**Lessons from a Lockdown**

Rommel J. Casis

**Day 57**

**Ephesians 6:1-4**

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

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. As a child is/was it easy for me to obey my parents? Why? Would they say that I was humble towards them? Why?
2. How did I try to honor my parents? Do my parents feel that I respect them?
3. Did I feel that my parents exasperated me? Why?
4. Parents: How do I not exasperate my child? How do I bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord? Non-Parents: How can I help raise the children in the church?
5. Am I teaching my child the Word? Am I correcting my child enough when they make mistakes? How is my child’s behavior different from children outside the church?

***Insight:***

Children show their submission by their obedience to their parents. We honor our parents when we obey them. This is difficult when we don’t feel that they deserve our obedience. But as in all our relationships we treat them not according to what we think they deserve but according to God’s expectation for us. For as long as what they are asking us to do is not sinful, we must obey. There is no qualification as to what type of parents we should obey. Whatever our parents may be like, we should obey them.

This command is hard teaching for those whose parents are not loving or meeting their needs. Some parents are abusive and harsh. While children should strive to protect themselves from abuse and not grow up to be like their abuser, they still need to obey their parents. This is also hard teaching for those whose parents are in the church but don’t act like Christians at home. Some parents are not present most of the time and the child may feel neglected. Some parents may be physically present but emotionally unavailable to their children. Even for these parents who don’t act like parents, children are still commanded to obey? Yes, for as long as their obedience will not cause them to sin, they must obey. Why? Because the obligation to obey is based on the child’s relationship with God, not with his parent. Our treatment of our parents does not depend how they treat us but because of how God trets us.

As they grow older, we should always be thinking of ways we can honor our parents. We should express our love and appreciation for them as often as we can because we do not know how much time with them we have left. How many children today would do anything just to say I love you to their parents one more time? Let us express our love to our parents today. We don’t have to wait for a special occasion to honor them.

During this pandemic we need to take care of our parents whether they live with us or not. If they live us, we need to make sure we spend enough time with them and have meaningful conversations with them. Just imagine those children who live far from their parents and how they wish they had could do what you could do every day. If they live away from us, we need to find ways to stay connected. They need to know we are thinking of them and express our love even from a distance.

Obedience is difficult for any child. As parents we should not make it harder for our children to obey us. We should be great examples of obedience to God so our children can be inspired to be obedient as well. We should not rely on our authority and demand obedience but rely on our example to inspire obedience.

Fathers should not exasperate their children. Paul might have focused on fathers as head of the family and therefore should serve as role models. They have the responsibility to “bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” At the very least this means teaching them about the Word of God. Training requires practice. We need to help them put the Word of God into practice. How? We need to model following the Word of God. We need to show them how to do it. The word translated as “instruction” means admonition or exhortation. So when our children make mistakes, we need to correct them. Tolerating disobedience from our children is unacceptable. So not exasperating our children does not mean not letting them get upset in anyway. Sometimes as parents we need to upset them with discipline. Simply put we should treat them as God treats us as our Father.

Parents should be the primary teachers of their children. They should be the most active in teaching them about God, not the church or the Children’s Ministry or Youth Ministry. As parents we need to always be sharing our faith with our children.

Whether they intend to or not, parents are teaching their children by their example. What is our example teaching our children? Are we showing them that being a Christian is the best way to live? Do they want to become like us?

During the lockdown let us honor our parents and inspire our children.