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## Parents and children

**Objective** The confirmands respect their parents and strive to develop a trusting relationship with them.

**Contents** The relationship with parents.  
Mutual trust.  
The parents' advice.  
The generation gap – mutual understanding.  
Speaking with one another.  
The Fourth Commandment.

### 1 Lead-in

**Workbook exercise (homework)**

The confirmands have completed the story in their workbook. They are now to read aloud what they have written. Their suggestions are then discussed.

### 2 Gratitude and love

**Hint**

No responses are to be given to the following questions. However, the confirmation teacher gives the confirmands time to think about them.

**Ask**

**Have our parents not already often done things for us without our even realising it?**

**Hint**

The confirmation teacher explains the following two points and prompts the confirmands to provide examples.

Our parents undoubtedly

- have done much for us which we only realised much later, and
- often have done without certain things so that they could do something to please us.

**Tell**

A mother had very unsightly hands. They were disfigured and had ugly scars. As long as her daughter was young, the daughter did not notice this. As she grew older she noticed something: the mothers of her playmates had beautiful, manicured hands—her mother did not. The daughter began to be ashamed of her mother. Later she was even repulsed by her mother's hands. She no longer wanted to let her mother touch her. The mother probably had realised this, but said nothing. However, she was sad. One day her daughter blurted out, "You have such ugly hands." Her father took the girl aside and explained to her why her mother had such disfigured hands. She had rescued her child from a burning room when she was small.



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When the girl heard this she cried and said, "Mum, from today you have the most beautiful hands in the world for me."

### Ask

**How do we feel when we truly realise what our parents have done for us?**

### Listen to answers and summarise

Our gratitude and love for our parents increases. These two feelings also ought to guide us in our attitude towards our parents.

Let us

- show our gratitude by never speaking disparagingly of our parents or treating them in a condescending manner
- show our love by at times doing without something if we can thereby bring joy to our parents.

### Hint

The confirmands are to comment on these points. When necessary the confirmation teacher can ask a few questions (for example, Have you ever voluntarily given up something to please your parents? How did you feel when you did this?)

## 3 Matters which sometimes disturb the relationship between parents and children

### Ask

**Why is the relationship between parents and children sometimes disturbed?**

### Listen to answers and supplement

- I do not always agree with my parents and do not always understand their views.
- I feel that my parents do not understand me.
- My parents do not want to fulfil one of my wishes.
- My parents have no time or do not listen properly to me.
- I cannot do anything right for my parents.

### Hint

Let us now discuss with the confirmands what they can do to improve such situations. The confirmands mention what comes to mind concerning this. The confirmation teacher does not comment. Using key words he writes down the ideas for all to see. Only afterwards the thoughts which have been expressed are discussed. If only a few ideas are put forward the following suggestions can be provided:

- If we truly want to understand someone we have to listen patiently and take time for him or her. Often we do not want to understand. We only want to find the weak point in the other one's argument so that we can contradict him or her.
- If we want to understand one another we have to know and respect one another. We must foster fellowship and speak with one another. This means that both have to listen.
- Let us ask ourselves why our parents do not always fulfil our every wish. If we find no answer we can always ask them for the reasons.
- It is important to find the right moment. Let us not start a conversation when our parents are tired or in a hurry.





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### 4 Trust

#### A student tells (homework)

*Peter's catch of fish*

Ask

Listen to answers  
and summarise

Ask

Listen to answers  
and supplement  
*Those who  
love us*

Summarise

A student reads aloud

One time Peter had fished the entire night and caught nothing. In the morning the Lord Jesus advised him to go out and cast his nets again. This advice did not seem practical from a human perspective. Nevertheless Peter said, "At Your word I will let down the net" (Luke 5: 5). He had faith in the Lord Jesus' word.

**Why did Peter have such great trust in the Lord Jesus?**

- Peter had experienced that the Lord Jesus meant well.
- Peter sensed that he was not dealing with a mere human being.

**Whom can we trust?**

We can trust those who mean well! It will quickly become apparent if they are good counsellors. If they indeed mean well they will only counsel us when they are sure.

Our attitude towards our parents ought to embrace **gratitude, love, and trust**. These are the prerequisites for fulfilling the Fourth Commandment and being blessed by our heavenly Father. The Fourth Commandment also implies certain obligations for parents. Their mandate to raise their children properly imposes a high degree of responsibility upon them: through their God-pleasing conduct, they are to see to it that they do not make it difficult for their children to honour them.

Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

#### The main points

**I also want to ...** ... **make my parents happy!**

#### Homework

The confirmands learn the Fourth Commandment by heart.

