

Their office being so high and honourable, parents are very remiss, when they do not require from their children outward marks of respect. The outward habit will greatly influence the inward feeling. In the present day there appears a general relaxation of family discipline in this respect, which promises no good to society hereafter. Not a century back, no child in a well-ordered family would have been allowed to remain seated when a parent entered the room. In primitive times no rank or honours exempted a son from rising at his father's appearance. Consistently with the principle here set forth, parents lower their proper dignity, and undermine their necessary authority, when they allow their families to continue the same boisterous behaviour in their presence as in their absence. Children should grow up with the feeling, that outward "honour" is due to the very presence of their father or mother. All rude and noisy rushing in and out of a father's or mother's company, should be habitually felt to be unmeet, and contrary to family etiquette.

There is an evil too often fostered by persons with pious intentions, namely, encouraging children to make themselves teachers of religious knowledge to their parents. That which is an utter subversion of God's ordinance; and a violation of the practice of mankind from Adam to the present hour, cannot be a trifling matter. God is a God of order, not of disorder; and we must beware of infringing his institutions under the impulse of an ill-regulated zeal for religion. However God's grace may sometimes flow to individuals through unusual channels, that is no reason for his creatures to despise his ordinances, or to anticipate a blessing when acting in opposition to them. As the unbelieving husband is to be won "without the word," by his wife's Christian deportment, so must the unbelieving parent be worked upon for his soul's good, not by the child usurping authority, (which teaching will be, without great caution,) but by the powerful force of *example*. It is not meant that wife or children are never to venture on suggesting a religious truth to the unbelieving husband or father; this is quite different from an assumption of the office of religious teacher. Satan often attacks children in this manner; he plays upon their pride of knowing something more than their parents do, until he leads them to violate that honour and deference, the shewing of which would have been the most probable means of rescuing their parents from the power of Satan.

The apostolic directions to parents are; "Ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," (Eph. vi. 4.) Fathers are addressed here without express mention of mothers, because bodies are addressed in their head, who is responsible for the evil of the whole. But the Apostle's injunction indicates that parents are often tempted to irritate their children by harsh language, or by capricious severity; and there is little doubt but that much of the bad tempers exhibited by children, are reflections of those into which the parents have been betrayed.