

Notes: Sermon 8
The Fifth Commandment

Exodus 20:12

Honour your Father and Mother

Introduction

We're looking at the fifth commandment today. What does this commandment teach us?

- It teaches us that children should honour, love and obey their parents.
- It also teaches parents how they should raise their children to honour, love and obey them.
- This commandment also reminds us that as children learn to submit to authority in the home, so they also learn the principle of submitting to authority in other areas of life.

We're going to look at this commandment under three headings:

1. Children's responsibilities to parents (this time)
and then next time
2. Parents' responsibilities to children
3. Everyone's responsibilities to authority

Heading 1: Children's responsibilities to parents

So firstly, obeying our parents. As long as children and teenagers are in their parent's home they are to obey your parents. We see this said very clearly in Ephesians 6:1-3. You obey your parents, "Straight away, all the way, with a happy heart."

Secondly, honouring our parents. Children and young people are to honour their parents by loving them, and respecting them – don't mock them, criticise them, hurt them or threaten them. And remember God is giving authority to them. Rejecting your parents' authority is the first step on the road of rejecting God's authority.

We're still under the heading of Children's responsibilities to parents, and we're going to look now at Adults honouring their parents.

Most adults leave their parent's authority but the requirement to honour their parents will never go away, as long as they live. Listen to Alistair Begg: "To honour our parents is to care for them as age takes its long, slow, inevitable toll."

This brings us into extremely sensitive territory which we need to address in the church. What is our thinking? Is the care that we provided for our parents for their benefit or our own convenience? We as Christians have got to think and pray about these things. If there's a genuine need for a care home – well and good. But always, always, always, honour your father and mother.

Heading 2: Care for the elderly more generally

We miss the principle of the commandment if we think that this only has something to teach us about how we respect and honour our parents. The priority is our immediate family, but then there are principles which extend into society and the church.

With people generally living longer, we have an opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ by regularly visiting our brothers and sisters who are in care. There they are, unable to come to church, and you can go and read the Scriptures to them, and pray with them and encourage them in their "battles, fears, regrets and difficulties; comfort them in their distresses and losses."

By doing this, we will all benefit. We are not doing them a huge favour as many in our culture appear to think. The Scriptural position is that the younger will be blessed by the older. (See Proverbs). And we all need to grow into the sort of people who are examples in righteousness, and can graciously and patiently pass on wisdom and instruction.

Conclusion

Romans 13:7 tells us it's time for us to show honour to whom honour is due.

So what changes do you need to make in your attitude towards your parents, towards those who are older than you and also towards God Himself??

Do you show respect to those who are older and show care to those in your church who are in need of your help and encouragement.

Finally, if your attitude towards this commandment is "Oh that's a bunch of nonsense..." then be sure that you have never submitted to God.