

The Covenantal Life
Week 7 - Children of the Covenant
Ephesians 6:1-4

- If relationships are bound and governed by covenants, we must ask: is the relationship between parents and children itself a covenant?
 - It is relevant in our day to explore what obligations exist in these relationships
- Children are the natural result of marriage - Gen. 1:28, 4:1
 - God commanded the first couple to have children, and children are the fruit of covenantal, marital union
 - When couples obey the command to regularly engage in covenant renewal, the result typically will be children
 - The fall can disrupt this, but the normal design of God is for marriage to result in children
 - Links the explicit marriage covenant to the children produced by it
- Naturally plain obligations of family are made explicit in the 10 Commandments - Ex. 20:12
 - Requirements of love and respect are highlighted and elevated within family
- Command and its promised blessing are repeated in the New Covenant - Eph. 6:1-4
 - As with marriage, Paul roots parent-child relationship in Old Testament paradigms
 - Covenant is the means by which God mediates blessing and curse
 - Faithfulness in the covenant of marriage generally leads to blessing; explicitly told that faithfulness between parents and children leads to blessing
- Blessing/Curse paradigm demonstrated in Ex. 20:4-6
 - Through families that blessings and curses flow through generations
 - Not salvific, but concerning this life, God very much acts to bless and curse by way of the family
- Authority structure of family has the marks of a covenant
 - Federal headship in the father - accountability and authority
 - Naming indicates covenantal authority
- Paul considers care for family a necessary fruit of salvation - 1 Tim. 5:8
 - When we fail to image the covenantal Triune God in the natural obligations of our lives, we are “worse than unbelievers”
 - These relations are so natural that even the most rebellious can understand them
- The legal structure of adoption provides a picture of the family covenant
 - Our covenant relationship with God comes by way of adoption - Rom. 8:14-17
 - Our salvation is explained to us in terms of husbands and wives, father and children