

Part 3: The Duties and Sins of Superiors

Appendix A: Follow-up Questions

Q. 1: If superiors have a problem using power they don't have, what should they do to help themselves? And what should the inferiors do?

Q. 2: Can superiors, such as parents, praise their inferiors too much? Is that bad? How can a superior ensure that he is not over-praising his inferiors?

Q. 3: Doesn't an established church lead naturally to abuse and neglect?

129 (cont'd)

Q. 129. *What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?*

A. It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand... and, by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God,[n] honor to themselves,[o]...

[n] 1 Timothy 4:12 - "Let no man despise thy youth; but ***be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.***"

Titus 2:3-5 - "The ***aged women*** likewise, that they be ***in behaviour as becometh holiness***, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may ***teach the young women to be sober***, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, ***chaste***, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, ***that the word of God be not blasphemed.***"

Ursinus's Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism: "GRAVITY, which is a virtue arising from a knowledge of our calling and rank in society, observes what is becoming and proper to the person, and maintains a constancy and evenness in the words, carriage, and actions of the life, that so we may preserve the authority and good report which we have, and not bring a disgrace upon our calling; for seeing that God desires that those placed in authority should be honored, he at the same time desires that they themselves should guard and maintain their own honor."

[o] 1 Kings 3:28 - "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; ***and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.***"

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT, PARENTING, AND MARRIAGE

129 (cont'd)

Thomas Boston's Body of Divinity: "Children are apt to imitate their parents, but especially in evil. He that sins before a child, sins twice, for he may expect that his sin shall be acted over again. Let them, then, not see you do any thing ye would not have them to do, nor speak words ye would not have them to follow you in. Your good precept will not stick, if it be not fastened with a good example."

Q. 129. What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?

A. It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand... and, by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.[p]

[p] Titus 2:15 - "These things speak, and exhort, and *rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*"

Q. 130. What are the sins of superiors?

A. The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them,[a] an inordinate seeking of themselves... [b]

[a] Ezekiel 34:2-4 - "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; ***Woe be to the shepherds of Israel*** that do feed themselves! ***should not the shepherds feed the flocks?*** Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: ***but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost;*** but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them."

[b] Philippians 2:21 - "***For all seek their own,*** not the things which are Jesus Christ's."
