

How Children Can Glorify God

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Date: 12 June 2011

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[0:00] This afternoon, I want to do something a little different. I want to speak directly to you children. I know you just ate lunch and you're probably sleepy.

! You kids are too, I'm sure. So I don't want to talk too long, but I do want to talk to you about how you can glorify God when you are young. And as I was just thinking about this, it turns out that you can glorify God when you're old in pretty much all the same ways.

So there should be application here for everyone, even though I'm speaking directly to your children. Did you know that you can glorify God as a child? Children can help other people see how good and wonderful God is.

And that's what glorifying God is about. It's not just something that older people do. It's not just something that older people can do. It's something that, children, you should do. Something you can do.

So if you can count to five, you can follow what I have to say, because I have five things to say about glorifying God when you are young. And all but the first are taken from Luke chapter 2.

[1:14] So everyone, if you have a Bible, turn to Luke chapter 2. Like I said, the first one doesn't come from that passage.

Instead, it comes from the rest of the scriptures. So let me tell you first, the first way that you can glorify God when you are young is, and I hope everyone is listening.

You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.

So let me tell you something very serious right now. Children, you must be saved from your sins. You must be saved from your sins.

There's lots of things that are different about each one of you. You're all special and unique. There's only one of you in the whole wide world. And you have different parents.

[2:20] You have different moms and dads. And you go to different schools. And you like to do different things. And some of you, your favorite food is pizza. And some of you like cake and ice cream.

But all of you have one thing in common. And that is you are a sinner. So you're unique in very many ways. But you have one thing in common.

You are a sinner. So you disobey God. And when you disobey God, it's a very evil thing to do. God is not happy with your sin.

God is not happy with you when you sin. And as a matter of fact, He hates your sin. So every time you disobey your mom and dad, you are raising your fist to God and saying, God, I don't want you to be God.

I want to be God. It doesn't sound like that. And it might not feel like that. But every time you disobey your mom and dad, you are raising your fist to God and saying, you are not my boss.

[3:27] I'm my boss. And you don't have any right to tell me what to do. It's a terrible thing when children sin. But here's the good news.

Children can be saved. That's good news, isn't it? Children are sinners, but they can be saved. Did you know you don't have to be a teenager to be saved? You don't have to be a grown-up to be saved.

You can be five years old. You can be six years old. And God can save you. So you don't have to be grown-up to be saved. You just have to know that you're a sinner.

And I'm not talking about just knowing it in your mind, but knowing it and feeling it down here in your heart, that you're a sinner. You have to be sad about it.

And out of your sadness, you have to go and talk to God about it and say, Father, God in heaven, save me. I'm a sinner.

[4:26] And God does save young people. He saves children. He saved millions and millions of children. And that's why Jesus was born, after all, because he came to save sinners, young and old alike.

So it's Christmas Day. And there's a little boy in a manger. And there are shepherds there. And Mary and Joseph are there. And Mary and Joseph call that baby boy Jesus.

Well, why do they call him Jesus? Because Jesus means the Lord saves. The Lord saves. And he will save, the angel said, he will save his people from their sins.

So Jesus is a Savior for sinners. That's why he's come to save his people from their sins. There's only one Savior in the whole world. It's Jesus. Now, you know how he did that.

You know how he did that. He died on the cross. He died on the cross. He died on the cross. So, but what does that mean? Lots of people have died.

[5:35] Why is Jesus dying on the cross so special? And why is that where all our hope is if you're going to be saved? Well, let's say you have a brother. And one day you do something really bad.

You take a rock and you scratch, a big scratch in your mom and dad's car. And when your dad sees it, he's angry. You can imagine he would be angry.

And he wants to know who did it. So he has both of you there. You and your brother there. And your brother does something very peculiar.

He does something very surprising. And he says, I did it. Now, that's not telling the truth. But for the sake of the story, he says, I did it. And you look at your brother. And he looks at you.

And you know that he knows that you did it. And you know that he didn't do it. And so your dad is really angry.

[6:35] And he takes your brother back. And he spans him harder and longer than you've ever seen anyone get spanked before. And then your brother comes out. And you're looking at him.

Why did you do that? And he tells you, because I loved you. And I didn't want you to get in trouble. Now, that's a very imperfect story.

But that's kind of like how Jesus has loved sinners. How Jesus saved sinners. So I am the sinner. I'm the one that has disobeyed God.

I'm the one that has made a big scratch in the car. But he is the one who takes the punishment. He is punished. And I go free.

That's how it works when Jesus saves a person. Now, the only way that you can be saved is if you run to Jesus and run to him to be and go to him to be saved.

[7:36] And you say, Jesus, save me. I need your death. I need that to be my punishment. Because if that punishment comes to me, I'll be in hell forever. So Jesus, I need your death.

And I need your life. And when you do that, and you come to God with all of your heart, he says, I'll receive you.

And he washes you white as snow. So that's the very first way that you can glorify God when you are a child. You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.

And if you don't do that, then guess what? The rest of the sermon won't make any difference at all. Because anything else you do, if you don't do that, it's just nothing but sin.

You're saying, oh, I want to do it my way. And so you're just putting your fist in God's face again.

God says, without faith, it is impossible to please God. Young children, without faith, it is impossible to please God.

[8:40] And so nothing you do after that will matter one little bit if you don't come to Jesus and ask for a new heart and ask to be saved.

Now children, here's the second way to glorify God when you are young. And you see it in Luke 2, verse 52. It's the very last verse in the chapter, Luke 2, 52.

And Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God in men. So you see the second way that you can please God, or you can glorify God when you are young, is you can be wise.

Jesus grew in wisdom. He grew in wisdom. And when Jesus grew in wisdom, that glorified His Father. That made God the Father very happy.

So kids, let me ask you, do you need to be wise, or do you need to be big to be wise? Do you have to be big and tall and a grown-up to be a wise person?

[9:45] The Bible says not at all. Actually, you can be very small and be wise. Listen to what Proverbs 30, verse 24 says. Four things on earth are small, yet they're extremely wise.

So these things are small, but they're extremely wise. Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer. Conies, that's probably some kind of rabbit or a badger or something.

They're creatures of little power, yet they make their home in the crags. Locusts have no kings, yet they advance together in ranks. A lizard can be caught with a hand, yet it's found in the king's palaces.

So ants, rabbits, grasshoppers, and lizards. You are bigger than all of those things. And yet God says, they are all very wise.

You don't have to be old and you don't have to be big to be wise. So Jesus was a boy. He was a boy just like you. He was a teenager, just like you're going to be or that you are, and he was wise.

[10:58] And you should be wise too. So how can you be wise? The Bible says, Proverbs says, one really big important thing, and that is to listen to your parents.

Listen to your parents. Too many children think that they know best, that they know better than mom or dad, and that they want to go their own way. And time after time, you know what ends up happening to those children?

They suffer for it. They hurt themselves by not listening. So once upon a time, a donkey was being driven along a road.

He was headed down a mountain. So this is a mountain road. He's going down the mountainside. When all of a sudden, the donkey got a very silly idea in his head, and he decided that he knew the best way to go down.

Because as he looked down over the mountain, off the cliff, he could see a stable down there. He could see his food there, and he could see what he wanted. So he had this very bad idea that he was going to choose his own path.

[12:09] And the quickest way down that mountain, he thought, was to go off the side of the cliff. So that's what he started to do. And just as he was about to leap over the edge to go head over heels down the cliff, the man, his master, grabbed his tail, and he's pulling on this donkey, and the donkey, you know, is being really stubborn, and he's trying to jump off the cliff.

And the stubborn donkey wouldn't stop, and he just kept pulling with all of his might. And so he's got a hold, the master's got a hold of the donkey's tail, and finally, he's tired of dealing with the donkey, and he says, fine, go your own way, you silly, stupid animal.

And so he lets go, and the donkey jumps off the cliff, head over heels, down the mountainside, until, splat, he was dead.

So kids, when you don't listen to your parents, you're acting like that donkey. And when you think you know the right way to go, you act just like that donkey.

So the point of the story is, don't do that. Listen to your parents, and grow in wisdom. Seek it out, and be wise.

[13:24] And when you do, others will think, wow, God has given such wisdom to that boy or girl, and people will think more about God. They'll glorify God.

So that's the second way that you can glorify God in all your life, is by being wise. Here's the third way that you can glorify God when you are young. Take care of your body. Take care of your body. Luke tells us that Jesus grew up, he grew in stature. He grew big and strong. So Jesus, have you ever thought about it?

How much did Jesus, how many times do you read about Jesus riding a horse or driving a car? He never did it. He walked, he walked miles and miles every day.

He climbed up mountains and over hills. He spent his days out of doors and walking through fields. Jesus wasn't lazy. Jesus wasn't lazy, and he took care of the body God had made for him.

[14:23] When he came into this earth, he said, a body you've prepared for me. Just like God's prepared a body for you and me, he prepared a body for Jesus.

And one way for you children to glorify God when you are young is you can take care of that body that God has given you. It's not your body ultimately and finally.

It's ultimately and finally God's body. He made it. It's made for him. So it really finally belongs to him. Now, suppose I was going on a two-week vacation and I came over to your house and I brought my cat, Lance a lot, for you to watch.

And I hope you would feed and water Lance a lot as well as you could. And I know you would. I know if I took my cat over, you would take good care of him. But wouldn't it be terrible if after I came back from my vacation, I came to your house to pick up my cat and his tummy was dragging on the ground because all you did was feed him tuna-flavored marshmallows and you never let him out of his cat carrier and so he just sat there and ate and did nothing all day.

He didn't have a chance to go and run around and play. And if I came to your house and my cat was looking like that, I would think, wow, that person doesn't care about me at all.

[15 : 52] If he cared about me, he would have taken a better, he would have taken care of my cat. Now, it's the same thing with your body. If you don't take care of your body, it shows you don't care very much for God because your body belongs to him finally.

It's his. So how do you take care of your body? Well, it's not health class, but a couple of things. I like playing video games and movies and watching movies, but too much of that doesn't make you very big.

and strong. And I like eating cake and candy, just like you do, but too much of that and that doesn't make you big and strong. So, eat right, play a lot, and as you run around and enjoy the body God has given you, you glorify God as you thank him for giving you such a wonderful body and you take care of him.

Take care of it. And as you do, you honor him. Now, parents, I hope the application for you is obvious. Are you helping your children do those things?

Or are you hindering them? So that's the third way to glorify God when you're young. Take care of your body. Here's the fourth way to glorify God when you're young. Obey God's commandments.

[17 : 12] And really, we could say a lot about this, but we're not going to say very much. Obey God's commandments. It says that Jesus grew in favor with God.

He grew in favor with God. Well, how did Jesus do that? Because he humbled himself, he listened to God, and he did exactly what his father wanted him to do.

So remember when Jesus was baptized. He came out of the water and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove came down and then a voice broke out and he said, this is my son with whom I am well pleased.

God said, I am very happy with this one. Now, what made God the Father split open the heavens and speak and say, this is my son with whom I am well pleased? Well, Jesus had just been baptized.

He was just beginning or he was in the process. He had humbled himself because did really Jesus need baptized? Did he have any sins? No. So why should you be baptized?

[18 : 19] John asked. He said, to fulfill all righteousness. I want to do everything my father wants me to do. And so Jesus was doing exactly what his father wanted him to do.

And God saw Jesus' humility and willingness to obey and it pleased him. Now, kids, you can do the same thing. Obey God. Obey his commandments.

And obeying God isn't complicated. It's not hard. He says, children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord.

So, when your parents tell you to do something and you obey right away, all the way with a happy heart, you're obeying God. And God sees that and he smiles.

You make God happy and you show how great he is. You show everyone that God is really worth listening to. So, obey God's commandments. Here's the fifth way that you can glorify God when you're young.

[19 : 20] Love people. Love people. So that Jesus grew in favor with God and with men. Jesus loved God and obeyed him and Jesus loved people and he made a good impression on people.

Jesus was a young person and people thought well of him. They liked him. The people that he lived with they thought highly of Jesus.

Now, you know what Jesus did before he taught, right? You know what he did before he taught. He was a carpenter. Jesus and Joseph they either worked with wood or the word doesn't necessarily mean they worked with wood.

It means they could have been working with stone or iron and so they made things with their hands. They had a little business making things or being a blacksmith or something like that and so this is the business that Joseph and Jesus had and guess what?

Jesus did a really good job of doing his business. He did a good job at his work. He charged a fair price. He was polite with his customers.

[20 : 33] He was honest with them. He didn't take advantage of people. If he wasn't able to meet a deadline he didn't make up lies. He told them the truth. He didn't make up excuses. He was an honest businessman and he grew in favor with men.

People wanted to do business with Jesus because he was an honest hardworking man. Now, so children when you do a good job at your school when your teachers give you something to do and you do a good job you honor God.

You glorify him. You act just like Jesus did. But Jesus also went through hard times. He went through something that I hope none of you have to go through.

Sometime when he was a young man his dad died. Joseph died. And so Jesus had to take care of his own family.

And he worked hard at it. And he supplied and he provided for his brothers and sisters and for his mom. He took care of them. And so Jesus lived this ordinary hard life.

[21 : 43] And as he did, his reputation with people grew. People thought highly of him. People like being around him and they thought well of him. And he shed a light for everyone to see.

he did it all to glorify his father. Now you say probably, but I can't do that.

That's really hard. And I would agree with you. That would be really hard. It would be impossible.

And Jesus knows that living just like him would be impossible. It is impossible for you and for me.

And that's why he said, if you ask God the father, he will give you the Holy Spirit. Because we need more than just what we have inside of us. We need just more than our own strength.

We need Jesus inside of me. I need the spirit of Jesus working in me and giving me a new heart and giving me strength and helping me to love and be patient with people.

[22 : 44] And that's what the Holy Spirit does. So he brings power and he brings the life of Jesus into our heart. And he helps us to live a Jesus like life.

And so pray for the Holy Spirit to help you live a Jesus kind of life. And then when you sin and you're going to sin and you disobey mom and dad, you do something mean and nasty to your brothers and sisters, go to Jesus and ask him to forgive you.

Don't wait very long. Go to Jesus and ask him to forgive you and he will do it. He'll forgive you. And as you do that, as you try to live for him and you trust in him and you keep coming back to Jesus again and again and again, you glorify God.

And that is something that no matter how old you are or no matter how young you are, that's what we're called to do. And by the power of God, the Holy Spirit, that's exactly what we can do.

So let's pray. pray. Our Heavenly Father, I do pray for the children here and ask that you would save them while they are young.

[24 : 07] Thank you that the gospel is something that they can understand. It's not too far above them. Please take it out of the ordinary and the imaginary and make their sin real to them and make Jesus Christ real to them.

Thank you that you can put your love, the love for you and the hatred for sin into the youngest heart. We pray that you would do that. And please help all of our children to strive after being like Jesus.

We pray that you would give them grace for that, that you would raise up men and women who are strong, who believe in you, who are ready to obey you in all things. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.