

Honor Thy Father and Mother

“Get in here, David! It’s your turn! I did it last time!”

“Hey, Don! Watch this! Did you know that popped bubbles are slippery? It’s fun!”

“Hey...stop it! OUCH!” their older brother shouts.

Tonight it’s the boys’ turn to clean the kitchen. Mom put the food away nearly an hour ago. She’s out weeding the back flowerbed but has come to check on them a couple times already. Once again, she takes her gardening gloves off and comes in. “Boys! This is the last time!” she says, this time quite loudly.

Almost immediately, the boys spot dad at the door. “Boys, you go now,” he says firmly. “I will clean the kitchen.”

The three brothers glance at each other and sheepishly step into the hallway. Dad closes the door. Now, they don’t even want to play. They sit on the floor right outside the closed door.

What does it mean to honor our mothers and fathers? What does the Bible, God’s Word, teach? In Ephesians 6:1–3 it says: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour 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.” What does this mean?

Jacob (age 8) says that it means that we should listen to our moms and dads and do what they tell us to do. “When we don’t obey our parents, they’re not very happy,” he says.

“If we don’t honor our parents, it is sin,” Mikael (9) adds. “But, if we do obey them, they’re very happy. God is happy, too.”

Jacob and Mikael are right. To honor our mothers and fathers is all that and more. To honor means to respect, to look up to, to obey, etc. Luther teaches that we are to place our mothers and fathers as if next to God. Even if they are different, or as God’s Word says, “peculiar,” this instruction does not change. God’s Word says to love and honor them all of their lives, even when they grow old and frail.

In a sermon, a believing minister talked about obedience. He said that we don’t always understand why certain things happen in our lives. Sometimes we may not even understand a certain instruction or teaching in God’s kingdom. Years later, we might look back and then understand why something happened the way it did. But, not always, even then.

If we don’t understand, why would we listen and obey? The minister said it’s because we want to be obedient to God and the instruction in God’s kingdom. He compared this to the example of children wanting to go to a friend’s house. Sometimes your parents will say “yes” when you ask, but other times they will say “no, not this time.” Some--times when they say no, they have a reason that you understand, but other times you might not understand or agree with them. Is this easy to accept? Is it easy to obey them at such a time when you don’t understand why?

The devil, the enemy of souls, wants God’s children to fall into sin. Just like the boys in the kitchen. He tempted them like he tempts you and me today. When dad opened the door after finishing the dishes, the boys ran into his arms, immediately wanting to have their sins forgiven. Dad happily forgave them. Pray to God that He will help you to always want to have your sins forgiven, too.

“Dad, we’ll do the kitchen for the girls tomorrow,” Don promised, “won’t we?” looking at his brothers. They both nodded. “And we’ll come help you outside now, too!” Then they ran off to find their mom.

We can be happy that God has given us our mothers and fathers. They care for us so much, more than we can even understand. Having a mother and father is a gift. Treat them as great and precious. Love them and help them. Most important, help them get to heaven. Tell them that they, too, can have all their sins forgiven.

Lori Loukusa

QUESTIONS:

- Does the devil tempt you to not listen to God’s instruction? What does he say to you?
- What is it like at home when you don’t show love and honor to your moms and dads?
- Tell about times when you honor and obey your parents. How do your mom and dad feel?
- How do you feel? What is it like at home?

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