

Catechetical Sermon, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 39 "Honor Authority"**

Scripture Lesson: 1 Peter 2

<b>Lesson Aim</b>	To understand three things: First, we Christians owe honor to our parents; second, honor to all in authority over us; and third, in showing honor to authority, we are submitting to Christ, who first submitted to his Father.
<b>Steps to Learning</b>	Read the <a href="#">Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 39</a> and <a href="#">1 Peter 2</a> . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
<b>Discuss</b>	<p><b>All people understand that they are to honor their parents (or any authority). Why is this so difficult?</b></p> <p>The answer is, in short, we are sinners who are selfish and want our own way. Paul argues in Romans chapter 1 that all people want to vaunt themselves over God who is the ultimate authority.</p> <p><b>What does the fifth command mean by honoring parents?</b></p> <p>Honoring parents means to obey their rules and commands, which are consonant with general wisdom and special revelation in the Scriptures. Paul says explicitly in Ephesians chapter 6 that children are to obey their parents. Honoring parents means also showing them respect. This is applied to the children's speech and responds to the parent's commands.</p> <p><b>How are parents to wield their authority?</b></p> <p>Paul says in <a href="#">Ephesians 6:4</a> that fathers must not provoke their children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." In a word, great responsibility comes with authority as a superior. Parents must teach their children the faith, but do so in a manner that is gentle.</p> <p><b>Paul says in <a href="#">Ephesians 6:2</a>, in reiterating the fifth commandment, that "this is the first commandment with a promise," which refers to living long in the land. What does he mean?</b></p> <p>Paul does not mean living long in a physical land, which applied to Israel. Rather, he means that things will go well, in general, for kids when they obey their parents.</p> <p><b>The Heidelberg, in interpreting the fifth commandment, mentions that it includes showing honor to all in authority over me. What does this entail?</b></p> <p>It entails honoring the authority of the state. God has established the government for our good and should obey the laws of the land. Also, we are to show honor to the church's leadership, the officers of the church.</p>
<b>Bible Reading</b>	<a href="#">John 8-14</a> (Reading through the Gospels)