

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: November 18, 2018

SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: ADULTS AND CHILDREN (1 of 2)—Respect Older Ones

SCRIPTURES: 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Kings 12:1-33

AIM: As children of God, we should respect, honor and be subject to our elders. This attitude will help us be open to receive help and guidance from them, thereby equipping us to live a proper life before the Lord.

MEMORY VERSES: 1 Peter 5:5 (In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.); Leviticus 19:32 (You shall rise up before the grayheaded and honor the face of the old man. And you shall fear your God; I am Jehovah.)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 191 (This Little Light of Mine); 192 (We are Different); 7621 (Who Will You Listen To - a song about Rehoboam *Tune: Hymn 1162*); 2829 (Honor and Respect for Authority); 9211 *Bible Story Songs David Song #11* (Can You Say, How Do You Do); 2830 (Knock, Knock - A new song about Proper Greetings); 9219 *BSS David Song #19* (I'd Like to Honor You); 9225 *BSS David Song #25* (Let's Honor with Manners)

CRAFT IDEAS: Make a greeting card/thank you card for one or more of the older people that care for the children.

APPROACH: Ask the children how the adults (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles or other older ones) in their lives take care of them? Do they listen to and obey these adults? It is a great privilege to live with older people because you can learn many things from them.

CONTENT: In order to grow up in a happy and healthy way, we must recognize God's order and arrangement and behave accordingly. By respecting God's authority, order and arrangement, we can avoid getting ourselves into a lot of unnecessary problems and difficulties. In God's arrangement there are different ages in our families: parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents, etc. Older ones provide for the physical needs of the younger ones. They have taken the responsibility to work in order to provide food, clothing, housing, toys, etc., so that the younger children can grow up happily. This is not a small responsibility. Older ones love and care for younger ones. We sometimes take older people for granted and do not appreciate them for who they are and what they have gone through in order to provide for us. They have also already passed through many experiences in life and can recognize potential or possible danger before it happens. Children should respect adults and recognize the wisdom that they have acquired over their years.

Today we will hear a true story from the Bible about the importance of listening to older ones, and the negative consequences if we do not listen. This story is from the book of 1 Kings, about a person named Rehoboam. His father was King Solomon, whose wisdom was known far and wide. After King Solomon died, Rehoboam became king. Kings need a lot of help running the kingdom since it is not easy to govern and lead a large group of people. So they have advisers, people who help give advice so that the king can make a wise decision. Since Rehoboam was now king, he sought some advice about a serious concern. In particular, the people asked him to reduce the burden of their labor. Though King Solomon was wise and a good king for most of his life, the people complained to the new king that his father had made their service hard and heavy. They told the new king that if he made their burden lighter, then they would serve the new king. Rehoboam did not answer them right away. He told them to go away for three days and then come back to him for answer.

In the meantime, Rehoboam sought the advice of two groups of people:

First, he asked the elders that had also served King Solomon while he was still alive. The elders advised Rehoboam to heed the people's request and listen to them. The elders advised him, "If today you will be a servant to this people and serve them and answer them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants always." This would have made his kingdom more pleasant and smooth. If the king was good to the people, then the people would be more willing to listen to him and serve him. But King Rehoboam forsook and rejected the advice from the elders who had served King Solomon. (1 Kings 12:1-8)

Instead, King Rehoboam sought advice from a second group of people, young men who grew up with him, his peers. These young men gave the king advice to do the opposite. His peers instead urged him to rule harshly and make it even harder and more difficult. Rehoboam listened to his peers, who were young like him. When the people returned after three days for an answer, Rehoboam was harsh and mean to them, and threatened to make their lives even more difficult. (1 Kings 12:6-11). As a result, most of the people of Israel rebelled against him. The people even killed the one that the king had put in charge of the forced labor. God's people became divided, leading to the loss of oneness, to idol worship, and eventually to the loss of the promised land. What a serious consequence could have been avoided if Rehoboam listened to the counsel of the older ones!

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

- **Children should have a heart to receive guidance from older ones.** Rehoboam should have listened to the elders who served his father, rather than listening to the advice of those he grew up with. Like Rehoboam, sometimes we may regard the word of our peers higher than the word of our elders. This may be because of peer pressure or because there is a generation gap or cultural difference with the older ones. Perhaps we may think our parents or older ones don't understand the current situation. However, we need to recognize that many of the older ones have a lot, including experiences of God and knowledge of His Word, that we can learn from. They have gained wisdom through life experience. We should have a heart to receive this kind of help.
- **By respecting God's authority, order and arrangement, we can avoid getting ourselves into a lot of unnecessary problems and difficulties.** Rehoboam could have saved himself from a lot of trouble by listening to the elders. He had a terrible ending. Even in small matters, we should listen to our parents and older ones. For example, when it is cold outside, sometimes our parents tell us to put on an extra layer of clothing, or wear a thicker coat. Do we listen to that advice, or do we prefer to wear certain clothing because we think it looks "cool"? Our parents may tell us that certain clothing is not proper, yet many people at school dress that way. What they are telling us is a protection to us. As we get older, the decisions we have to make become more and more important, and the consequences are also more important. We need to learn to respect, honor and obey while we are still young.
- **The trend of the world is not to respect older ones, but we need to follow the proper examples in the Bible.** Unfortunately, it is common these days to see some students talking back to teachers, or children talking back to parents. There is a lack of respect for authority. For some, there is even no shame in their rebellion. We must be strongly warned against the tide of rebellion and be those who respect and honor God's authority.

Adapted from the Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons: 11/16/97; 11/18/07; 12/8/13