

INSIGHT

Don't you long for the warmth and security of a stable family? Isn't it great to look forward to going to a nice, comfortable, warm, home after a tiresome day at work? Although many desire to have these things going for them the sad case is that many people are the result of broken, unstable, and abusive homes. The family unit, which is the basis of a stable and nurturing society, is being threatened by the godlessness and selfishness that comes by being disobedient to God. The commandments given at Mt. Sinai are to be the fertilizer that makes the community flourish with the love of God. The particular command that begins to address the type of relationships that we should have in our community is the fifth commandment. This commandment is a transitional one.

The transition from Yahweh's expectation of His people in relation to Himself to His expectation of His people in relation to the human family is this commandment establishing a norm for the relationship with father and mother. —John Durham

You see, your relationship with God hangs on your personal conviction of the first commandment. Your relationship with your community hangs on your personal conviction of the fifth commandment. All of them, of course, are nothing without the first commandment being established. Without honor and respect for your parents and the elders in your community there is no reason to preserve life, tell the truth, honor your marriage and be satisfied with your self. Without honor and respect for your parents there is no respect for any kind of authority. The first four commandments focus on your relationship with God—the last six on our relationship with each other. It is no wonder, then, how many of the problems that plague our society can be traced back to the stability of the family unit. We are even hearing many community leaders speak of the importance of focusing on the stability of our families. Much, if not all, of the lack of respect for authority shown to our police and our leaders comes from the lack of attention to honor in the family. How can we, as a people of God, make an impact on our community in regard to this commandment? I believe God can work through us as He did through the nation of Israel at that time. Of course, in order for us to get to that point the first four commandments need to be a solid foundation in our heart.

(1 Pet 2:17) Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

The Heart of God: The Fifth Commandment God Among the Generations...

Key Text:

Exodus 20:12

"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

Theme:

This is the first commandment that carries a promise for those who keep it with a true heart. This is a transitional command. The first four deal with God's relationship with His covenant people and the next six focus on the dealings between the people of the covenant community. The root of the dealings with the community are established by the conviction of this fifth commandment. Those who regard their family relations with honor will pass this honor and respect to future generations and appropriately defer their honor to God above all. In families where disrespect and folly reign, probably the first four commands were held with loose convictions and the rest of them will also be held loosely as well.

Application:

Here are some practical suggestions:

1. **Call your parents.** Let them know your plans, your whereabouts, your struggles, rekindle communication!

Tell them often that you love them!

2. **See to their needs.** Not only physically or financially, but emotionally.

3. **Include them in your family.** Make them feel at home, make them part of your family plans.

4. **Learn to honor them!** As you get to know who they really are and the struggles they have been through, you will find newfound respect for them. If you have been a victim of their abuse or neglect, teach them and love them as you would any other person who needs to know about the love of Jesus.

May the Lord richly bless you!

SERMON OUTLINE

God Among the Generations...

I. The first four commands...

Exodus 20:2-11

1. Focus on our relationship with God.
2. Establish a deep conviction and set the stage for the type of relationship we are to have with each other.

II. The fifth commandment--a transitional one

Exodus 20:12

1. Focuses on the adult relationship with one's elderly parents.
2. Is the first commandment with a promise.
Ephesians 6:1-4
3. Teaches us to love and take care of our natural family first. *1 Timothy 5:1-4*
4. Brings a godly conviction into our family relationships.

III. What is honor?

Mark 7:1-13

1. Hebrew *kabad*. To be rich, abounding in glory and greatness. To be weighty, carry much weight
2. Greek *timao*. To fix a value upon; to prize. To fear.
3. To honor someone is the opposite of shaming.
4. To honor is to provide material needs; to place high value upon; to acknowledge their worth by word or deed.

IV. As it goes with your parents so it goes with God

Hebrews 12:5-11

1. Parents are to discipline.
2. God disciplines us for holiness
3. Verse 9--->Respect (honor) is a must!
4. How well you listened and obeyed your parents is reflected in your relationship with God.

V. Your relationship with the community

1. Commandments 6 through 10.
2. Goes as our relationship with our parents goes.
3. Reflects ultimately on our relationship with God.

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Warm-up:

Discuss some effective ways of disciplining children.

See To It

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

1. What could have caused this son to be stubborn and rebellious? Does any cause justify stubbornness or rebellion in a family?
2. What classified this son as being stubborn and rebellious? Why did the parents eventually had to bring him before the elders?
3. What made the situation change from a family matter to a community one? What does this say about those families who don't address stubbornness and rebellion in their household?

Seeing It Closer

1 Timothy 5:1-4

1. How is honor to be shown amongst the family and the brethren?
2. How is your religion to be put into practice amongst your family?
3. Do you see yourself owing something to your parents? Is there something to repay them?
4. What are some ways that you show honor to your mother and father? How does this reflect your relationship with God?

Getting To It:

Pray that above all we, as the church of Jesus Christ, may be ministers of reconciliation to all the members of our immediate family. If we cannot be ministers of peace with our immediate family, then we are simply playing the part (being hypocrites) when it comes to ministering to strangers.

Are there some members of your family you have had a tough time making peace with? What have been some things that have prevented you from practicing your religion? How do you see yourself being a peacemaker with them?