

Parents and Children (2)

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 6:1-4

*Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
Colossians 3:20 —*

Some time ago, while sitting in a restaurant, I overheard a conversation between a teenager and her mother. The mother was trying to convince her daughter that as long as she was in high school and living at home, she had to follow her parents' rules. At one point the daughter said, "I don't have to listen to you just because you are my mother. I'm old enough to make my own decisions."

Of course, the daughter had it wrong. Lewis Smedes, in his book *Mere Morality*, explains that God appoints parents to guide their children on his behalf. The fifth commandment tells children of every age that they must honor and respect their parents, simply because they are their parents. Children who are still living at home are expected to follow their parents' rules. The only exception would be a case in which the parents were asking the children to do something against God's will.

Obedying our parents and listening to them can save us from a lot of hurt in life. On more than one occasion I've heard adult children say, "I should have listened to my parents." Because of their life experience, parents often can better see the consequences of the decisions their children could make. And making Christlike decisions in their own lives helps parents earn their children's respect.

Prayer

Father in heaven, help us to honor and respect our parents. Forgive us if we have ignored them, and help us as children to be patient with their shortcomings. In Jesus, Amen.

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