indicate that *rebellion* is a *work of the flesh* that will not inherit the *kingdom of God*...

*“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft (1 Sam 15:23 teaches, ‘rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft’), hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness,*

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<sup>1</sup> *Strong’s Hebrew & Greek Dictionary.*

*revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” —Galatians 5:19-21*

*“But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government (all and any God-ordained authority). Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.” —2 Peter 2:10*

The Scriptures also associate *rebellion* against *parental authority* as a sign of *reprobation* (being turned over to *delusion and sin-stupidity*) and *apostasy*:

*“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” —Romans 1:28-32*

*“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” —2 Timothy 3:1-5*

## **Conclusion**

It is clear from our study the idea that children are not obligated to obey their parents *simply* because they reach a particular age is nowhere taught in the Scriptures but is rather a worldly, cultural tradition based on social constructs.

*“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” —Colossians 2:8*

—B.W.