***The Technique of Thinking Divine Viewpoint, No. 2

Techniques of the Christian Life

TL10-01***

We're studying the techniques of the Christian life. We are now on the technique of thinking divine viewpoint. The human mind obviously always functions from a certain point of view and from a certain frame of reference. We found in the Word of God that that frame of reference can either be human viewpoint or it can be God's divine viewpoint. All outward actions on the part of any of us flow from one of these mental outlooks. God's way of life is declared in the Bible as divine viewpoint. Satan expresses human viewpoint and all the values that accompany that. All of the decisions and goals originating in human viewpoint are destructive of God's blessings upon us. All of the decisions that stem from divine viewpoint open the door to God's blessing.

We looked last time at Romans 12:2 which declared to us this contrast between human and divine viewpoints. Just to review this for a moment, we read in Romans 12:2, "Be not conformed to this world." That means "be not fashioned outwardly after the pattern of this evil age." The word "world" means "age." Do not be patterned after this evil age. In other words, don't cut the pattern of your life according to human viewpoint standards. Satan, as a ruler of this age, is very subtle in making his values appear commendable so that in general people in our society function upon human viewpoint standards. They think it is perfectly good and, as a matter of fact, quite desirable. It also said, "and be transformed." The word transformed in the Greek refers to an inward change which will produce outward godly living. In other words, this inward essence is divine viewpoint. The inward change will be seen then in outward actions. It is within a Christian's choice to change his mind from human viewpoint to divide viewpoint.

Now, how shall we do that? The word says, "by the renewing of your mind." The word "renewing" here means converting your mind from human viewpoint values to divine viewpoint values. It refers to a Christian taking on the mind of Christ. This is done by the intake of Bible doctrine. This provides him with God's frame of reference. So a Christian's outward actions reflect his viewpoint--they don't form it. One may deliberately cover up his mental viewpoint by what he says and does. He may be steeped in human viewpoint but he may deliberately cover it up by his outward acts. Your outward actions are not the thing that determine what you are as a person or as a believer. It is what you think that determines what you are.

For this reason, it is first of all important for a Christian to get his mind squared away with God's thinking. This is what is so deceptive when people are given the impression, as Christians so often are, that the first thing God wants them to do is to get out there and hustle and do things for them. Indeed the Lord does want us to serve with our spiritual gifts, but it takes training and preparation before a soldier can go into the field in battle, and that training and preparation includes in large measure his mental outlook. For a soldier to be a winner on the field of battle requires that he has a mentality which is properly prepared for the battle. Each of us have a mind which is filled with human viewpoint, which is stupid, and which loses blessing, or a mind filled with divine viewpoint, which is smart, and which opens God's richest blessings upon us. Here's the contrast. Our service, our actions, our life flowing from human viewpoint will be to self-glory, but that which is flowing from divine viewpoint will be to the Lord's glory.

**1 Samuel 16-17 - David and Goliath**

In the Word of God, one of the great saints of all times of course is David. David, in the Old Testament, had his ups and he had his downs, but he was always oriented eventually to God's point of view. He is a fruitful example of what we are talking about here of the working of human and divine viewpoint within a person's soul. Therefore, let's look at 1 Samuel 17 where we can examine the mental attitude of David. David began life as a nonentity. He was the eighth son in the family. He was low man on the totem pole. To him was delegated the care of the family sheep. He had other brothers who were in the army and who were in executive positions--perhaps officers, apparently, in Saul's army. We have this in 1 Samuel 17:13 where we read, "And the three oldest sons of Jessie went and followed Saul to the battle." These three, of course, were held in very high esteem because they were military men, quite in contrast to little David, who was the youngest and who was out in the field caring for the sheep. Yet this was the boy who had a mental attitude outlook which eventually qualified him to become the king over all of Israel.

As you know, David made history with his confrontation with Goliath. He personally challenged this nine-foot plus giant and actually defeated him seemingly against all odds. He became popular in Saul's court but he also ended up as a fugitive. Therefore, he had pressures against him in his life, as well as moments of prosperity, both of which he had to meet from his mental outlook. When he was on human viewpoint, he met it one way. When he was on divine viewpoint, which most of the time he was, he met it in a very magnificent way. His life is the result of what he thought, just as ours is a result of what we think.

Yet, usually when Sunday school teachers come to the story of David, his life, and his performance on the field of battle against Goliath, you don't really hear too much about what this boy thought. You just hear about how he got out there; found his little slingshot; got five smooth stones; how he charged out there; a few of the famous dramatic things he said; trying the armor on; and, taking the armor off. All those details come through, but Sunday school teachers have a way of missing that the crucial point of this story about David is up here in his head--the way he looked at things. The way he looked at things was the thing that contrasted him, the little shepherd kid, with all the professional soldiers who were in Saul's army who were shaking in their boots as the giant Goliath would come out in the field of battle and bellow his insults and challenge them to come out and meet him. The contrast was very pointed. As a matter of fact, David is a contrast even with Samuel who was appointed to go out and identify and appoint the next king whom God had chosen to replace Saul over Israel.

You remember that the Lord sent Samuel to the home of David. Samuel approached David's father, and in 1 Samuel 16, we have this inquiry concerning the sons of Jesse, one of whom God has said would be the next king. The seven oldest sons are there before Samuel. David is not here. He's out in the field with the sheep. 1 Samuel 16:6: "And it came to pass when they were come that he (Samuel) came and he looked on Eliab, and said 'Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.'" Eliab happened to be the oldest son in the family. He was one of the executives, and probably an officer, in Saul's army. When Samuel looked at him, he was such a dashing handsome military figure, Samuel said, "That's the king." Samuel, the prophet, was operating on human viewpoint. Human viewpoint will cause you to be impressed with what you see on the outside of people. That is one of the destructive characteristics of human viewpoint. It does not give you the discernment you need to see through a person and to sense what that individual really is.

If you have been disappointed in people in your experience, or if you've been shocked by people in your experience by the choices they have made, it is because you were looking at this person with some human viewpoint evaluation and you did not see this individual in his real characteristics. You did not see that this person loved certain prominence. You did not sense that while this person may have been a very energetic dedicated worker within the sphere of your Christian activity, yet there was about this person the desire to be in the sun; the desire for prominence; or, the desire for recognition. When the time came when that individual did not get the amount of recognition that he felt was coming to him, you were shocked that he drifted off someplace else because you were looking at these people through human viewpoint eyes and you did not sense the real character and the real qualities that motivated their choices.

This is what Samuel was doing. He was looking on outward factors and he was confused as to what God really thought. In verse 7, the Lord has to say to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature because I have refused him." He was saying, "Samuel, you're looking at the beautiful military uniform he's wearing. You're looking at the fact that he's a nice tall fellow. You're looking at his outward appearance which is impressive." However, God says, "Don't look at that Samuel. This man that you think is it, I have refused." It goes on: "For the Lord sees not as man sees (with human viewpoint). For man looks on the outward appearance but the Lord looks on the heart, on the mentality (divine viewpoint)." It is what a person thinks that determines what he is. When God looks at us, He looks up here into your brain. This is what he wants to see. He wants to see the nature of your viewpoint. Then God says, "This is the kind of a person you are." It is on that basis that God makes his decisions. He does not make them on the basis of what we are doing for or against him.

Samuel has made a mistake. He's looking at this from the wrong viewpoint. God's viewpoint eventually rejected all seven of these sons. The result was that Samuel was a little confused. In 1 Samuel 16:10, "Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel, and Samuel said unto Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.'" The father Jesse says, "Samuel, you must be mistaken. Take a look at them again. Boys, walk by once more, will you?" It continues: "And Samuel said, 'No, the Lord has not chosen these.'" Then Samuel gets an idea. He begins to put two and two together. In verse 11 he says to Jesse, "Are all of your children here?" The father said, "Oh well there remains this little kid. He's out there watching the sheep." Samuel said to Jessie, "Send and fetch him. For we'll not sit down till he comes here." One more son was to be considered--one who had faithfully stayed out there doing his job and performing his responsibility. Everyone else was there parading before Samuel, but he was left out there.

Even the very fact that he probably knew what was going on, that he was willing to stay out there, and willing to stand by the sheep and do his job indicates the kind of mentality that possessed David--the divine viewpoint of faithfulness to his calling, whatever it was at any point in his life. So when Samuel asked about the other son, they brought the youngest son. David knew how to respond. He came before Samuel. Samuel looked at David and immediately recognized him by the Lord's leading as the one that he was looking for.

**The Lion and the Bear**

David had already demonstrated in his work as a shepherd boy just what kind of mental outlook he had. In 1 Samuel 17:34, we have the incident of David's battle with a lion and a bear who are attacking his flock: "David said unto Saul, 'Your servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear and took a lamb out of the flock.'" If you were a shepherd boy and you had a big flock of sheep out there, and you were sitting down here along the gentle flowing banks of the Trinity River watching your flock by night and by day, and along came a bear out of the woods and snagged one of your little lambs, and a lion coming behind him snagged one, you'd look at your 100 or 200 sheep and say, "Oh well, one lamb, we've got plenty of others," and you'd let him beat it with the lamb. That's because that's human viewpoint. Human viewpoint would say forget the lamb. However, David, operating on divine viewpoint, had been made responsible for each animal. Because he was on divine viewpoint, this responsibility could not be shrugged off. He had to be faithful to it.

Consequently we read in verse 35, "I went out after him and I struck him and I delivered it out of his mouth. When he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and I struck him and I killed him." That takes a lot of divine viewpoint to grab a bear by his beard and to knock him over and to kill him. It's bad enough to go up and snatch the lamb out of his mouth. Of course, this is the hazard of having a beard. There is always a handle on you if somebody is looking for one. This is an inherent problem for bears and lions. Verse 36 says, "Your servant slew both the lion and the bear," and that was the end of that. This incident reflects the outlook of this boy. He did not allow this invader to simply move in. He did not forget his responsibility. He didn't just let it go. This incident reflects to us the divine viewpoint that possessed David's thinking.

Having done such a wonderful thing, to whom did he give credit for this? Who was to be credited with the victories? In 1 Samuel 17:36, he says, "'Your servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing that he has defied the armies of the living God.'" David said, 'Moreover, the Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine.'" David, of course, had a very interesting story to tell as he described what he had done to the bear and to the lion. This is really something pretty exciting to have hand-to-hand combat with bears and lions. He could have really made himself look very good, but instead he said, "Yeah, I kill them, but it was the Lord who did it," so that it very clearly reflects the divine viewpoint that possessed this boy's thinking. "The Lord is my Deliver. The Lord is my rock." These are expressions which are repeated by David the shepherd in the Psalms. He is a boy who has demonstrated by his performance that he is acting on divine viewpoint; that he has taken in the Word of God; and, that his mind is filled with God's frame of reference, and he has been tapped to be the next king over Israel.

**Goliath**

The result of this kind of a mentality led to one of the great victories in David's life. This was on the occasion of the threat by the Philistine giant Goliath. Goliath was nine feet two inches tall. He was a champion of the Philistine arch enemy of the Jewish people, and a very degenerate enemy at that. 1 Samuel 17:4 says, "And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines named Goliath of Gath whose height was six cubits and a span (nine feet two inches high)." A nine-foot two-inch high man is a pretty imposing sight, and this huge creature would step out on the field between the two armies which were lined up facing each other, and would challenge the Jews to send out anybody at all to fight him, and that would settle the war between them.

Goliath was an extremely formidable enemy of the state. 1 Samuel 17:8 says, "And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel and said unto them, 'Why have you come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and you servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me and to kill me, then will we be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall you be our servants and serve us.' And the Philistine said, 'I defy the armies of Israel this day. Give me a man that we may fight together.'"

Now this was a very blasphemous remark. Those who had divine viewpoint recognized that this was extreme blasphemy. When he said, "I defy the armies of Israel," he was in effect saying, "I defy the God of the Israelites," for the army of Israel was the Army of the Lord. This man was thereby challenging God himself. Now the Israelite soldiers simply fled from Goliath. In 1 Samuel 17:24 we read, "And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were very much afraid." The fear signals to us that they were on human viewpoint outlook. This included Jonathan. In 1 Samuel 14, you may read of a great victory which Jonathan had just had. Jonathan was by and large a man who was functioning on God's viewpoint. Yet, apparently even Jonathan was frightened by confronting such a man on the field of battle.

The coat of mail that Goliath wore, his chest armor, weighed 150 to 200 pounds, and he carried a spear, the tip of it made of iron, and it weighed 25 pounds. Even if the spear didn't go through you it certainly would knock you silly just to be struck by the thing with a 25-pound tip. That's bigger than a shot put. That's four Berean Youth Club junior shot puts put together, to give you some idea for those of you who've been in camp. This man was calling for someone to come out and fight him with that kind of equipment on him.

Well, it so happened that David came at his father's direction to see how his brothers were doing in Saul's camp. 1 Samuel 17:22: "And David left his baggage in the hand of the keeper of the baggage and ran into the army and came and greeted his brethren. And as he talked with them behold there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath, by the name, out of the armies of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before and David heard him." While David is visiting with his brothers, Goliath makes his daily appearance. He calls out his challenge, and young David the shepherd with the mentality full of divine viewpoint is now taking this in through his ears into his mentality. He hears what the giant says. He makes inquiries as the result of what he has heard.

David's older brother rebukes him for what he is saying. In other words, David was wondering. "How come we're letting that slob get away with that out there?" So, in verse 28, Eliab, the eldest, who already was irked by David having been chosen above him as the next king, spoke up: "Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke unto the men, and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, 'Why did you come down here, and with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness. I know your pride in the naughtiness of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.'" Heh, some battle to see--only one guy to fight, and nobody out there to do it. I hope he didn't plan to stay too long. Here's David being rebuked by his brother. Obviously, he didn't leave his sheep. He didn't abandon his sheep. His father had sent him. The boy did the right thing.

So, he says, in effect, to his brother in verse 29, "What have I done? All I did was ask a question." That is what it literally is saying, "All I've done is ask a question." But David has a totally different view of this giant than does his brother. David views Goliath as one who is not defying Saul's imperial army, but the armies of the living God. He indicates this in 1 Samuel 17:36, when he says, "He has defied the armies of the living God. The result is that David offers to meet Goliath. Saul comes along and is so desperate, he's willing to let this kid go out there to try to fight the giant. Apparently even Saul was impressed that David had something about him that he might be able to pull this off. In his concern for David, he offers his own armor. The boy puts it on, and we read that the result was that he found it so heavy and so awkward that he removed it and excused himself from using it.

Goliath viewed David's challenge from human viewpoint. That's the only thing he could operate on. Notice what he says when he sees David walking out to meet him on the field of battle. 1 Samuel 17:42: "And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, 'Am I a dog, that you come to me with staves?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, 'Come to me, and I will give your flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.'"

Now that is a splendid human viewpoint speech. It's a beautiful human viewpoint speech. From the eyes of this giant, he looks at David, this little boy coming along with him with this shepherd staff and his slingshot. He says, "What, are you coming out here to chase a dog? Do you realize who it is you're going to fight." And he says, "OK, come on out here sonny. The buzzards haven't been fed today, and you're on the menu." That's pure human viewpoint. However, David responded with pure divine viewpoint. Notice in 1 Samuel 17:45: "Then said David to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a shield, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied. This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand, and I will smite you and take your head from you, and I will give the carcasses of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a god in Israel."

David says, "I am not only going to strike you down. I'm going to take off your head, and I'm going to feed the carcasses of your fellow Philistines soldiers this day to the buzzards." Now, that was pure divine viewpoint expression. One of the things you will notice is that divine viewpoint is free of fear. There was no expression of fear. There was confidence in what the Lord was going to do.

The important thing is the viewpoint of David. That's the contrast in these verses, The Philistine on the one side is expressing what he thinks is going to happen, and David on the other side is expressing what he thinks is going to happen. Each of them is operating from diametrically opposite viewpoints. That's why when you teach this story, you should call attention to the fact that the mentality, the mental outlook, of these two contestants was the thing that made the difference in battle. Obviously, Goliath had it all over David in understanding techniques of warfare; in the equipment that he bore; and, certainly, in the experience. David was no soldier. He was a shepherd. He did not have the experience behind him that a professional soldier like Goliath would have. The thing that made the difference in their combat was their mental outlook. David's purpose was seeking the Lord's glory. He turned to the Lord for that direction. Goliath's purpose was to seek his own glory and he turned to his gods for that purpose.

Well as you know, David moved out; he released the stone; it struck Goliath right in the middle of the forehead; and, knocked him down. David ran up and pulled out the sword and cut his head off. Verse 49: "And David put his hand in his bag and took from there a stone and slung it and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone and smote the Philistine and slew him, but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore, David ran and stood upon the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of the sheath, and slew him and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines until they came to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines and plundered their camp. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem."

That was the result of the divine viewpoint confrontation. Before the battle took place, there was thought which was based on Bible doctrine in David's mind. It was entirely different from the thinking of the rest of the men in Israel. David's habit of looking at life from God's point of view enabled him to see Goliath in a true light. Later on we find, sadly enough, that David, like all the rest of us, has his moments of human viewpoint. When David drifted off into human viewpoint, he came into the breakdowns in his own life and into the consequences of choices made under his human outlook. However, he bounced back and spent most of his life, obviously, looking at things from God's way.

So, may our outlook be as is summed up in the words of 2 Corinthians 10:5, the latter part of a verse where it says, "And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Saturate your mind with God's divine viewpoint, and the result will be the same kind of victory that David experienced.

**Why Would a Christian be Tempted to Choose Human Viewpoint?**

Now, knowing this, it does cause us to wonder as we look at an example like David, and we see what tremendous things he accomplished with divine viewpoint, it makes us wonder what there is about human viewpoint that appeals to us. The sources of human viewpoint, of course, are contact with human viewpoint of other people who influence you. That's called the world. Another place is the lust patterns of the old sin of nature. That's called the flesh. A third one is Satan and demonic influence on our minds and that's called the devil. So, human viewpoint comes from the world, the flesh, and the devil. There are certain reasons why a Christian is tempted to go with human viewpoint. This week, if you choose human viewpoint in certain circumstances of your life as the answer to the problem you're facing, it will probably be for one of these reasons:

* Logic - You'll choose human viewpoint, first of all, because it may seem the most logical course of action. You must remember that human viewpoint, from a point of logic, often seems the very thing to do. It's called the sensible thing to do. This is why, within a church congregation, you can have people who are often very prominently engaged in that particular church who are bucking a certain direction, and you are a little confused and wondering why they would be resisting what seems obviously to be the hand and the mind of God. The reason for that is because they are looking at it from human viewpoint, and God does not always work by logic.

You remember Gideon. You remember the battle that Gideon was to fight, and what God did to him. God stripped him down to 300 soldiers. Do you call that logical, against thousands that he was to face? That's how it is in the Christian life. The Lord does not work on what is logical. Human viewpoint always wants to work on what is sensible.

* Safety - Another reason we choose human viewpoint is that it seems to be the safest thing to do. There are times when it seems that going the route of human viewpoint is the safe thing to do. That's the line of least resistance. That's the situation that will cause you the least problems. However, they're the least problems now. In the long run, the course that you follow is going to bring you the most problems.
* Pleasure - You will choose human viewpoint because it seems the most pleasurable thing to do. A great deal of immorality flows from the human viewpoint conception that this is a pleasure to be desired. It takes a while to discover that the pleasures of human viewpoint will turn to ashes in your mouth. Those pleasures have a very bitter side to them. When you consider pursuing that which is contrary to what you know is God's thinking in any realm of pleasure, while it may seem pleasant at the moment, and indeed it does, have the good judgment that Moses did. As we read in the book of Hebrews, he elected to be identified with the people of Israel rather than to enjoy the pleasures of Egypt for a season. Egypt, I want you to know, was a fun nation. Egypt was a really fun place. There was no place like Pharaoh's palace. Pharaoh's palace out did Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas on every account. I can tell you that for a certainty. It was a fun place. Human viewpoint would have led Moses to say, "Wow, this is really great. This is the pleasure of the moment. I'll go with this." However, he knew that it was for a season. You may pursue human viewpoint pleasures because you think they're fun, and they are, but they're for a season.
* Profit - You may think it's the most profitable course. You think, "I'll follow this human viewpoint because I'll get the most money. This will be the most profitable. I'll make the biggest killing here so I'll follow this course of action." How often have men in business played roles of deceit because it seemed to them that they would be able to make the greatest profit by a little chicanery, but they were going to give the money to the Lord's work, so it wasn't so bad? Those are human viewpoint, short-term outcomes.
* Deceitful Doctrine - We may seem to be doctrinally accurate in what we're doing. This is one thing human viewpoint will do. It will take your wrong doctrine and it will make it seem right, simply because you don't know enough doctrine and you don't know enough Bible to be able to evaluate what you are doing and what you're choosing, as to whether it is of God or whether it is not. Human viewpoint makes what is doctrinally inaccurate seem right.
* The Comfort of Other Christians - Or, you may be convinced by other Christians that your choices are divine viewpoint when they may be raw human viewpoint as can be. Beware of the comfort of other Christians who will encourage you in human viewpoint, and in actually suggesting to you that you're doing what is pleasing to the Lord. That is one of the easiest ways to go into human viewpoint operation.
* Temporary Fix - There are certain benefits that do come to you from human viewpoint choices. If you choose human viewpoint solutions this week, it will get you out of a jam temporarily. Our government does this all the time. We have a problem with tight money so we print more. We do all kinds of economic things in this nation in order to solve our problems, and they temporarily get us out of a jam. You may divert attention from yourself for the moment. You may be under fire and you want to divert attention away from yourself, and you'll choose a human viewpoint solution. That will get people's eyes off of you for the moment.
* Pride - You will have the advantage that it will cause you to look great in people's eyes. You can make human viewpoint moves that will just be very clever and it will make you look very spectacular. That's one of the reasons you'll be tempted to choose that.
* Divert Suspicion - You may divert suspicion away from yourself for your questionable actions by taking some human viewpoint line of action yourself.
* Future Advantage - You may set up some future advantage. Your human viewpoint move now may set up some great future advantage for yourself in one way or another. You don't mind doing what is evil now in order to gain advantage later.
* Vengeance - You may gain vengeance against somebody that you dislike. At the moment, it is very satisfying that you should be able to secure this kind of a human viewpoint outlook. I remind you that the Word of God says the pleasures of sin are for a season and the pleasures of human viewpoint are likewise for a season.

**Ephesians 6:1-4 - Obey Your Parents**

One dramatic application of human and divine viewpoint is to be found in the instruction to young people, and we'll close with an application for you. In Exodus 20:12, we have the statement made in the Mosaic moral code concerning how young people are to treat their parents: "Honor your father and mother that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gave you." When we get to the New Testament, interestingly enough, here is one of the principles of the Old Testament law which is carried over into the New Testament. In Ephesians 6:1-4, we have that principle reiterated. This is an expression of divine viewpoint: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And you fathers provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord."

This principle of respect for constituted authority begins with respect for the authority of parents. Now that's divine viewpoint. Human viewpoint is rebellion against your parents. All the spiritual, moral, and social value attitudes of your parents flow either from human or divine viewpoint on their part. Your response will flow from either your human or divine viewpoint. But one thing God says is that you are to be obedient to your parents. That's divine viewpoint. And there is no exception to that. If the divine viewpoint of respect for parents is not something that parents insist upon when their children are young, the time will come when they have respect for nothing and for no one and for no institution.

I want you to notice that there's a reward for following the viewpoint attitude of obedience toward your parents. That reward is a good life and a life that is not prematurely snuffed out. If you want to shorten your life, you just be rebellious toward your parents. You just turn your back against the divine viewpoint that your parents have sought to instill in you. You just ignore all that the Bible warns about treating your parents with respect, and you will have a life of misery. You're operating on human viewpoint that will poison everything that you do. It will bring you a great deal of grief until finally you may (if in the grace of God you are given opportunity and your life is not taken in the meantime) have opportunity to turn around and to start going back up on divine viewpoint and on the place of God's blessing.

**Proverbs 30:11 - Respect for Parents**

In Proverbs 30, we have a very vivid description of the death penalty hazard which rests upon those who are rebellious to their parents--those who reject the divine viewpoint of respect for parents. Proverbs 30:11 says, "There is a generation (or there is a man) that curses their father and does not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes and yet they are not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up (arrogance). There is a generation whose teeth are like swords and their jaw teeth like knives to devour the poor from the earth and the needy from among men. And the judgment of God is that the eye that mocks his father and despises to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it." That's a horrible picture, and it's a picture of death. What Proverbs is saying is that divine viewpoint will give you a long and blessed life as that divine viewpoint expresses itself as a young person, as a teenager, in respect towards your parents. Rejection of this principle will result in a life or disasters; a life of disappointments; a life of grief; and, a life that is prematurely snuffed out. This will happen in apparently a violent way where the buzzards, we are told, the ravens of the valley will pick out the eyes and the young eagles shall eat it--that eye which mocked and rejected its father. Matthew 15:4 also refers to this violent death.

Divine viewpoint is to honor your parents while human viewpoint is to reject them. Of course, you come to the point where you're at a certain age where you are independent of the authority of your parents. However, the divine viewpoint of godly parents is not something that you abandon even when you become an adult. As a matter of fact, that's when you need it most. If you have been given it, thank God for it. If you have been given it and ignored it and neglected it, and consequently have moved into situations in life that now are the products of human viewpoint choices, and must now be brought to the Lord for revising and redesigning into a new pattern of blessing, then at least remember the divine viewpoint that you were given, and count upon it; rely upon it; and, act upon it, and God will straighten things out for you. If you have divine viewpoint to begin with, honor it. The first way is to respect your parents and to respond to them.

Remember David. This is exactly what he did to his father. This is quite evident. This respect toward his parents brought him to where he was the ruler over all of Israel. There's a big difference between human and divine viewpoint. It is up to us to choose which it shall be for each of us.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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