

Jesus as a Man Under Authority

- I. Introduction:
 - A. Authority defined.
 - B. Authority experiment video.

- II. Jesus Respect for Authority.
 - A. Jesus' resistance of Jewish abuses were out of respect for God's authority.
 - B. Jesus clearly respected authority. Explore three main areas.

- III. Jesus respect for His parents.
 - A. Jesus as a child: Spiritually mature.
 - B. Was subject to His parents.
 - C. Addressed parents' desires.
 - D. Even as He was dying, Jesus was concerned for His mother's well-being.

- IV. Jesus Respect for civil authority.
 - A. Roman authority was questioned during Jesus' day.
 - B. Jesus recognized civil authority and was subject to it.

- V. Jesus ordered His life to be in compliance with God's authority.
 - A. Jesus came to earth to live as a man in order to fulfill God's will.
 - B. Jesus was obedient even through a terrible death.

- VI. Final Thoughts.

Thought Questions

1. What does God expect of us in terms of our respect for the authority of our parents and civil authorities? _____

2. Is agreement with their rules, decisions, etc. required for us to consent to them?

3. What if our parents' or civil rule is harsh, can we disregard their authority?

4. Could Jesus have overcome the power of His execution by crucifixion by the Roman government? _____ Should he have used it? Could he have accomplished God's will if he had?

5. What if we don't like, understand or want to do God's will? Is it okay not to do it?

6. Are we free to pick and choose which commandments we want to follow and which ones we don't want to follow?

Obey Your Parents!

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Everyone coming into this world has to learn that no one can do "just as I please." Some learn that lesson younger than others. However, it is to everyone's benefit if they learn to respect laws, rules and authority as young as possible. It is such a sad thing to see young people who do not honor, respect or obey their parents. Often disrespect for authority in the home is further manifest in rebellion at school, law breaking in the community, and rejection of God's laws.

I suggest that we have been so busy impressing parents with their responsibilities that we have neglected to inform and impress young people with their responsibility.

Responsibilities for young people are seen in the following verses:

Ephesians 6:1-2: "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother. . . ."

Proverbs 23:22: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old."

Proverbs 19:26.- "He who assaults his father and drives his mother away is a shameful and disgraceful son."

Proverbs 15:20.- "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother."

Proverbs 15:15: "A fool despiseth his father's instruction"

Exodus 21:15: "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death."

Matthew 15:4: ". . . he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."

Colossians 3:20.- "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

Luke 2:51-52: Here we have the example of Jesus: "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them" (His parents, REH).

Then in Romans 1:30 and 2 Timothy 3:2, those who are "disobedient to parents" are listed among such terrible sinners as blasphemers, traitors, murderers and haters of God.

Truly, it is the will of God that everyone (young and old, alike) respect authority and submit to it. We are all under law, and we will all have to face the consequences of disobedience, whether it be disobedience of the home, the laws of government or the laws of God.

Guardian of Truth XXVII: 16, p. 504

August 18, 1983

Respect for Authority

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Respect for authority is fundamental in rearing children. It must be the first lesson, for without it nothing worthwhile will ever be instilled in our children. Children who aren't taught obedience in the home usually have a hard time submitting to authority of any kind. Many parents, failing to recognize this, have absolutely ruined their children. Thus, we see children who run the home, disrupt the school, and take over the Bible class. Later in life, these children are a problem on the job, get into trouble with the law, and are a menace to society. Finally, they lose their souls. Why? Too often the answer is in the fact that their parents never taught the first lesson.

Society is greatly benefitted by due subordination of family life. We are suffering today because of a crop of permissive children who never learned obedience to their parents or superiors. Young people proudly wear their badges of rebellion. They will not conform to society nor subordinate to anything or anybody. The spirit of resentment for any authority is both impractical and unscriptural. You will always have someone over you. There are some rules and regulations you are going to have to respect, and some authority to which you will have to answer. If you don't learn it in this life and die a renegade, you will most assuredly learn it in the judgment.

The home should be a place where members show respect for parental authority, civil authority, and the law of God. Respect for authority begins in the home, carries over into the school, the city streets, and the church.

Parental Authority

Children must be taught respect for parents. "Children obey your parents in the Lord;" "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Eph. 6:1,2). Children who hear the instruction of fathers and abide in the law of mothers find parents are "fair garlands for their heads" and "pendants about their necks" (Prov. 1:8,9; 6:20). This obedience should flow not only from the feeling of love, gratitude and esteem for their parents, but especially from reverence for the Lord. Obedience is the duty, and honor is the disposition of which true obedience is born. This is an obligation that rests on the very nature of things and cannot change with our changing world. It is not enough for children to simply obey in act. Love and reverence should be found in the heart of the child.

We have been living for some time in a child-oriented society which has been profitable to neither children nor parents. The father in many homes today is only a breadwinner, possessed of no say-so in the affairs of his offspring. The mother is a glorified maid and is expected to desist from meddling in the business of her youngsters. The result is this: the young people rule, and parents become slaves to their children. Age is demeaned, inexperience is exalted, wisdom is ignored, discipline is ridiculed, and controls scoffed at. Parents sit back afraid to challenge this movement brought about by their own mismanagement. The basic problem is not in the young themselves, but in the misdirection they are receiving.

Parents must establish their authority over the child. Children are to obey their parents "in all things" (Col. 3:20). The father is to rule (Eph. 5:22,33; 6:4). He should establish fundamental rules with which the family lives. Be consistent in your attitudes and expectations. It is irresponsible to allow a child to get by with challenging your authority, whether it be a small child who throws a temper tantrum when told to put up his toys and get ready for bed, or a teenager who says he is going to do something you have forbidden. You have the obligation to God and to the child to check that type of behavior. "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24).

The rebellious son of Deuteronomy 21:18-21 was stoned to death because he was incorrigible. Many fit this description today simply because their conduct was seen by parents as being cute, merely a part of a phase, or unworthy of attention. Therefore, in the formative years, rebellion had the stamp of approval. The product of such "rearing" then proceeds through life shaking his first at society, government and God.

In every society parental authority has been accepted as an indispensable prerequisite of social stability. Any tendency that swerves from this principle is a mark of a decadent society (Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:1,2). If responsible citizenship and godliness are not taught in the home, the foundation of society will crumble and disaster will ensue.

Civil Authority

Children must be taught to obey the laws of the land (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-15). Civil government exists as a divine ordinance, and we must recognize this. God doesn't place every ruler in office or approve each judicial function, but leaders of human society represent the authority of God on earth. Though earthly governments become corrupt and tyrannical, this doesn't disprove their divine origin. "Every soul," every intelligent member of society, is under obligation to obey governmental authority. The Ceasars, who were generally corrupt and evil, were reigning in Rome; yet by inspiration, Paul wrote, "Be subject to the higher powers." The only exception to this is when authority conflicts with spiritual law (Acts 5:29).

The rebel against civil law is a rebel against divine law. Government is an ordinance of God, and rulers are ministers of God. This business of lawlessness in the name of justice, immorality in the name of individuality, and disobedience in the name of progress is not true to God's word. To disobey civil law indicates an undisciplined life that leads to vice and dissipation.

The young person who has geared his set of values to approve conduct which is harmful to himself and others is certainly not developing a set of values which will improve his character. By continually accepting such standards and values, he has weakened his conscience and taught himself that it is good to do wrong. More and more he forms habits that connect him with evil and a lack of restraint. Further and further he plunges into the darkness and away from the light. He is gambling with his soul with high odds against him.

Divine Authority

Parents are commanded to "nurture" their children, cause them to grow and develop in the "chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). This is a sadly neglected duty. It brings irreparable and immeasurable injury to children. Parents can commit no greater sin against their children than to fail to lead them to love and obey the Lord.

Instruction from parent to child is not passive, nor transferrable, and is an obligation that cannot be overdone in regard to spiritual matters. The child's character lies in our hands, as clay in the hand of the potter. As the child is molded and shaped, so will be the adult. We have the power to shape their eternal destiny. The responsibility is often taken too lightly, and we are faced with the national problem of child neglect, abuse, delinquency, moral degeneration and spiritual reprobates. To neglect children is criminal in nature and usually disastrous in results.

Parents must firmly anchor their children in the faith, if they are to stand against social pressures, regarding activities and dress, in this materialistic and sexually-oriented society (2 Cor. 6:14-18). If a parent loves his child's soul, he will teach the child that he must be different from those around him and must not compromise that difference. Emphasis should not be placed on recreation or material values, but salvation. Children should be taught that life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not the end (Eccl. 12:1; Rom. 14:12).

Under the Law of Moses parents were instructed to teach incessantly, "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way and when thou liest down, and when thou riseth up" (Deut. 6:6-7). Notice, first, that these words were to be, not simply in a book, but "in thine heart." God's word must dwell in the heart of parents for them to be able to teach them effectively to their children! Secondly, they were to "teach it diligently unto thy children." They were not to teach them carelessly or indifferently, but they were to teach them with painstaking care.

Youth's education is not complete without a knowledge of the Bible. With all the knowledge of the world (science, human philosophy, the fine arts, mathematics, history and literature) man, without self-control and submission to God, is only a refined animal. Education is without a true foundation unless based upon a knowledge of God and the principles of the Bible. We must seek to instill in our children a basic knowledge and understanding of God's will (Prov. 4:5,7), a love for the truth (2 Thess. 2: 10), and an attitude of complete submission to God.

When parents give their children good instruction and, at the same time set a bad example, they could be compared to bringing food in one hand and poison in the other. Such a parent is a hypocrite, and no one will spot the hypocrisy quicker than the child who lives under the same roof. He is practically guaranteeing that his child will one day repudiate him and all he stands for.

Train your children to respect God's word while they are young. We have them such a short time and the opportunities are limited, and they pass so quickly. Today they are babes in arms, and tomorrow

they are gone out to meet the world. Begin while they are in the cradle. The patterns of life are so soon set. We must develop and refine standards of social behavior and a moral value system, so that the child will be able to accept the restraints he will be living under as an adult and, of course, as a Christian.

Conclusion

It's high time we parents, Christians, and children take a hard look at this whole business of authority and how it affects the welfare of our homes, schools, churches, the nation and our individual lives. Let all of us as parents humbly lift our voices to God, seeking wisdom from above in the rearing of our children.

Guardian of Truth XXXIII: 12, pp. 355-356

June 15, 1989