##### **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

**Lesson 8 - The Fifth Commandment: Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother**

**Exodus 20:12**

**Introduction:** We begin with a statement that is most quotable: “The world is passing through troublous times. The young people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint. They talk as if they knew everything, and what passes for wisdom with us is foolishness with them. As for the girls, they are forward, immodest, and unwomanly in speech, behavior, and dress.” I think this sounds familiar, and certainly describes our culture today. Actually the quote is out of a sermon preached by Peter the Hermit in 1274 AD!

In the last several years, even months, we have witnessed numerous school massacres; kids killing kids. Once again, when the killers are identified and they are only in their teens, many of us have the same question initially: “What kind of parents do these kids have?” It must be somewhat ironic that the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in 1962 that the Ten Commandments had no place in public education; that they should not even be visibly displayed. The Ten Commandments taught, read, and obeyed could surely have saved many lives and great horror in these past five decades. But no, America’s kids are “protected” from the Ten Commandments while encouraged to fill their minds full of scenes of graphic violence produced by Hollywood.

This fifth commandment, like all the others, is given by God *for us*; and not just for individual benefit, but also for collective and societal benefit.

# I. Honor father and mother

## A. Honor defined.

## 1. To attach weight or significance or value to.

## 2. To put in the place of superiority; to hold in high opinion; to reverence in the best sense of the word.

## B. Honor explained.

1. It should be obvious already, that this commandment is not given only to children that are minors. At whatever age, parents are due honor from their children. (Proverbs 23:22) Even after our parents’ death, the commandment lives!

### 2. Obviously, honor includes obedience (Ephesians 6:1-2).

#### a. See Ephesians 6:1. The simplicity of God’s Word is beautiful: “for this (obedience) is right.”

#### b. I Corinthians 11:3 The first thing a child should be taught is that they are responsible to authority and superiority in their lives, and no one on earth is exempt (not even Christ when here as a man).

### 3. Honor would include gratitude.

#### a. Watch a parent care for a child during the stages of relative helplessness in the child’s life.

#### b. Only the lowest form of life would fail to give the child proper care when that child, who did not ask to be born, is totally dependent upon the parents.

#### c. At the same time, the child should be taught that the parent made the effort and no matter how duty-bound or love-motivated the parent may have been, the child should be filled with gratitude that it was done. It is called *honor*!

### 4. Honor would include perpetual attention and care.

## C. Honor illustrated.

### 1. Luke 2:40-52 Jesus submitted to Joseph and Mary for thirty years, though still giving attention to His *Father’s* business.

### 2. Matthew 15:3-6 Jesus taught duty to parents in their aging days. The Pharisees (under guise of devotion to God) refused to help aged parents, saying their money was dedicated already to God. Jesus taught them to care for their parents. Our Savior called them hypocrites. (V7)

### 3. John 19:25-27 At Jesus’ last hour, He showed care for His mother. *What* *honor!*

4. William Barclay also points out that parental control, authority, and honor was not just a Jewish practice, nor is it simply a Christian theme. In both the Greek and Roman empires, stories abound where children (even into adulthood) showed, or were expected to show, the utmost honor to their parents.

# II. v12 the promise associated with the commandment

## A. Two great benefits not mentioned in the text itself. (These come from G. Campbell Morgan and from common sense.)

### 1. This commandment takes undue stress and pressure off a child while he is developing in character and mind.

#### a. A father takes a lot of pressure off a child by making certain decisions for them.

#### b. Some never have the pressure as a child of whether to go to church or where. Whether to attend questionable parties, movies, dances, etc.; those matters are decided for them while they are being developed to make right choices on their own at a later time.

#### c. Many more personal examples are possible.

### 2. The grace of God is shown in that “God calls the child to obey those whom, in the very nature of things, he loves.” (G. Campbell Morgan)

#### a. God intends the parent to obey Commandments one through four.

#### b. A parent who obeys the first four Commandments will love their child. How reasonable! God expects the child to honor those who love him/her the most!

## B. V12b The promise: long days upon the land given by God.

### 1. First a reminder**:** These are the terms of agreement to a covenant people. (Exodus 19:1-8) God purposed to give them the land of Canaan.

### 2. God warned them that they could be expelled from the land as the Canaanites were to be expelled.

#### a. Obey God’s laws and stay in Canaan.

#### b. Disobey God’s laws and the land will vomit them out. (Leviticus 18 and Deuteronomy 28)

### 3. If children are not taught to honor parent’s authority, rest assured they will disobey laws of God and man!

**Conclusion:** “Nothing is more certain than the fact that, if parents are to be honored, they must be honorable.” (G. Campbell Morgan) The parents represent God to the children. If we do not represent God in a way appropriate to godliness, how may we expect our children to honor us? Our lives must, at least somewhat, reflect the grace of God and the love of God. When they do, honor will come from the child and his life shall be the better for it and so will his whole society.