

The Ten Commandments
Lesson 13: Honoring Parents (Part 2)
Recognizing And Valuing Father and Mother

1. Honoring Father and Mother in Jesus' Day

When we turn the pages of the New Testament, we find the command to honor father and mother as real as ever. Though times change, the human heart does not, and the needs of parents and children remain constant. Jesus understands this. He is the Lawgiver who created the family and knows what is needed to fulfill His design.

- a. First, Jesus sets the perfect example for us by the way that He honored His earthly father, Joseph, and His mother, Mary. Let's summarize **Luke 2:41-52**.
 - i. Joseph and Mary faced some surprises in raising Jesus. When they found Jesus with the teachers in the Temple, what did Mary say to Him according to verse 48?
 - ii. How did Jesus respond to his parents' concern (verse 49)?
 - iii. How did Jesus honor His heavenly Father in this incident and throughout His years of growing up in Nazareth (verse 52)?
 - iv. What does this passage reveal about how Jesus honored Mary and Joseph?

Mary was surprised that Jesus was there teaching in the Temple, and He seems to have been amazed that she was so surprised, because He asked, *"Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"* (NKJV). In this, His first recorded ministry in the Temple, Jesus was honoring His heavenly Father. But He obediently left with Mary and Joseph, continuing *"in subjection to them"* as He grew older. He continued *"increasing in wisdom...and in favor with God and men,"* a testimony to the way that He honored His heavenly Father and His earthly parents.

- b. The book of Isaiah contains several prophecies about the coming Messiah, one of which points to His daily relationship with His Father. **Isaiah 50:4-9** is part of one of the "Servant Songs," a prophecy about the Messiah, verses 5—6 particularly pointing to Christ's crucifixion. **Isaiah 50:4** points to Christ's preparation for His ministry. In light of what we just discussed in **Luke 2:46-49**, how did Jesus honor His Father each day?
 - i. Isaiah prophesied that the Lord would awaken the Messiah *"morning by morning...to listen as a disciple."* As a result, Jesus would learn much about the Word of God, about ministry, and about what to say as a disciple of His Father. He would be able *"to sustain the weary one with a word"*—the word by God in those early morning meetings.
 - ii. Years later, as He ministered, Jesus declared that He spoke *"the things which I heard from Him [the Father]."* In **John 8:27**, the apostle John focused further attention on the fact that Jesus *"had been speaking to them about the Father."* Jesus' testimony of His relationship with the father remained, *"I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."*
- c. Read **Matthew 3:13-17**. What testimony did the Father give about His Son at the beginning of Jesus' ministry?
- d. The Transfiguration occurred during Jesus' third year of ministry. Look at the account in **Matthew 17:1-8**. What did the Father say about Jesus (verse 5)?

- e. **John 8** presents a confrontation between Jesus and certain Jews about His teaching and His relationship to God the Father. They maligned Jesus and questioned His integrity. What did Jesus say about His relationship to His Father in **John 8:42, 49**?
- f. What did Jesus say to His Father, at the end of His ministry (**John 17:4-8**)?

Jesus continued to obey Mary and Joseph as He grew up. When He began His ministry, God declared at His baptism, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"*. God reiterated His pleasure in His Son after Jesus had completed three years of ministry. Everything Jesus had said or done pleased and honored the Father; nothing that our Savior did or said was ever the result of self-will. Giving personal testimony, Jesus confidently declared that He came from God, sent at His Father's initiative. He then stated clearly, *"I honor My Father"* (**John 8:49**).

- g. Jesus knew the heart of his Father and the importance of honoring one's parents. But in **Mark 7:1-13**, He confronts some Pharisees about honoring tradition more than the Word of God. What were the Pharisees concerned about, according to verses 1-5?
 - i. What problematic attitude of the Pharisees did Jesus address in Mark 7, particularly in verses 6-8?
 - ii. Look carefully at verses 9-13. What specific command had the Pharisees ignored? As you look at these verses realize that the word Corban originally referred to a gift dedicated to God (like those in Leviticus 2:1, 4, 12, 13), but some had begun to designate certain "gifts" to excuse themselves from caring for parents.
- The Pharisees had a rigid hand-washing rule, a tradition that did not come from the Law of Moses, but from elders who came after the Babylonian captivity (sixth century B.C.).
- They even had a certain way of washing their hands, as well as cups, pitchers, and so on. Jesus' disciples failed to do this, and the Pharisees caught them. Their criticism of the disciples was clearly aimed at Jesus and His teaching.
- Jesus immediately bypassed their meaningless regulations and directed His words at their hearts. Jesus quotes a prophecy of Isaiah, pointing out that they were only paying lip service to God by trying to enforce ways of doing things that had no intrinsic value. Their rules had no value because people, not God created them. Thus, they were "far from" the Lord.
- Specifically, instead of honoring their parents by taking care of their parents' financial needs, they had crafted a way to use money for themselves or for some self-promoting religious exercise.
- In exalting their traditions and laws above God's Word, they were dishonoring God and their parents.
- h. In **John 19:25-27**, what did Jesus tell His mother, Mary, to do? What did He instruct John to do? What is the apostle's own testimony in verse 27 (remember John is writing this account)?
 - i. Jesus knew that honoring father and mother lasted a lifetime. Although Joseph apparently died sometime before Jesus' ministry began, Mary lived for many years after the Resurrection. Even on the cross, Jesus wanted to make sure she was taken care of after His death.
 - ii. He told her to regard John as her own son, and John was to regard her as his own mother. Jesus made sure Mary would be cared for in the best way possible, in the loving home that John gladly provided.

2. Honoring Father and Mother Today

God designed the family as the basic unit of life on earth, with fathers and mothers bearing children to fill and subdue the earth. His intention was for people to reveal His character and care in daily life which was His purpose in creating us. And, when we become new creatures through Christ, God's design is for us, as believers, to move throughout the earth, making disciples of those in every nation. God wants fathers and mothers to trust and obey Him, and He wants children to honor their parents throughout life. This becomes even more evident as we read the New Testament. The truth of honoring father and mother is a thread running throughout the Scriptures from start to finish.

- a. Look at **Ephesians 6:1-3**. What will be the result of honoring father and mother ?
 - i. What added information is offered by **Colossians 3:20**?

God's call is clear: children are commanded to obey their parents "in the Lord," pointing to the child's obedient relationship with Jesus Christ. Obedience must match the boundaries given in the Word of God, never overstepping those clearly marked principles and precepts. A child should never obey something that is evidently against the Word of God. As a child obeys his or her parents, agreeing with the Lord and His Word, that child is doing what "*is right*".

- b. Let's look at Hebrews 12:5-10. What are the marks of a parent-child relationship? How does "discipline" or "child training" by a parent show love to a child?
 - i. What is the expected response from a son or daughter who is being disciplined, according to verse 9? What are some of the benefits of such discipline?
- c. What about taking care of parents as they age, especially those who are widowed? Read **1 Timothy 5:3-8**. After commanding the church to care for widows who had no family to care for them (verse 3), what guidelines did Paul set forth (verse 4)?
 - i. What is the call to each family member in verse 8?
- d. As we have seen, not everyone responds correctly to father and mother. What do you find in **Romans 1:30**? (You may want to read **Romans 1:18-32** to understand the context).
- e. We must be aware of the dangers of the demise of homelife and look for ways to better deal with dishonor and disobedience to parents. What insights do you gain from **2 Timothy 3:1-5**; **1 Timothy 1:8-11**; and **Proverbs 30:11**?

3. For Me to Follow God

Honoring your father and mother is a command dear to the heart of God. When Jesus walked on earth, He showed us through example and through exhortation what it meant to honor the Heavenly Father as well as our earthly father and mother. We must ever remember as believers and followers of Christ, that He lives in us to empower us and guide us first in obeying, pleasing, and honoring our Father. Then because of His Father-pleasing life in us, He will guide us in showing proper honor not only to our Heavenly Father, but to our

earthly parents as well. We must ever depend on Him to guide us so that we honor our parents in the best way possible.

Apply

- a. "Honor your father and mother." In what ways are your parents or grandparents valuable to you now and how have they been valuable in the past? How may they be valuable in the days ahead? What about your spouse's parents? They, too, are to be honored. Pray, think through, and then write some of the ways your father and mother, grandparents, and parents-in-law are of value. Give thanks to God for these treasures.
- b. One of the ways to honor father and mother is to *Pray for them*. Pray for God's will, God's work, and God's blessing in your parents' lives, trusting God for how that will be done by Him. If you have had some difficult years with your parents, you can still pray for them. **Luke 6:28** says, "*Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*" While the home should never be a place of such difficulties, sometimes it is. Some children are maligned for following Christ. **Matthew 5:44** says, "*Pray for those who persecute you.*" **Romans 12:14** adds, "*Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not.*" Others have had delightful years in your home. Thank the Lord, pray for, and bless your parents as well. You have much for which to be thankful.
- c. Write two letters, one to your father and one to your mother. If one or both are no longer living, write the letter to the Lord, expressing your heart to Him about them. This is one way to show them honor.
- d. Plus... If possible, it would be good to go see your parents or if you cannot do that now, give them a call and tell them how much you appreciate them. Thank them for what they have meant, what they have done, what they have given.
- e. **What If...?** What if you were adopted or are part of a blended family. It is important to thank and honor those who have cared for you regardless of how much or how little. They need to be encouraged and you need to express gratitude and honor for the life you have been given—first to the Lord, then to those who raised you.
- f. Even if you faced abandonment or rejection in some way, you have a life now for which you can be grateful and you have the opportunity to know, love, and follow the Lord Jesus. That is an eternal treasure for which to give abundant praise and thanks to your Heavenly Father.

Parents need to be encouraged, and children should express gratitude and honor to their parents for giving them life!

Homework: Read Genesis 4; Exodus 20:13; and Exodus 21:12-14.

Lesson Topics: Do Not Murder, The Birth of Murder, and The Law of Moses Speaks