



19 Minutes with Luther

The Fourth Commandment

- The Knowledge of God
- Law and Gospel
- Introduction to the Law
- 1st Commandment
- 2nd Commandment
- 3rd Commandment
- **4th Commandment**
- 5th Commandment
- 6th Commandment
- 7th Commandment
- 8th Commandment
- 9th & 10th Commandments
- The Conclusion
- The Gospel & the Nature of God
- The Apostles' Creed (Faith)
- 1st Article (Creation)
- 1st Article (Preservation)
- 1st Article (Protection)
- 1st Article (The Fall into Sin)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Person)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Office)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Work)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Humiliation)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Exaltation)
- 2nd Article (Christian Life)
- 2nd Article (Saved by Faith)
- 3rd Article (The Holy Spirit)
- 3rd Article (Calls)
- 3rd Article (Enlightens)
- 3rd Article (Sanctifies)
- 3rd Article (Keeps in Faith)
- 3rd Article (Invisible Church)
- 3rd Article (Visible Church)
- 3rd Article (Forgiveness)
- 3rd Article (Eternal Life)
- Baptism (Part 1)
- Baptism (Part 2)
- Holy Communion (Part 1)
- Holy Communion (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 1)
- Keys & Confession (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 3)
- Introduction to the Lord's Prayer
- The Address
- 1st Petition
- 2nd Petition
- 3rd Petition
- 4th Petition
- 5th Petition
- 6th Petition
- 7th Petition
- The Doxology

Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger our parents and others in authority, but honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

1. What are the three main areas in which God has placed his representatives over us? What blessings do we receive through each?
 - (a)
 - (b)
 - (c)
2. How does a child honor his parents by his attitude? by his speech? by his conduct?
3. When this commandment is scorned by children, what harm or sadness is brought upon parents? upon the children themselves? upon society?
4. Proverbs 13:24 reads, "*He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.*" What does God want his representatives to do with those who sin against this commandment? How can this be a blessing?
5. What happens when parents openly disagree about discipline?

6. What is the significance of this commandment for employees and employers? for citizens and government authorities?

7. Acts 5:29 reads, *"We must obey God rather than men!"* What does this verse tell us about obedience to parents, employers, and others in authority?

8. In his Large Catechism, Martin Luther reminds us that the Fourth Commandment also has something to say to those in authority. What sinful attitudes do parents sometimes have toward their children? What, however, are the blessings from God for parents and superiors who carry out their responsibilities?

9. How does the Fourth Commandment serve as a mirror for us?

10. What two things did Jesus do to save us from our sins against this commandment?

Luther said:

"Children should bear in mind that, however humble, poor, infirm, or eccentric their parents may be, our fathers and mothers are nevertheless God's gifts to us. They are not to be robbed of their honor because of any peculiarities or failings. We are not to be influenced by their persons, whatever these may be, but rather by the will of God, who has created and ordained their parental relationship to us." (Tappert, pp. 379,380.)

Closing Prayer

Lord, our sinful nature wants to rebel against you and all your representatives. Forgive us for Jesus' sake. Lead us to respond to your salvation by honoring those whom you, in love, have placed in authority over us. Amen.

At home

- Memorize the Fourth Commandment and its meaning.
- Write a prayer asking God to bless those in the home, the church, and the state whom God has placed in authority over you. Use the prayer daily.

Helps

(1) (a) God blesses us physically through his representatives in the government. (b) He blesses us spiritually through his representatives in the church. (c) And he blesses us both physically and spiritually through his representatives in the home. (2) A child will honor his parents with an attitude of respect. This will be reflected in his speech, both when he is in and out of his parents' presence. A child will love his parents and demonstrate his love through service and obedience. (3) Children who scorn this commandment not only harm themselves spiritually but can bring physical harm and embarrassment both on themselves and their families. Society also has to deal with a rebellious citizen. (4) God wants his representatives to rebuke and patiently instruct those who sin against this commandment and to punish them when necessary. Such discipline is an important training for life and can prevent a person from falling under the terrible judgment of God. (5) When parents disagree about discipline, their authority is eroded; soon their ability to discipline effectively is lost. The result is a rebellious child. (6) Employees and citizens owe their employers and the government the same thing that children owe their parents: honor, respect, and obedience. (7) God does not want us to obey those in authority if they tell us to do something contrary to his Word. (8) At times, parents will fail to see that God has honored them by making them his representatives in the home. They may see their responsibility as a burden and their children as a nuisance. However, God promises both physical and spiritual blessings to parents (the security of family and grandchildren). (9) The Fourth Commandment shows us our damning sins against God's representatives and our need for a Savior. (10) Jesus saved us by keeping the Fourth Commandment perfectly in our place and by offering his life on the cross of Calvary as the payment for our sins.