

(Ephesians 6:1-3, NIV84)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"-which is the first commandment with a promise- "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

In his explanation of the Fourth Commandment Martin Luther wrote: We should fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger or parents and others in authority, but honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

Students of the Bible know that when we "come of age" we are not released from following the Fourth Commandment. We may move out of our childhood home and no longer be under the control of our parents, but the Fourth Commandment still stands: Honor your father and mother. That applies not only to the way we treat our parents, but to all who have authority over us.

We are to honor, serve and obey them.

We see a lot of dishonoring of those in authority these days--riots, protests, disrespect, violence. We see many prominent people setting disgraceful examples for the rest of us in how to deal with those in authority they don't agree with.

Let us always remember who we are and whose we are. We may not always agree with those in authority over us, just as we may not have always agreed with our parents' way of raising us. Nevertheless, we are called to honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect. We don't want to be accused of being rebellious and in so doing bring disgrace on the name of Christ.

For the times we have failed to show proper respect to those in authority, let us turn to our Lord in repentance and seek His forgiveness. Jesus paid for those sins too. And let us ask God to strengthen us to live exemplary lives that reflect Christ's love and obedience, remembering that we are always serving God and not merely our fellow human beings.

A servant of Christ with you,
Pastor Golm

August 28

God's Word-to Christian Children

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

To the above word, Paul immediately adds: "Honor 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."

According to the divine plan, children are to look upon their parents not only as their superiors in a biological sense, but as the representatives of God who are responsible for their welfare both physically and spiritually.

Because of this relationship, children are to look up to their parents.

And, looking up, they are to obey. Paul says that they are to obey them "in the Lord", that is, because of the Lord's clear command and gracious promise. Children are to obey their parents out of both love and respect, their ultimate loyalty, of course, always being to the Lord who bought them (Acts 5:29), and whose will they seek to follow.

How is it in our family? Do children "look up" to father and mother as those who are taking God's place-especially during their childhood and youth? And, looking up, do they willingly obey? If so, we have God's first foundation for family happiness.

If so, then parents and children can join hearts and lips in the beautiful lines of the poet:

Blest such a house, it prospers well,
In peace and joy the parents dwell,
And in their children's lot
is shown How richly God can bless His own.

God grant it, for Jesus' sake. And may He grant that the Holy Spirit, given to our children in Holy Baptism, continue to enlighten them with His gifts, sanctify them, and keep them in the true faith unto the end. Amen.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)