

Discussion Questions: Living in Freedom 5th Commandment: Honor Your Parents - Exodus 20:12

Drawn from the February 2, 2025 sermon by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Opener: Other than life, what was the best gift your parents gave you? How might you have answered this at age fifteen? How has your answer changed (if it has)?

Read Exodus 20:12 NLT

“Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.”

The fifth commandment is often considered a bridge across the commandments. The first four deal with our relationship to God – the proper way to worship and please him. The last five deal with our relationships to other human beings. The fifth commandment speaks both about parents and also about God’s promise. It binds our obligations to God with our obligations to others.

The first five commandments all use the phrase “The LORD your God” which is absent in the last five. Also the relationship between parents and children is the most fundamental of all human relationships. It’s the first relationship we experience, the one that defines us more fully than any other. It’s the closest thing on earth to our relationship with God – who is incidentally called our Father (Matthew 5:16) and likened to a mother as well (Isaiah 66:13).

1. In what ways is your relationship with your parents like your relationship with God?
In what ways is it different?

2. What have your parents done for you that mirrors what God also does – in terms of protection, provision, and discipline?

3. Notice the words “then you will live a long full life”. Why would honoring our parents tend to produce longevity in our lives? What is the cost of rebellion?

What it means to honor at each stage of life

As a child, I honor my parents by obeying and respecting them.

Ephesians 6:1-3

¹ Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. ² “Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: ³ If you honor your father and mother, things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.

4. Why is it important for young children to learn the value of obedience and respect? If you are a parent, what would make it easier for your children to honor you?

As an adult, I honor my parents by accepting them.

Acceptance means:

- Realizing that God used them to bring you into the world. You owe them your life, regardless of the parenting skills used.
- Listening to what they have to say:
Listen to your father, who gave you life, and don't despise your mother when she is old. Proverbs 23:22 NLT
- Acceptance includes forgiveness:
If you curse your father or mother, your lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness. Proverbs 20:20 TNIV

5. How have you tried to apply these in your own relationship with your parents?

As an adult, I honor my parents by appreciating and affirming them.

Deuteronomy 26:11 (New Living Translation)

Go and celebrate because of all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household.

Proverbs 3:27 (New Living Translation)

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it's in your power to help them.

6. What good can you say about the effort and sacrifice your parents extended for you?

As an adult – I honor my parents by caring for them.

1 Timothy 5:8 (New Living Translation)

But those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers.

7. Are you facing any challenges related to caring for your aging parents? If so, how are you trying to honor them in this stage of their lives?

Group Prayer time: Do you consider your relationship with your parents is (or was) such that it is easy to honor them? Does anyone struggle with their children not honoring them? For some people in your small group this may have been a very tough lesson to do, and yet in the process of working through the subject of honor there can be a healing and new sense of peace. Pray for one another for the things that came up in your time together doing this lesson.

For personal reflection in the group or on your own:

The principle of honor starts in the home, but extends beyond it to other areas of life and ultimately to honoring God. Obedient and honoring children can become a treasure to parents and society as a whole; growing up with the grace and honor to give to many other key relationships in life. Honor and respect taught in the home breeds and multiplies outside it for a lifetime.

Building a foundation of honor.

- a. **The Biblical pattern is that honor is learned through our relationship to our parents.** Eph 6:2—"*Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise.*"
- b. **We learn to honor "God-given" institutions of government and justice.** 1 Pet. 2:17—"*Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.*"
- c. **That shows itself in honoring other people above ourselves.** Rom. 12:10—"*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.*"
Rom. 13:7—"*Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.*"
- d. **We realize that our personal happiness isn't our highest purpose; our purpose is to glorify God with all that He's given us.** 1Cor. 6:20—"*You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.*"
- e. **God's given a promise for this life.** Prov. 21:21—"*He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.*"
- f. **The ultimate goal, however, is eternal. This "culmination of honor" will be shown as we honor God in our eternal existence in His presence.** Rev. 7:12 says the angels will fall down before the throne saying, "*Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!*"

How has your relationship with your parents helped or hindered you in showing honor to other people?

How has it impacted how you honor God?

How well do you stay in touch with your parents? What could you do to include them more in your life?

Next week, February 9, pastor Jeff will cover "You shall not murder" and there will be discussion questions available in "Downloads" on the SCC website.