

That every man should bear rule in

F.B. Meyer:

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his own house. Esther 1. 22.

ONE of the pre-requisites in choosing a presiding officer in the early Church was that he should rule well his own house; "for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" (1 Tim. iii. 4, 5).

When a man bears rule as husband and father in the love of God, there is no issue of commands which conflict with primary obligations; rather than that, his authority represents the Divine authority. As Christ received his authority from the Father, so does a man derive and receive his from Christ; and in the recognition of his delegated right and ability to lead, the entire household becomes well ordered. The relaxation of the bonds of authority and government in our homes is one of the saddest symptoms of national decay, as it is among the predicted signs of the end (2 Tim. iii. 2, 3).

But, on the other hand, you must show yourself worthy to lead and rule your home. Your character must be such as to command respect. Those whom God has put into your charge require that you do not use your authority for selfish or capricious ends. Above all, love is the source of the truest authority. We count nothing hard or irksome that we do for those we love. Show love, and you will win love; and on love will be built respect, reverence, and obedience.

One of the most eloquent of modern Italians has said truly: "You can only obtain the exercise of your rights by deserving them, through your own activity, and your own spirit of love and sacrifice!" Christ's golden rule holds good in every phase of life; "In all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."