

Simon Says (Obedience)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 'Honor your father and mother'— which is the first commandment with a promise – 3 'so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.' Ephesians 6:1-3

The Basic Bible Truth

Of all of the commands that God gave to the nation of Israel, this one was unique. It was the only one with a promise attached to it. Obedience to parents is a condition that requires both parties involvement—the child to listen and obey, and the parents to present the rules in such a way as to make them understandable and attractive. In reality, the parents carry the largest part of the burden here.

The Object

A Simple Game Of “Simon Says”

This is a simple children’s game in which one person calls out commands, some prefaced with the words “Simon Says”, some without. Only the commands prefaced with those two words are to be obeyed, all of the others are to be ignored. If a participant follows one of the commands that Simon does not say, they are out of the competition. As the game moves on, simply pick up the pace of the commands to trip those up who are good at the game.

The Lesson

God gave Adam and Eve one rule to follow in the Garden those many years ago. They failed. But don’t be too hard on them. We would have done the same thing. Even just one rule can be difficult to follow perfectly. Allow me to demonstrate with a simple game of “Simon Says”. Follow one rule. Do what Simon tells you to do. Don’t do what he doesn’t tell you to do. It’s as simple as that.

It is more difficult that it sounds at first. Obedience is important to God. We have very little in the Bible concerning the early years of Jesus’ life. In Luke 2:41-52 we find the one and only episode recorded regarding His early years. It is significant to note that it involved His obedience to His parents. The Creator God, Jesus, the one who spoke this universe into existence, demonstrated for us the perfect example of relationship to parents by obeying His parents fully as a child.

The Mosaic Law found in the Old Testament addressed the issue of obedience to parents. We find it mentioned among the first 10 commandments, but we also find penalties mentioned later in Scripture. God explained in Deuteronomy 13 that parents had a responsibility to their children regarding obedience. The penalty for disobedience was harsh, not just for the young person in question, but for the parent as well. Note that this law did not affect those who were young. What we will be talking about here relates to “old enough to know better” youth. If a young adult had proved to be incorrigible, the parents were to take them before the elders and charge their child with the crime of disobedience. If found guilty, that young person was to be stoned to death! And here is the point that I want to stress. It was the parent’s responsibility to throw the first stone! I don’t care how troublesome a young man or woman can be, but to be a parent who must throw that first stone would be unthinkable to me. I could not bear that, and it would urge me to be a better parent to avoid that difficult situation.

God created humans with an inward set of rules and laws that govern our behavior at an almost instinctive level. Godless societies across the globe rely on the rule that children must listen to parents. It is something deep down inside them that says that it must be this way for society to remain intact. We are seeing the results of a departure from this idea now in America. Our children are no longer taught right from wrong. Rather we give them the chance to make up their own minds as to whether or not they want to follow one path in life or another, and throw the concept of right and wrong to the wind. It can only end in heartache.

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