No. 480

The duties of children to parents
Exodus xx, 12. "Honor thy father & thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land, wh. the Lord thy God giveth thee."

This is one part of my audience, to whom this command will, I trust, be peculiarly interesting & that is, to children. To a child, who has not lost all native innocence, tenderness, affection, the precept will say, "Honor thy father & mother." Must I bring its recommendation along with it, because it brings to humble all these dear cherished connexions by which he is bound to those, whom he loves best on earth. But, my young friends, this precept has still higher claims on your attention, for it comes from God, your Head, Saviour: you know well your duty to obey that great God, who rules in the heavens, & who...
gives you life & breath & all things? You read in the Bible, that God appeared unto Moses, by a solemn & grand display of His presence: ye one of the commandments, oath He there gave to the children of Israel, was, ‘Honour thy father & mother’. If you know it is one of the ten commandments, ask you have already heard; it is addressed to you, to each one of you; you must obey it, if you would be good children, again the affection of your heart. Thus,

1st, they are particularly the serious attention of the children in this assembly, while I declare to you to point out to them the duty, with the one to the parents. This I shall attempt to do in as plain & simple a manner as possible. And it is not only among young children, who have an interest in the subject, you cannot imagine, that the obligation of children to parents ceases when they have come to years of maturity. Nay, no means: at every age, in every condition, there is still a sacred tie between the hearts of the offspring & hearts of the father & mother, & that the many not be broken. You can never be too old, take

utifully affectionate to your parents. Nothing can be more overwhelming to every feeling heart, than to see young people, when they have grown up, & have come to age, to take care of themselves, be all obedient, & go to their parents, as if glad to escape from their influence in one’s jurisdiction. & yet their hand & the eye cannot rest on a more delightful object, than on them, who, as in manhood, the have & duties to the parents.

- The tongue could utter them, going with the growth, & strengthening with the strength, becoming stronger, as the lanes of the body, spreading it were, with the firmness of the body. The children, as the frame stretches itself to the protection of mankind. I speak them, with the aspirations of all children, whether very young or more advanced, to what I am about to say. Many can be found of must apply only to those who are still young enough to live under the parental roof. The parental age...
general principles of the duty of children are often the same at every age; they must be modified in their application by the good sense of those who are capable of judging for themselves.

The duties of children to parents may be considered in the heads of reverence, love, obedience, provision for their comfort and welfare.

1. You must reverence your parents. This is a duty demanded of you by every motive, that is fitted to influence your tender minds. The young should always reverence the aged; and more especially a child should always reverence his parents. They have every claim to your most profound respect; they have been before you in the path of life; they have the wisdom of years; they know, better than you can know, what you should pursue or what you should avoid. They are your constitutional guides and directors, guardians appointed by heaven to watch over you, to watch for you, to whisper in your ear the secrets of life. Therefore you should fear them with all reverence.

Even if they do not know or will not perform their duty, remember it will become a child to be the first to express respect. In your correspondence approach the imperfections of a parent with the presence of the father or mother. The good child will always behave with humility and affectionate reverence, respecting and obeying them, either in the external conduct or in the feelings of the heart. We do not mean that you should stand in dread fear of your parents, or tremble or be gloomy in their presence.

A good parent would desire this of his child, for this is not reverence, but a chilling and discouraging dread. That is not reverence, but a chilling and discouraging dread. We wish to inculcate upon you, that you should cherish a deep and heartfelt respect for your parents. That you should cherish a deep and heartfelt respect for your parents. Therefore you should fear them with all reverence.
should extend still further. You should not only respect them yourself, but endeavor that no disgrace or reproach be thrown upon them; if you perceive that they have infirmities or weaknesses, it should be your business to ever conceal them. Imitate the conduct of these two dutiful sons of Noah, who went back, instead of covering his nakedness, when their brother would have exposed him to shame. This tender should you be to these errors or frailties of your parents, not may tempt you to think of them of them. But, alas! is it the wicked practice of some children to disbelieve or publish the infirmities of those who brought them into existence? You have experienced all their own. Shun such monstrosities as these, did not exist; but it is lamentable to reflect, that you are sometimes so rash as to find, that you cannot endure the counsel or directions of your elders, and therefore you would make them feel for the effects of obduracy; nor when such conscience is thrown to any aged person, it is bad enough; but when it is thrown to a father or mother, it is shocking. Tell me, my young friend, is it not dreadfull for a child to make part of the weakness of faults of a parent? What, will you make sport of these, who have fed and taught you? Oh! remember that almost always when you conceal or as nearly as possible, it is your fault, not their's. More than if you disclose another mother, when she is old! The eye of the world feels what it is out of the eye of shame, unless it is shut to its view. If all the world's eyes shut up, what is the business of thy Father, that began thee? I desire not thy mother when she is old! The eye that commiteth theft only blesseth to obey his mother, the arrows of the world's eyes shall shew it to you. 2. You must love your parents. As you do not need any motive to urge you to this duty, it is what you are prompted to by the very constitution of your nature, I should think you must do great violence to your feelings, before you can neglect it. And yet there are too many children, who, although they profess to love their parents, are doing many things which cannot be pleasant to them, or behavie in such a manner as must wound their feelings. This is most unfriendly and ungrateful.
a disposition, so I hope none of your possess. How can you fail to love your parents, when you think of all they have done, & are doing for you... Look back to the time, when you were helpless & helpless infants; when but for the kind care of those, who brought you into existence, you must have perished. Consider how a mother's eyes watched over you cradle, & brighten I wish you do all very well for your spin. Many are the sorrowful, agonizing minutes, many the aching days of the sleepless night. if your parents have passed in your account, you have been in sickness, but they have been near you with most kindness, & have applied all that kindness or skill could accomplish to ease your sufferings & save you from going down to the grave. they have recalled youruttering breath, restored health to your wasted cheeks, & every joy & comfort thrilled through their hearts. And once you have passed the days of infancy, have they not done all that affection could prompt, to make you happy & useful? What is it, that feeds, clothes, & sheltered you? Who but your parents? When you gather round the fire side at home, feel happy, cheerful, & elevated, remember it is your parents, who have provided for you all these comforts. Is it they too, who are now watching over the growth of your character, & rejoicing to see you disposed to reward them by your good conduct & by their expects. They hope for you to the future, & if you should spare your lives, & give you all the means of making what may make you useful, they furnish you with instruction with books, & send you to schools, giving you with them to the house of God. If they have no farms, that you and I desire, must be well formed & well furnished, & that you may be trained to be honorable & happy in this life, to enjoy the eternal favors of God in the life to come. Show my young fr, will you not have them for all this? I have the heart of each good child well repley. I love & I will love my parents. I know you will refrain from doing anything that may give them pain; you will seek to please them to all these thousand marvelous attentions & kind offices, oh serve to sweeten this life, & smooth their path. When it is rough & stormy.
There is nothing more delightful to a parent, than to see their children able, amidst all the trials of life, to rejoice on the love of a dutiful child. This is a resource, on which you must not neglect them. They have bestowed hard, spent some of the best strength for your 4. If you see them in your affection, kindness. You can not more effectually show your love for them than by behaving well, by using diligently in all the means of improvement as they gave you, by conducting in such a manner as to do them honor, and make them feel that they have a treasure on their offspring.

3. You must obey your parents. I need not tell you why you must obey them, if it is plain, that they are set over you by God himself to be your guides and protectors in your early years, and therefore to refuse them obedience would be to rebel against the authority of your Holy Father. This duty is the natural consequence of that disposition, on which is incated under the last head. Love is the spring of all obedience to your parents; if you love them, you will seek to please them. If you seek to please them, it must be by obeying their commands. When I say, that implicit obedience is the duty of children, I mean, of course, to suppose, that the commands are such as are not contrary to the command of God; if they should be so, a great duty to God must shove less be performed. Thus, if any parent should be persuaded to require his child to lie, to steal, or to do anything unlawful, then the child offends not against his duty, for by the command of God he must obey, else he will violate a higher duty, even that which becomes to God his Holy Father. But of the evils that may happen to every parent, it must be to the child, if the instruments of their crimes, and to their guilty indulgences. Where there are any such, sincerely pity this child; for it seems as if they must go a long way to ruin. But it is seldom that children are exposed to this dreadful alternative of obedience, if violating the command of God; for most parents, however wicked, may be themselves, have too much feeling, sense and conscience to endeavor to make their offspring
wicked... Obedience, therefore, is in almost every case your duty: if this duty implies that you patiently bear your full remembrance all that you are eager to bring away while they are speaking, or the moment they have done speaking to you. You do not obey your parents, unless you do what they bid you; in the very last time they desire you to do it. You are not to wait your own leisure, but choose your time for obeying their commands: if they tell you to do a thing now, you are not to put off the doing it to some other time, but to do it immediately: remember it is always a very bad excuse for not obeying to say that you forget the command, for it was a part of your duty to have remembered it. You should show your parents, meekly from the fear of concurrence, those are very unskillful children, who will be obedient no longer than the soul is held over them. You should obey them because you love them, because you wish to avoid any thing, which chances them the least pain or uneasiness. And you must obey your parents at all times, not only when it may not be hurt your inclination, as when you have nothing else to do, but whenever they may call for your obedience... There are a few of the principal traits in the character of God's children. If new you will point you to the example of our Blessed Lord, & Co. Do you not love him? Do you want to be like him? Do you want to be like him? If so, you will see, that when on earth he talked children into his arms & threw them? Will you not then follow his example? And what was that example? Why he that his youth in obedience to his parents. He went with them to hear. If was subject to them... This is a most affecting trait, in the sublime character of our Lord; if every good child will strive to imitate him in this point, that, like him, as he increases in stature, he may increase in favour with God by man... 4th. It is your duty to provide, as much as in your power, for the comfort & welfare of your parents. This is no mere than a common debt of gratitude, of which all owe to those who have shown us kindness & given us relief...
And in what case, let me ask, is this obligation setting
as in the case of the child to the parent? There are many
ings, in which you will be able to afford comfort to your
parents. Should they ever have to meet you
and an affliction, your support in poverty, your attentive
dance in sickness, or under the infirmities of age, you
are to honor them by doing every thing to your power
to make them comfortable and respectable; to solace them
under all their troubles, to supply their wants, to
anticipate their wishes, by your kindness of affection.
In doing all this for your parents, should they need
it, you are not to suppose them therefore bound under
any obligations, or that they are at all beholden to
you, that what you do for them is a favor, a grati-
te; no, by no means; it is a debt, nay, you owe them
your justice alone would require you to discharge
a debt, as was contracted by your dependence on them,
by what they did for you in your infancy, and childhood.
They sustained you, cherished you, even entirely helpless;
therefore it is a small thing for you to support them
when tottering with age. They thought it no task
to do every thing for you, when you could do nothing
for yourselves; now then it ought not to be deemed a
task for you to do every thing you can for them, when
they become an infirmity. They bore with all your
childish vanities, excused a thousand little imperfections
in your conduct; nay, indeed, from the fond
resignations of ages and infirmities, hence you are bound
to be with them, in the same things from them, when
reverting to childhood a second time. Hence nothing more
adapted to fill the heart with delightful feeling
than to see a once daughter ministering comfort to the
old age of those, who ministered to the subject of the
youth of another; and nothing is happier must it be for parents
to have the evening of their life brightened by the care
of attention of thankful children. And perhaps it may
be the hard fate of some parents to come to poverty in
their declining years; then, if you are gainful and provident be
blessed you with a competency or with wealth: then is the
time for you to requite in some degree their labors.
to see that they never know what it is to feel the sting of want, or of poverty for support. The very thoughts of being dependent are very recently most strong; it will be very distressing to avoid what may make it so. It will be very degrading & dishonorable for you ever to speak to them with an air of authority, to give them any command or unpleasant task, or to let them see you do for them seem a trouble, truly to share their pains, to offer their anxieties, to help their weakness, to brighten their hours, let them see that you feel your greatest happiness in making them happy.

I have this, my young, given you a very imperfect outline of some of the duties, & in your own school. I must leave it to your own hearts to apply, as well as you can, what I have said. Thank for a moment on the mind before any serious fear, or your parents entertain on your account. Did you but know how much their own hearts are bound up in you, what a multitude they feel for you, & how much happiness your conduct will give them, if the virtues you possess are honorable, & how much anxiety it will give them, if it be disgraceful to make. Oh! how you feel things, will you look into their breasts, & see how the images of their offspring are enshrined there, I am persuaded you would not, for an instant, be vicious, dissolute, or unkind. May your fi

If you should in God's providence be called to stand by the death of a parent, or to close those eyes, & have always looked on it, it will not be your heart with agony to look back & reflect, that you have been untrustful & unkind to them. I know it would. If then you would escape the remembrance of a guilty conscience, be obedient, attentive, dutiful to your parents, & remember while you are afflicted in the offices of duty to them, God has good angels from his own

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that a child without innocence is like a flower without perfume; that while you...
O other, who art the source of all good, the fountain of all happiness, we praise and adore thy name for all the means of making our children. We thank thee for all the blessings of life and for the duties and obligations which flow from these relations. Let thy blessing be upon all ages and conditions among us. Impart upon the minds of children of the young in general, a deep sense of their duties and a feeling of their accountability. May they be affectionate, grateful, obedient to their earthly parents, rendering to them that kindness and respect which is due for all their labors and services in their accounts. May children learn to feel how many hopes are centered in them. May these remember these hopes, how many promises are given by their early days, of many they seek to fulfill these promises. May such feelings pervade their hearts, such principles govern their minds, as shall make them useful and happy in this world, and prepare them through thy many, for endless
Bless in the world to come. - Give us all the grace to
serve thee in one day of generation, & may we have the com-
fort of knowing behind us there who shall be doing good
in the world, who we shall be doing in it. - We are so.

At home, Oct. 22d. 1820, afternoon.