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Teaching Notes

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The Fifth Commandment: Honor Your Father and Mother

Exodus 20:12

Exodus 20:1-17 And God spoke all these words:

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

6 but showing love to a thousand *generations* of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.

11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

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

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

I. What Is Commanded

vs. 12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

A. The Meaning of the Word Itself

1. "Honor" here related to word for "glory" or "weight"
2. It means to give proper glory to your father and mother in their position

B. The Honor We Owe to God

Psalm 22:23 You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

Exodus 14:4 "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." And they did so."

Honor offered to God here is the glory of His name... His reputation will be held in honor

Acts 19:13-17 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." 14 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor.

Fear is part of the honor we pay to God

Leviticus 10:1-3 Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. 2 So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the LORD spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.

Deuteronomy 28:58-59 "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God, 59 then the LORD will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

Outward physical worship is a form of honor to God

Psalm 50:23 He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God."

BUT the honor must be more than outward only, but must go to the heart

Matthew 15:8-9 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

We must honor God with our wealth

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops

We honor God when we give Him credit for our salvation

Psalm 50:15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me."

The central honor is obedience

Numbers 20:12 But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

Numbers 27:14 for when the community rebelled at the waters in the Desert of Zin, both of you disobeyed my command to honor me as holy before their eyes." (These were the waters of Meribah Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin.)

We must honor God above any other human being, and if we don't we will be judged

1 Samuel 2:29-30 Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel?' 30 "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever.' But now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.

C. Honoring Human Beings

1. Respect for position of authority

Malachi 1:6 "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?'

2. Esteem for the person in the heart; reputation

2 Samuel 23:18-19 Abishai the brother of Joab son of Zeruiah was chief of the Three. He raised his spear against three hundred men, whom he killed, and so he became as famous as the Three. Was he not held in greater honor than the Three? He became their commander, even though he was not included among them.

3. Words and actions of honor

4. Outward trappings of honor

Esther 6:1-11 That night the king could not sleep; so he ordered the book of the chronicles, the record of his reign, to be brought in and read to him. 2 It was found recorded there that Mordecai had exposed Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, who had conspired to assassinate King Xerxes. 3 "What honor and recognition has Mordecai received for this?" the king asked. "Nothing has been done for him," his attendants answered. 4 The king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the palace to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows he had erected for him. 5 His attendants answered, "Haman is standing in the court." "Bring him in," the king ordered. 6 When Haman entered, the king asked him, "What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?" Now Haman thought to himself, "Who is there that the king would rather honor than me?" 7 So he answered the king, "For the man the king delights to honor, 8 have them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king has ridden, one with a royal crest placed on its head. 9 Then let the robe and horse be entrusted to one of the king's most noble princes. Let them robe the man the king delights to honor, and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, 'This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!'" 10 "Go at once," the king commanded Haman. "Get the robe and the horse and do just as you have suggested for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate. Do not neglect anything you have recommended." 11 So Haman got the robe and the horse. He robed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city streets, proclaiming before him, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!"

a. clothing

Exodus 28:2 Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him dignity and honor.

Exodus 28:40 Make tunics, sashes and headbands for Aaron's sons, to give them dignity and honor.

b. seats of honor

Jeremiah 52:32 [The King of Babylon] spoke kindly to [Jehoiachin] and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

c. privileges

Exodus 8:9 Moses said to Pharaoh, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile."

d. dramatic displays

1 Kings 3:13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for-- both riches and honor-- so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.

2 Chronicles 17:5 The LORD established the kingdom under his control; and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so that he had great wealth and honor.

e. social customs and displays

[Joseph's brothers to Joseph as ruler of Egypt] Genesis 43:28 They replied, "Your servant our father is still alive and well." And they bowed low to pay him honor.

1 Samuel 15:30 Saul replied, "I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God."

2 Chronicles 32:33 Hezekiah rested with his fathers and was buried on the hill where the tombs of David's descendants are. All Judah and the people of Jerusalem honored him when he died. And Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.

D. Specifically Honoring Father and Mother

1. Note command is equally strong for BOTH father and mother
2. Old Testament clearly patriarchal... father the clear head of the family
3. BUT honor must be given to BOTH father and mother
4. Christ's understanding of the command
5. To honor father and mother means
 - to esteem them above yourself in your heart
 - to fear and reverence them
 - to obey them
 - to give them outward trappings of honor and respect
 - to speak to them and of them in an honorable way
 - to provide for their needs

II. What Is Promised

- A. Paul: "The First Command with a Promise"
- B. Long Life in the Land
 1. Directly tied to Old Covenant promise of the land

2. Later in Deuteronomy, “blessings” and “curses” set before the people
3. Central curse for disobedience = eviction from the Promised Land

Deuteronomy 4:25-27 *After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time-- if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing evil in the eyes of the LORD your God and provoking him to anger, 26 I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you this day that you will quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You will not live there long but will certainly be destroyed. 27 The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and only a few of you will survive among the nations to which the LORD will drive you.*

4. Thus this promise of long life in the land is attached to ALL the covenant of God

Deuteronomy 4:40 *Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the LORD your God gives you for all time.*

Deuteronomy 5:33 *Walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.*

C. The Connection Between Honoring Parents and Long Life

Deuteronomy 32:46-47 *"Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. 47 They are not just idle words for you-- they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."*

1. The children do not come into the world understanding the commands of God
2. The commands are not idle words... they were the very life of the Israelites in the Promised Land
3. Thus the parents were responsible to teach all these commands to their children

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 *These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, 2 so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. 3 Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you. 4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*

4. If basic obedience to the parents was not well-established, all other commands would fall apart... this was the link to everything
5. Eventually the death penalty awaited a rebel personally... and the national death penalty awaited a rebellious nation

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 *If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, 19 his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. 20 They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard." 21 Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid.*

6. More generally, long life is connected to a wise life

Proverbs 3:13-18 *Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, 14 for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. 15 She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. 16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. 18 She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.*

NOTE: the first and primary teachers of wisdom in Proverbs are the parents:

Proverbs 1:8-9 *Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. 9 They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.*

III. Why the Command is So Important

Two Great Commandments

Table #1: Love the Lord... vertical relationship

Table #2: Love Your Neighbor... horizontal relationships

A. The Essential Nature of Human Life on Earth

1. Constant physical provision needed at the beginning of life

2 Corinthians 12:14 *Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.*

2. Constant physical provision needed at the end of life
3. Families responsible for this provision

1 Timothy 5:4, 8 *But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. ...8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

This command then stands over all other commands of human relationship

B. How then Will You Obey Any Command??

1. Children come into the world a blank slate when it comes to the commands of God
2. The commands must be mediated to the child by adults
3. God has ordained parents to do that job
4. A child that will not obey this command will not obey any command

C. How then Will You Believe in the Lord??

1. Parents in effect stand in the place of God in the child's life
2. As infants, they literally know nothing of God
3. Then little by little, they learn basic virtues from parents... first by life experience, then by verbal instruction, then by Biblical teaching
4. Rebellion against parents thus is a direct affront to the gospel and to faith in Christ

D. Disobedience to this Begins a Life of Rebellion to All Authority

Romans 13:1-2 *Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.*

E. That Rebellion Brings Great Disorder to the Home, the Church, and Eventually the World

1. A submissive relationship to the parents is at the root of a healthy family life
2. One rebellious child can dominate a family and force the entire family to revolve around him/her
3. The home is the basic building block of the rest of human society... a disorderly home means a disorderly world

F. That Life of Rebellion Unchecked Ends Up in Hell

Romans 1:29-32 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their **parents**; 31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. **32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.**

2 Timothy 3:1-2 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy

1 Timothy 1:8-9 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. 9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, 10 for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers-- and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine 11 that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

IV. Why the Command is So Difficult

A. Because Children are Essentially Sinful

1. The doctrine of original sin is biblical and proven out by experience all over the world

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2. Children do not have to be taught how to rebel

“Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered: he wants what he wants... his bottle, his mother’s attention, his playmate’s toys, his uncle’s watch, or whatever. Deny him these and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness which would be murderous were he not so helpless. He is dirty; he has no morals, no knowledge, and no developed skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, but all children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in their self-centered world of infancy, given free reign

to their impulsive actions to satisfy every want, every child would grow up a criminal, a killer, a thief, and a rapist.” Police Study in San Francisco on Juvenile Delinquency, cited by Jim Elliff

3. Two basic goals of every child: to run his/her own life... to run yours too, if possible

B. Because Parents are Essentially Sinful

1. Parents are hard to obey because they make mistakes, are hypocrites, are not perfect role models, don't have perfect wisdom
2. Sometimes parents are overly harsh and dictatorial
3. Sometimes parents are aloof, detached, or permissive and let the kids run wild
4. Kids are specially attuned to parental flaws... and imitate them far more readily than parental virtues
5. All of this undermines parental authority
6. BUT the principle is still established in scripture

Genesis 9:20-26 Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. 21 When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. 22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said, "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers." 26 He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem.

1 Peter 2:18 Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

Biblical submission is not dependent upon the godliness of the one to whom you are commanded to submit

V. Godly Limitations of the Command

A. “In the Lord” = Not Contradictory to God’s Commands

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Parental Authority Not Absolute!!

Acts 4:19 *But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God."*

B. Not Above the Lord

Matthew 10:34-39 *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-- 36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' 37 "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; 38 and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."*

Our honor for our parents should never be above our honor for Christ Himself

Some parents may not be believers, and the Lord said we must never allow allegiance to parents to block our higher allegiance to follow Christ

Matthew 8:21-22 *Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

In Jesus' way of thinking, our allegiance to the family of God is higher than that of our allegiance to natural and unbelieving parents

Matthew 12:47-50 *Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." 48 He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."*

C. Significant Changes at Adulthood and Marriage

1. At marriage a man sets up his own home, and his wife is to come under his headship

Genesis 2:24 *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

2. At adulthood, a man's honor for his parents changes... he must make key life decisions as he sees best

John 2:3-4 *When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."*

VI. The Present State of Parenting

A. Foolishness

Proverbs 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

1. Proverbs: foolishness = self-centeredness
2. Proverbs: foolishness = wickedness

B. Self-centeredness: Symptoms (Reb Bradley)

- Expects to have own way; expresses blatant irritation when desires are thwarted
- Never happy; complains and whines constantly; always discontent
- Always complains about food set before them
- Expects “extras” when eating out; experience is ruined if they don’t get these extras
- Expects for life to be exciting; demands entertainment; frequently bored
- Impatient; demands parent’s immediate attention
- Thinks he has rights to personal decisions
- Disrespectful and familiar with adults
- Requires bribery for obedience
- Unappreciative; never thankful; not easily satisfied; think they deserve everything they receive
- Resents work or anything that requires self-discipline
- Lazy; habitually goofs off; looks for ways to get out of work
- In response to assigned chores—roll their eyes; complain; disappear—before, during, after task; does as little as possible
- The home is a “child-run” home

C. How to Raise a Selfish Brat

1. Strive for their affection above all else
 - Be intimidated by their displeasure
 - Kill your desire to be firm with them
 - When you do discipline, immediately offer to get them a snack
 - After giving a command, seem to ask for approval by saying weakly “Okay??”
 - [Single parents, blended families] Abdicate any discipline at all in the hopes of being “buddies”
 - Avoid being the “bad guy” at all costs... strive to “keep the peace” no matter what

2. Put their happiness at highest priority level... LIVE FOR THEIR HAPPINESS!!

- Be sure your kids learn that what makes them happy is the most important thing in the world to you
- Use their desires to bribe them into obedience... find out what they like and give it to them so they will obey you (e.g. candy bars for good behavior in checkout line)
- Fire youth ministers who fail to entertain your teens to their satisfaction
- Make family schedule and choices revolve around what makes kids happiest

3. Shelter your children from all trials, discomfort, inconveniences, and suffering

- Never make them wait!! Give immediate attention to any child as soon as they want it, especially while talking to another adult... Give them the sense “Little darling, you are the most important person in the universe!! How can I serve you?”
- Do your level best to weed out of their lives every single little discomfort so they can live in ease... get their rooms looking just how they like it, if they're too hot or cold, adjust the temperature to their satisfaction
- Come when they call you
- Give them their favorite foods, and only their favorite foods; if they don't like what you have served them, ask what they would like instead
- Never allow them to be bored!! Remind them of all the toys you've bought them, or if they have used them all up, buy them some new ones... think of yourself like a recreation director on a cruise ship
- If they are having trouble with a teacher or other adult, go give that adult a piece of your mind; take them out of the class if the problems persist

4. Avoid giving children responsibilities

- Pick up after them
- Clean their rooms for them, even into the teen years
- Feed them well, whether they work or not
- Keep them in constant entertainment

5. Indulge your children's material & entertainment desires

- Keep them in the latest fashion trends
 - But whatever they desire for Christmas or birthdays
 - If they don't like the gift you select, take it back and get what they want
6. Allow them to share as equal partners in parental decisions
 - Sizzler's or McDonalds... be the hero!!
 - Ask their input constantly
 - Allow them veto power
 7. Allow them to choose whether or not they will obey you
 8. Withhold discipline from them

If kids roll their eyes at you, disregard you as unimportant, laugh you off when you try to give input, and generally treat you with disrespect, you know that you have succeeded in raising up one more child with incredibly strong **SELF-ESTEEM!!!**