

The Ten Commandments

Commandment 5: Honour your father and mother

As I counsel people I come to realise how many broken relationships there are between parents and their children. Today's world is full of people who hate their mothers or their fathers or both. There are also many who hate their children. This is also applicable to in-laws. What is God's heart in this regard?

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.

1) The reason to honour your father and mother

- The primary reason that we are to honour our fathers and mothers is because God commands us to do so.
 - We cannot use the excuse that our mother or father treated us badly so we won't honour them.
 - The command to honour our parents is without the condition of them being good parents. It is a command to honour irrespective of type of parents they may have been – irrespective of how many mistakes they have made, irrespective of conscious bad decisions that they have made that have left a negative effect on our lives.
 - Even the Qur'an states: "Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them but address them in terms of honour. (Sura 17: 23)
- When children, our parents are our immediate authority over our lives
 - For a considerable time parents stand as it were in the place of God to their children, and therefore rebellion against their lawful commands has been considered as rebellion against God. (Adam Clarke's Commentary)
 - Ephesians 6: 1 – 2 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise"
 - The command to "obey your parents" precedes that to honour them thus indicating that they have a God given authority over the lives of their children. So for a child to honour his parents would mean that they need to submit to their authority and be obedient to them.
 - Proverbs 29: 15 "The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother."
- Jesus set us an example to follow.
 - John 14: 31 The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.
 - John 17: 1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you
 - John 19: 26 – 27 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is

your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

- Even whilst Jesus was dying he considered His mother.

2) How we honour our father and mother

- Sociological studies have increased appreciation for shame and honour as two pivotal values in ancient societies. As a noun, honour approximates our ideas of esteem, respect, (high) regard, or (good) reputation. Shame, the opposite of honour, approximates humiliation or loss of standing. (Holman Bible Dictionary)
- This precept therefore prohibits, not only all injurious acts, irreverent and unkind speeches to parents, but enjoins all necessary acts of kindness, filial respect, and obedience. We can scarcely suppose that a man honours his parents who, when they fall weak, blind, or sick, does not exert himself to the uttermost in their support. (Adam Clarke's Commentary)
- Show respect
 - Leviticus 19: 3 Each of you must respect his mother and father
- Loving submission
 - Matthew 21: 28 – 30 There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' 'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went." Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.
- Way we dishonour – bring shame on – our parents
 - Being foolish
 - Proverbs 10: 1 A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother.
 - Despising them
 - Proverbs 15: 20 A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish man despises his mother.
 - Robbing them
 - Proverbs 19: 26 He who robs his father and drives out his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace.
 - Cursing them
 - Proverbs 20: 20 If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness.
 - Mocks them
 - Proverbs 30: 17 The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures.

3) The benefits of honouring your father and mother

- We may live long in the land that the Lord is giving us.
- This would be equivalent to enjoying the blessings of God because the land that He was giving was His blessing upon His people. (Deuteronomy 28: 1 – 14)
- On the contrary He had commanded that they should obey Him otherwise He would take their land away from them and give it to other nations.
 - Deuteronomy 27: 16 Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or his mother.