

Bethany Fellowship Hall SS Class
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The Fifth Commandment

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.

Deuteronomy 5:16: Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Its Meaning: What does "honor" your parents mean?

Not to physically abuse them:

Ex 21:15: Anyone who attacks his father or mother must be put to death

Not to curse them:

Ex 21:17: Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death (cp Lev 20:9)

Respect them:

Lev 19:3: Each of you must respect his mother and father

Listen to their teaching:

Prov 1:8: Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching (cp Prov 4:1, 5:1, 6:20, etc.)

Obeys them:

Deut 21:18: 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 ...

Col 3:20: Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord (cp Eph 6:1-3)

Help them in old age:

Prov 23:22: Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old (cp Matt 15:3-9)

1 Tim 5:8: 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 (also v 16)

Its Seriousness: How does God view this?

Death penalty for disobedience:

Striking parents: Ex 21:15

Cursing parents: Ex 21:17

Stubborn rebellion: Deut 21:18-21

Cursed by God and His people:

Deut 27:16: Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or his mother

Training ground for all respect for authority:

see discussion in Westminster Catechisms

see handout by Zimmerman, "Biblically Balanced Parenting"

Its Continuation: Is this still in force today?

Gospels:

Matt 19:19: Jesus quotes this commandment in response to rich young ruler's question about getting eternal life (parallels in Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20)

Epistles:

Eph 6:1-3: Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise -- "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (note how Paul generalizes "land" to "earth"; cp Col 3:20)

Its Limitations: Obey in everything?

When there is disagreement, we must obey God:

Acts 5:29: We must obey God rather than men (Peter responding to Sanhedrin; cp Acts 4:18-20)

Matt 10:37: Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me (cp Luke 14:26, note "even his own life")

Relation to Christian service?

Matt 15:3-9: Jesus rebuking Pharisees for oral tradition that sanctity of vows cancels 5th commandment (good discussion of this in Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 2:17-21)

1 Tim 5:8, 16: Responsibility to care for elderly parents