

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

HAVING SEEN WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH US CONCERNING GOD, IT
FOLLOWS TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY REQUIRE AS THE DUTY OF MAN

QUESTION # 128.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #128. *What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?*

A. The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them;¹ envying at,² contempt of,³ and rebellion⁴ against, their persons⁵ and places,⁶ in their lawful counsels,⁷ commands, and corrections;⁸ cursing, mocking,⁹ and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonour to them and their government.¹⁰

Question 1—*Wherein consists that neglect of duties which constitutes sin in inferiors?*

Answer—The neglect of duties consists in all failures to perform that which is required by this command, Matt. 15:4-6; and that under any hypocritical pretext whatsoever, especially when the neglect seeks religious cover, Mark 7:10, 11.

This neglect appears particularly when: 1.) Wives cast off all reverence to their husbands, carrying themselves in a domineering or overbearing way towards them, being disobedient, wilful or otherwise difficult and hard to control, like Vashti, Est. 1:10-12. It is not their honor to command, whose province God has made to obey, Ezek. 16:30; Eph. 5:33. 2.) Children sin against parents by disobedience to them, Rom. 1:30; which is a sin near to complete ruin of body and soul, Prov. 30:17. Therefore, all irreverence to them, by slighting and dishonoring them in word and deed, tends to this destruction, Deut. 27:16. This is to be seen in those who, without the consent of their parents, dispose themselves to callings or in marriage, 1 Sam. 16:11, 19; Jer. 35:6, 7; Gen. 26:34, 35. 3.) Servants sin against masters by irreverent, disrespectful and impudent carriage towards them without yielding the respect which God calls upon them to give, especially by the aversion they show to every good thing and religious duty, as if their masters had no concern in this so long as they were careful about their work, Eph. 6:5, 6. 4.) People sin against their ministers when, by their careless carriage, they are stubborn against and refuse all warnings and entreaties to discipline, Heb. 13:17. 5.) Subjects sin against magistrates by carrying disrespectful toward them, denying them subjection and their just dues, and not praying for them, 1 Pet. 2:13, 14; 1 Tim. 2:2. 6.) The younger sin against the aged,

¹ Matt. 15:4-6.

² Num. 11:28, 29.

³ 1 Sam. 8:7; Isa. 3:5.

⁴ 2 Sam. 15:1-12.

⁵ Ex. 21:15.

⁶ 1 Sam. 10:27.

⁷ 1 Sam. 2:25.

⁸ Deut. 21:18-21.

⁹ Prov. 30:11, 17.

¹⁰ Prov. 19:26.

especially those that seek to be pious, when they forget that they too must come to age or die young, Prov. 16:31. 7.) Those less gifted, whether materially, mentally or spiritually, sin against their gifted superiors very often by despising them and speaking evil of them, Jude 8.

Question 2—*Wherein consists the doing anything against or contrary to these duties?*

Answer—Those act against or contrary who: 1.) Are given to envying their superiors, Num. 11:28, 29. Envy is a work of the flesh, Gal. 5:19-21. It is the nature of envy to corrupt men's judgment especially in spiritual matters, Prov. 23:17; Jas. 3:16; Ps. 73:3. 2.) Are moved to hold their superiors in contempt, wherein is the root of all subversion of civil and social order, Isa. 3:5; and the root of all misgovernment in the civil realm, 1 Sam. 8:7. This is often done by divulging of secrets, either with regard to family affairs or matters pertaining to their secular employment, Prov. 29:11. 3.) Engage in a way of active rebellion which is designed to overthrow any or all lawful social or civil order, 2 Sam. 15:1-12. This transpires when any make disturbance or disorders in family or commonwealth through a discontent with their station as inferiors or a desire to rule over those to whom they ought to be in subjection, Isa. 3:12.

These acts against or contrary may be perpetrated in two ways: 1.) Directly as against their persons, Ex. 21:15. The severity of judgment is aimed at the gross and aggravated violation of the principles of natural morality, 1 Tim. 1:8-10. 2.) Indirectly as against their places or stations, 1 Sam. 10:27. Proper reverence expresses itself in all acts of deportment designed to express an acceptance of the status, station or place of the superior, 2 Sam. 14:4; thus, bringing of gifts (הַמְנִיחַ), or presents, represents an acknowledging that another is a superior and consecrating of oneself to render proper reverence and service to him, 2 Sam. 8:2.

These acts are in opposition to the spirit and tenor of this command when: 1.) They contradict the lawful counsels given by their superiors, 1 Sam. 2:25. Those who forsake the lawful counsels of their superiors often bring themselves to ruin, 2 Chron. 25:16. 2.) They heap contempt or rebellion against their lawful commandments, which is a high handed act of despising their lawful authority, Deut. 21:18-21. 3.) They regard the corrections of their superiors with contempt or, worse yet, entirely disregard their lawful corrections, Prov. 15:10.

Additionally, this command also prohibits all thought and conduct which may prove a shame and dishonor either to them or their government, such as: 1.) Cursing them, whether in the heart or out loud, whether verbally or through behavior, Prov. 30:11; Eccl. 7:22. This is a sin worthy of death, Lev. 20:9; Matt. 15:4. 2.) Mocking them, whether by design or neglect of care to reverence them, is also worthy of death, Prov. 30:17. 3.) When to either of these is added the insult of such refractory and scandalous behavior that underscores the contempt and rebellion, Prov. 19:26. All unbecoming conduct perpetrated by children, or other inferiors, reflects upon and profanes the honor of the parent, or superior, Lev. 21:9.