

Honor Your Father and Mother!

GodsLawToday.com

Regarding God's Ten (Great) Commandments, the *first four* show the basics of how to show love to **God**... and the *last six* show the basics of how to show love to fellowman.

Yet, have you ever considered that *one* of those commandments, serves as somewhat of a "*bridge between*" the commandments "to love God," and the commandments "to love fellowman"?

Let's now consider this "bridge" or "connecting" commandment. Let's consider the **FIFTH** Commandment... "Honor your father and your mother" (Ex.20:12).

Notice that this commandment is placed **first** among those six Commandments which govern our *human*-relationships. And, could *that fact*, be an *indication* of how **important** this Commandment is to God?

In fact, this Commandment is **so** important, that *more than one* scripture in the Old Testament states that he who **curses** his father or mother, shall surely be put to **death!** (Ex.21:17; Lev.20:9).

Now... if God deems that "**cursing** a parent" is serious enough to earn the **death** penalty... then surely, God also **hates** it when a child (or a grownup) speaks **disrespectfully** to his parent!

In fact, let's notice a scripture which *shows* that to be the case: "**Cursed** *is* the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt..." (Deut.27:16). *Young's Literal Translation* renders that scripture this way: "**Cursed** [is] He who is **making light of** his father and his mother."

Yes, according to **God**, if we speak to (or treat) our parent with **contempt**, we are "cursed."

So, obviously, "how we *speak* to" our parents, is an important *means* of showing them the "**honor**" which the Fifth Commandment requires us to show.

Yet, God instructs us to go *much further* than just *refraining* from speaking *improperly* to our parents! God says that we are to **REVERE** our parents! And we can *see* that, in Leviticus, chapter 19: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy. Every one of you **shall revere** his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God"' (Lev.19:1-3).

Now... **why** does God consider this Fifth Commandment so **important**? It's because, *in the eyes of a small-child*, a parent stands **in the place of** God Himself! The *parent* is the child's protector, provider, teacher, law-giver... and his giver of **love**.

A child's *early training* (that is, his **relationship** with father and mother) will largely **determine**, *not only* his relationship with **society**, but will also greatly influence his relationship with his **spiritual** Father in heaven!

And it's for **that** reason, that this Fifth Commandment acts as a "bridge" or "*connection between*" the Commandments to love God and to love fellowman.

In the sixth chapter of Ephesians, we see *another magnification* of the Fifth Commandment: "Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph. 6: 1).

So, here we see that children are not only to **honor** their parents... they are also to **obey** them. And, *why is that?* Because, again, *until* the child develops, his parents stand **to him**, *in place of* God. And, God holds the parents **responsible** for *teaching* and *guiding* them: "... And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. **You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up**" (Deut. 6: 1-7).

Now, when the child grows up and *moves out on his own*, **then** the command to "**obey** the parent" may *no longer* apply. Yet, there should **NEVER** come a time when we no longer **honor** our parents!

Honor Them, Even When You Are Grown

To the very *end* of His life, **Jesus Christ** honored His parents. Even in His *dying* moments on the cross (while suffering in *agony*) Christ made final provision for His mother **to be taken care of**, by John (John 19: 25-27). At a time when the thoughts of others would have been solely on themselves, Christ **remembered** the Fifth Commandment.

Sadly, there are some individuals who haven't visited—or contacted their parents—in *years*! Such individuals would do well to *ask* themselves: Is it **possible** to "**honor**" my parent, while having *nothing to do with them*?! No... it is *not* possible!

Even if your parent *mistreated* you, or never gave you **any reason** to love them... even if they **deserted** you when you needed them most... we still owe them *the first move at reconciliation*. And, consider that such reconciliation may very well require, **repeated** attempts!

Remember... the Fifth Commandment is directed *at the CHILDREN*... **not** the parents!

Now, there are *some* who might say: "Until my dad **earns** my respect, I **cannot** honor him. However, the Bible *nowhere* **lifts our responsibility to "honor" our parents UNTIL the parent redeems himself in our eyes.**

In fact... an “about-face” toward our parent, *could* even be instrumental in opening *their* eyes to God’s truth! It’s happened before!

Satan *knows* the value of a strong family. And he **loves** to see a **broken-family**! He *loves* to see people **failing** to “honor their father and mother”!

One way, that we can show honor to our parents, is by simply *visiting* them often. And—if they live far away—then be sure to *phone* them often!

Another way, is to verbally **thank** them for all they’ve done for us. Too many of us don’t realize *until our parent’s funeral*, that we **haven’t** thanked them and told them how much we appreciate them! Wouldn’t it be so much better to do it now—*before* it’s too late?

Try this!

Here is one specific thing you can do which will likely yield *multiple* benefits. Ask your parents about their lives... and **write down** what they tell you! Actually write a **mini-biography** of each of your parent’s lives! Get the names of their siblings, their parents, their grandparents, their aunts and uncles, etc. Ask where your parents lived throughout their lives—and where they worked. Ask about their aspirations and their hardships. Get them to tell you any interesting stories involving their lives.

By writing all this down, it will **delight** them to know that you are *sincerely interested* in their lives! It will also provide you with details that you will sooner or later wish you had! You will be able to pass this information on to *your* children.

Don’t wait until it’s too late to do this!

You might even enroll in a membership on *ancestry.com*. There, you will learn *so much* about your extended family... and you can even *contribute* information and photos of family members—something which others around the world (now and in the future) will greatly appreciate! Furthermore—and perhaps *most* importantly—you can share all that information *with* your parents and grandparents.

And, by the way, the principles that we are considering in this article, apply—by extension—to our *grandparents* as well.

Conclusion

Let’s all of us take steps now to *improve* our relationships with our parents. Remember to always—regardless of your age—*speak respectfully* to your parents.

In short, let’s *actively* **HONOR** our father and mother!