

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
The Fourth Commandment

Family Talk:
Honor Your Father and Your Mother

You know what “father” and “mother” mean. You have a father and a mother. But perhaps you do not know what “honor” means. It means respect and love. Every year as you grow older, you learn more things and can do more things. And you can grow to love your parents more and more.

This is so important that the Lord has given people a Commandment—“Honor your father and your mother.” You have heard about the Ten Commandments. In a few years you will know all of these commandments by heart. You will say them many times. The Lord Himself spoke those Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel. He also wrote them with His finger on two tables of stone. Those two tables of stone were kept for a long time in the Ark in the Tabernacle. They were the most precious things the Children of Israel had.

The fourth Commandment is:

“Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

This Commandment teaches us that the father and mother we are to honor are more than the man and woman who are our “father” and “mother.” The country that the Lord has given us is “our motherland.” Those who really love their country are said to have “patriotism”, and to be “patriots.”

Now, why is our country like a father and mother to us? It is because our country feeds and protects us. It educates us and gives us work. It does many things for us that we cannot do for ourselves, just as fathers and mothers do in homes.

Who is the Father of all people – of men and women of all ages and of all children? The Lord is. This is why we call Him the “Heavenly Father.” Whether we say, “Our Father, Who art in the heavens”, or “Heavenly Father,” we mean the same Lord God. All of us are His children. Even all the angels are His children. They, too, call Him “Heavenly Father.”

But do we have a “Heavenly Mother?” Yes, the Church is our “Heavenly Mother.” The Lord Himself calls the Church His Bride and Wife. He says that it

is the “Mother” of all who learn from her the wonderful things taught in the Word.

So the Lord’s Commandment, “Honor your father and your mother,” means that we are to love our parents, the father and mother in the home. We are to love our country. And above all, we are to respect and love the Lord’s Church and the Lord Himself.

If we keep this Commandment, our days will “be long upon the land” which the Lord gives us. For we shall become angels and live happily in His kingdom of heaven.