

# FATHERHOOD OF GOD DECLARED ETERNAL TRUTH AND REAL FOUNDATION OF KINSHIP

Simple Christianity of Jesus Cements Family Ties and Gives Comfort and Aid in Daily Life, Broadening Fellowship in Church and Love in Home Relations.

BY THE RIGHT REV. BOYD VINCENT, D. D., Bishop of Southern Ohio.

A sermon preached Sunday, September 3, at St. David's church, Columbus, Ohio.

Text—Ephesians, 3:15—"The Father (of our Lord Jesus Christ), of whom the whole family, in heaven and earth, is named."

WHAT is the sign of blood-kinship—of family relationship? It is your father's name—the family name; is it not? If your family name is Brown or Jones or Robinson, you know that every-

one else who has the same name is somehow connected with you. So, in God, "the whole family" of mankind—all spirits in heaven and on earth—is but one family. It all takes its life, as on earth it would take its name from the one "Father" of all in heaven. Jesus said: "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 23:9.

But now we may also read this same text in a different way. We may read: "The Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named." That is, the very idea of the family—of family life—has not been carried up from earth to heaven, but brought down from heaven to earth, from God to man, as we shall see.

For, again, we may read: "The Father, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is named." That is, "fatherhood" among men is a derived idea; it is a relationship which belongs to the family. But fatherhood in God is an eternal truth—an eternal fact before every time and man. It is the source and the procreation of children to be loved is of the very essence of the Divine. But there cannot be a father without a son; you cannot even think of the one without the other. Eternal Fatherhood in God, then, necessarily means also an Eternal Sonship in Him. And is not that the very way which St. John teaches us so beautifully to "think of the Father" in the "eternity of Jesus"? "The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father," he says; that is, who is in God's nature from all eternity. Both Fatherhood and Sonship, therefore, were always necessarily in God. This is the eternal truth from which the very idea of human fatherhood comes and in which it is to find its own highest ideal.

But, whichever way we read our text, we instantly see that here we have a great and inspiring idea: an idea which links up all human fatherhood and so all family life, in this world and the next, directly with God the universal Father. Indeed, what I want to show you now is that this simple, yet profound, really the most central, the most vital and the most helpful truth in all Christianity.

How men in all ages have struggled to get at the truth about God and ourselves! How they have thought, how they have searched, how they have sought a separate god in every power of nature, in every mountain, river or tree; and so he made idols of them all, an idolatry and bloodthirsty as himself.

The ancient classical religions fairly peopled heaven with sparkling "gods"; but after all those were only so many defiled men and women, with all our vices as well as our virtues, counterpoised in every way among those ancient as last began to see the Oneness of God and loved to think and speak of Him as pure Light and Love and Reason. But it was the Jews who first rightly thought of God as the One Supreme Being and Creator of all things, and making man in His own image. Afterward, to be sure, the Jews long thought of God only as their own Jewish God, a "Lord of Hosts," setting their battles for them, or else as a kind of awful Oriental Sovereign in the skies, writing laws and punishing all ignorance and disobedience with almost relentless anger and cruelty.

Here and there, though, as time went on, there were traces in Jewish religious thought of another and far vordier idea of God. For instance, the prophet Malachi said: "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?" You see, it was just a faint glimmer of the same great thought of God as Father, and of Love as His true character and so the rule of our life in Him and with one another.

So that when Jesus came, with His God-given Spirit, it was just this idea, among all the counterpoised ideas of His people—the idea of God's Fatherhood—on which He seized as the real truth about God and then gave to it all the force of a fresh and full and final revelation from God. All Christianity was to be built up around this truth as its center.

Christianity was to be a religion of family life. Jesus would take just this most familiar thing, the daily human experience, the life of the family, and idealize it and spiritualize it and sanctify it and glorify it as the counterpoised life-in-God himself, and so make of it a religion for all men. The greatest inspiration in such a religion would come from the very simplicity of this central idea in it. Its greatest power would lie in its appeal to all that seems most real and most beautiful in life both in men and in God. Never mind, for the present, what other exponents of Christianity have tried to make of it. But consider only Jesus' own teaching in the simple gospels; and you will see that here, in this idealized family life of God and His human children, is the very heart of Christianity. Indeed, the final revelation on this point was all summed up in one great object-lesson, viz: the fact of the incarnation. He, Jesus, the eternal son of God, had come to earth and become also man, not only to tell us, but also to show us in himself the perfect son, what God the Father is and what we, who also are His sons, should be. This was the meaning of our human life—the one reason why we are here on this earth at all—why God made us and made us in His own image, as the Father's children, we should do our Heavenly Father's will. That will has but one law, the law of love; love and obedience toward all God above all love and service of our brother men as much as ourselves. Here is our ideal family life as Christians.

Will you say that what Jesus really preached was "the kingdom of God" and not the family of God? Well, then, remember how plainly He taught us that they are just one and the same thing. For did he not teach us to pray: "Our Father in heaven. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as in heaven?" But one of our own American poets has caught and fixed the same truth, too, very beautifully, it seems to me. "The kingdom come," Yeats bid it come about when Thy kingdom first began on earth. Thy kingdom was a home. A child, a woman and a man.

What a tragedy it is, then, that this simple ideal has come at length

to be so often overlaid and obscured by other ideas, even by Christians themselves. They lost their sense of proportion; they lost their judgment of relative spiritual values, even in what is written. St. Paul, for instance, even though he still proclaimed this family idea in our very text, yet he unconsciously changed the emphasis and directed our attention far too much from the human Jesus our brother to the glorified Christ as our lord and judge in heaven. The Greek mind, with its love of metaphysics, must needs occupy itself with the mere mode of God's existence within himself. The Roman mind, with its instincts of law and order, substituted out-rightly in the Roman church, the idea of a kingdom for that of the family. The medieval schoolmen, reviving Greek philosophy, tried to refine and define everything, even the mystical in the Lord's Supper, until they turned that into the material and the miraculous. Lutheranism could not let go the idea of law even under the gospel; and so preached justification instead of reconciliation. Calvinism saw only sovereignty instead of fatherhood in God. Anglicanism has always been too much inclined to think of the nation instead of the family in its religious life. Evangelicalism rightly emphasized personal religion, but too often forgot the fellowship of the whole. Puseyism threw the emphasis back again on corporate religion, to be sure, but it was in the life of a body rather than in the life of a father.

Is it any wonder, then, that with all these attempts to improve on the original, that the simple truth of the gospels, we should so often be distracted and bewildered as to what Christianity really is, and so lose the inspiration and comfort and strength which that first simple idea of it was meant to give us?

But now let us reverently test this idea of family life and see how it works out in the different parts and actual practice of Christianity. Let us take the theological side of Christianity; take the doctrine of the Trinity. We will not deny the difficulty, idea and distinction of "persons" in God as set forth, for instance, in the Nicene creed; but we will not concern ourselves over-very much about it. We loyally confess all that as part of the church's historic statement and defense of her corporate faith. But let us see what it means in our personal religious life, who and what else is God to us than just what Jesus taught us to call him, that is, "our Father," the giver of all life and light and strength to our bodies and our souls? Who and what is Jesus himself but a son, God's perfect son, and as the perfect son, our human brother, living for us and dying for us, his erring brethren to show us our Father's love and win us back again to him. And to what is the Holy Spirit? Nothing magical, nothing mysterious (indeed, how I wish that that misleading and repellant word "person" never had been used here). But, God the Holy Spirit? Who and what is he, but just what the creed calls him, the spirit which proceeds from the Father and the son, that is, the spirit of a father and a son, that is, the spirit of all true family life, the spirit of love and obedience and service?

Or take the ethical side of Christianity. Its system of moral principles of right living. What is its law of duty, as Jesus taught it? Not a law of more commandments any longer ("thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"); but again the simple law of family life, the law of love, making all commandments unnecessary but for Jesus had but one rule of life, for himself and for us, toward God: "I always do," he said, "the things which please my Father." And for the rest he said what you are all brothers; that is, go and do the actual deeds of brotherliness, of kindness and of love. What is sin in Jesus' eyes? Not a law broken, but justice violated, no such abstract unreal thing as that; but rather an intensely personal thing. Sin is a son's disobedience to a holy father's consequent pain (not anger), and forgiveness? This, too, is another personal act. It is the father's instant reconciliation with his penitent and returning prodigal son. And heaven? Just "my father's house" Jesus called it. And what is the refusal and so the loss of all that family joy and blessedness.

Or, once more, take the institutional side of Christianity. What is baptism, but just a new spiritual birth into God's family? Or confirmation, but just a father's blessing? Or the holy communion, but just a family meal; the Lord's supper; the celebration of a son's utterly self-sacrificing obedience; the memorial

of our dying brother's love; the pledge of his life not only given for us but also given to us; and so the symbol of what should be our obedience as sons and our brotherly love among ourselves. What is Christian marriage but the earthly symbol of that mystical union of Christ with his bride the church? And the church itself, what is that? Not an insurance company, not a saints' club, but God's "like unto earth, meant to be a real brotherhood and so part of our divine fellowship here, even with those in heaven.

Is it not plain enough now that in Jesus and his simple gospel, this family idea was meant to run all through Christianity and bind it all together in such a simple, beautiful, perfect whole?

Just two or three other thoughts in conclusion: Do not fall to see the greatness of this truth in its very simplicity. Once, you will remember, after Jesus had set out the way to test this simple gospel and they had come back rejoicing over their success, he was lifted up in the spirit and said: "I thank thee, O Father, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes." For ages, before Christ and since, as we have seen, men have tried to solve all the mysteries of truth and life in God by their own wisdom, and failed; failed just because they were not simple enough to believe that the solution lay in anything so simple and familiar as this family idea. But every little child in the world understands such a religion, and loves to. For the very first word it learns to speak, the world over, is "father"; its very first word of prayer is "Our Father, who art in heaven." So with all of us, when we are ready to give over our own wisdom and self-sufficiency and "become" as Jesus said, "like little children," we find that the whole necessary truth about God, the whole meaning of our human life, lies right there in it. It is this very simplicity which makes the greatness of Christianity and fits it to become a universal religion, a religion for all men.

Next, always remember that this simple Christianity of Jesus is a good enough religion to live by, and also to die by. Your growing Christian experience will teach you this. All the elaborate apparatus of salvation of which some Christians are so proud and so fond and all the subtleties and mystifications about Christianity which you use to think so important will seem less and less so to you as they certainly do to God. Jesus' one simple law of duty is guide enough for our life. We have an understanding and merciful father and an affectionate and sympathetic brother to be our example and comfort and help in all our earthly trials. We have what was meant to be a true family fellowship in the church. And at the earthly end it will be enough, will it not, just to fall asleep, confidently and peacefully, in the bosom of our heavenly father and his eternal love.

And, then, lastly, try, from the very start, to keep this religious family ideal in your own actual home life. It will be hard to make much of it in your religious life if its beauty and power are being constantly mutilated and denied in the spirit of your home life. Ask yourselves, you Christian fathers, how faithful or unfaithful you have been, both by teaching and example, in inculcating in your children's minds this same religious ideal, this Christian family life of love and reverence and obedience and service, both in heaven and on earth.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

of our dying brother's love; the pledge of his life not only given for us but also given to us; and so the symbol of what should be our obedience as sons and our brotherly love among ourselves. What is Christian marriage but the earthly symbol of that mystical union of Christ with his bride the church? And the church itself, what is that? Not an insurance company, not a saints' club, but God's "like unto earth, meant to be a real brotherhood and so part of our divine fellowship here, even with those in heaven.

Is it not plain enough now that in Jesus and his simple gospel, this family idea was meant to run all through Christianity and bind it all together in such a simple, beautiful, perfect whole?

Just two or three other thoughts in conclusion: Do not fall to see the greatness of this truth in its very simplicity. Once, you will remember, after Jesus had set out the way to test this simple gospel and they had come back rejoicing over their success, he was lifted up in the spirit and said: "I thank thee, O Father, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes." For ages, before Christ and since, as we have seen, men have tried to solve all the mysteries of truth and life in God by their own wisdom, and failed; failed just because they were not simple enough to believe that the solution lay in anything so simple and familiar as this family idea. But every little child in the world understands such a religion, and loves to. For the very first word it learns to speak, the world over, is "father"; its very first word of prayer is "Our Father, who art in heaven." So with all of us, when we are ready to give over our own wisdom and self-sufficiency and "become" as Jesus said, "like little children," we find that the whole necessary truth about God, the whole meaning of our human life, lies right there in it. It is this very simplicity which makes the greatness of Christianity and fits it to become a universal religion, a religion for all men.

Next, always remember that this simple Christianity of Jesus is a good enough religion to live by, and also to die by. Your growing Christian experience will teach you this. All the elaborate apparatus of salvation of which some Christians are so proud and so fond and all the subtleties and mystifications about Christianity which you use to think so important will seem less and less so to you as they certainly do to God. Jesus' one simple law of duty is guide enough for our life. We have an understanding and merciful father and an affectionate and sympathetic brother to be our example and comfort and help in all our earthly trials. We have what was meant to be a true family fellowship in the church. And at the earthly end it will be enough, will it not, just to fall asleep, confidently and peacefully, in the bosom of our heavenly father and his eternal love.

And, then, lastly, try, from the very start, to keep this religious family ideal in your own actual home life. It will be hard to make much of it in your religious life if its beauty and power are being constantly mutilated and denied in the spirit of your home life. Ask yourselves, you Christian fathers, how faithful or unfaithful you have been, both by teaching and example, in inculcating in your children's minds this same religious ideal, this Christian family life of love and reverence and obedience and service, both in heaven and on earth.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be in every home in the land.

And you young people, do you gladly respond to all this? Or, on the other hand, do you not see what danger there is that, in your eagerness to please, you are drifting far away from this right spirit of love and reverence and obedience? Do you not see that, in spite of your willfulness and false spirit of independence, there are still family ties and home obligations which, both in God's sight and your own, must forever rest upon you? But, unhappily, there are too many families where the only ideal is that of parental sovereignty and a hard law of commandments, to be enforced by blows. Oh, how far away this is from that true fatherhood and true sonship which carry with them, all through life, the joy and blessedness of a happy comradeship and a real brotherliness. But if you want to see and have your children see, how beautiful such a Christian family life can be, get and read "President Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I wish the book could be