

LESSON 5

THE CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HOME

Scripture Texts: Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 15:32; Ephesians 6:1-3; Luke 2:49-52; Lamentations 3:27



Government without the consent of the governed will fall. Legislated morality cannot survive a rebellious heart. Old-fashioned obedience is still a virtue, even though modern conditions tend to make children independent at an early age. Obedience is just and proper, and God requires it of children. The lesson texts clearly express this truth.

MEMORY VERSE: *"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."*

Colossians 3:20

Maintaining Family Solidarity

In Luke 2:52 the development of Jesus pictures the normal development of the child. The home is the principal means of this development. Children should show respect for authority at home. They should know that service to God includes doing family duties. As parents grow older and weaker, the children who have become able have an obligation to repay them the love and care received from them. This will include financial support when needed, but especially important is love and consideration. Love makes it a joy. Rarely, in these modern times, does a child have any occasion to honor his parents with physical substance. This is good. No one wants a return to the poverty that formerly made parents depend, in their last days, upon the charity of their offspring. We thank God that in our time, for their own sakes, our dear parents are generally self-reliant, maintaining the dignity of independence in life's sunset. But there is a danger here of which we should be aware. It may cause an adverse effect on family closeness and honor of one's parents, resulting from the child's never sacrificing for them. In honoring our parents, we honor God also. A child's actions outside the home reflect on all aspects of the family.

The home is the child's first school, and here he is learning the most valuable lessons of his life. If he has been properly disciplined in the home, he will have developed an inner character that will enable him to live a disciplined life and get along with others when he has left the parents' home. He will put to use the training he has learned concerning physical and moral development. He will brush his teeth, comb his hair, and give attention to all aspects of personal appearance.

By bearing the yoke early, children become men and women, not overgrown babies. They learn self-discipline.

Obedience

In Colossians 3:20 children are commanded to obey parents in all things because this is well pleasing to the Lord. In Ephesians 6:1 children are commanded to simply obey because it is right, leaving no question as to God's attitude toward children's obedience to their parents. Is there any better reason than that it is right?

Children have as sure a position and as definite responsibilities as other members of the family. Obey clear and

plain, not unwillingly, but from love and respect. The commandment found in Exodus 20:12 commands this but also offers long life as a reward for doing so. Many individuals have shortened their life-span as a result of dishonoring father and mother.

It is important that children obey the parents to maintain family solidarity. To rebel against parental authority is a very serious sin in the sight of God. He said, in His Word, that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, a very serious charge indeed. In the event that there is a divided condition in the home and a parent would command the child to violate God's law, the child should always hold God's law in priority. To honor God's law from the heart always holds priority over every manmade law of the home or the community.

Self-Discipline

It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth, as stated in Lamentations 3:27. A child should learn to work, to bear responsibility, to meet hard things in life, and hold steady. Only in these ways can he gain self-discipline. By these, children learn to carry their part in life. Children allowed to always take and never give, to seek pleasure rather than to give service, learn to be leeches and not fruit bearers. Learn to work, and you will find out soon enough that the world does not owe you anything.

The will of the parents rules the home, not the will of the children. The child obeys whether his parents see him or not. In 2 Timothy 3:1-2 God tells us that in the last days perilous, or dangerous, times shall come. That time is now. The times are dangerous because many sinful customs make it a little harder to stand for the right. One of these sins is children being disobedient to parents. This sin is prevalent today. No matter what others may do, God's command of obedience to parents still stands.

Overcoming in the Battle

Youth may ask, "How can I win in this battle of life which I have been thrown into?" Thank God, there is a way through safely and with victory at the end. Ecclesiastes 12:1 shows us the way. Be saved early in life. Obey God's voice as soon as you are old enough for Him to talk to you and convict your heart of sin. The devil always tries to get us to put off surrendering to God, because he knows it will become more difficult all the time; and he may prevent it altogether. For this same reason, God tells us to be saved in the days of our youth.

JUST A THOUGHT

**Happiness is enjoying what you have
instead of fretting over what you don't have.**

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