

“The Fifth Commandment – Part 2”  
Exodus 20:12  
(Preached at Trinity, December 23, 2007)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last week I directed your attention to the Fifth Commandment which commands respect for all authority—a reverence for all whom God has placed in over us. We should render them honor, obedience, and gratitude. We must give due weight to their position. This is most difficult for the natural man who by nature despises authority.
2. As I pointed out, authority can be divided into various types.
  - A. Familial – Children are to obey their parents
  - B. Spiritual – pastors are to be honored with respect to their office.
  - C. Political – we are commanded to obey the civil authorities.
3. Because the family is the first institution of authority we face upon the earth this commandment speaks of it foremost.
  - A. Families are the foundation of society. When the family fails, society fails.
  - B. The 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment stresses the importance of the family unit –  
**Exodus 20:12** – “Honour thy father and thy mother”  
**Ephesians 6:1** – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”
4. Since this commandment requires the honor of children for their parents it also implies that Godly parents will take it seriously in the instruction of their children. They will teach their children to respect authority.
  - A. I pointed out that father's have been given particular responsibility in the home. This doesn’t mean that mothers are not responsible for training their children and it doesn’t mean mothers are any less due respect – “Honor thy father *and* thy mother”
  - B. God has given the father the chief responsibility for the oversight of the home. He must oversees the instruction of the children in the doctrines of Christ  
**Ephesians 6:4** – "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."
5. Last week I made a general statement concerning how father’s provoke their children to wrath. They provoke their children to wrath by leaving them to themselves.
  - A. Why is this? Because children are already full of wrath. They are by nature children of wrath.  
**Ephesians 2:2-3** – “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: <sup>3</sup> Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

1. In other words, not only are we under God's wrath, we are by nature filled with wrath, bitterness, hatred.  
**Romans 1:29** – "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,"
  2. Wrath is a part of our sinful nature. This is why Paul commands the believer to cast it away.  
**Ephesians 4:31** – "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:"
  3. All you have to do is leave a child to himself or herself and they will follow the course of nature.
- B. I mentioned in the message that there have been lists given to describe ways you can provoke a child to wrath but the chief way is to simply leave them to themselves.
6. After the service I was approached with the question: What are some of the ways you can provoke a child to wrath. This question led me to consider if perhaps there might be an interest here; a desire for a bit more application concerning the provoking of children to wrath.
  7. Tonight I want to expand more fully on this matter.  
 The fifth commandment is tied very closely to the duty of fathers in **Ephesians 6**  
**Ephesians 6:1-4** – "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. <sup>2</sup> Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) <sup>3</sup> That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. <sup>4</sup> And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."
- A. In this duty to fathers they are commanded not to provoke their children to wrath.
  - B. It is given slightly differently in **Colossians**  
**Colossians 3:20-21** – "Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, provoke not your children to *anger*, lest they be discouraged."
8. Obviously, there are ways in which a father can discourage his children. He can provoke them to expiration. Tonight I want to give you just a few of the ways a man can provoke his children to manifest that inward baseness and hatred of authority.
- I. By failing to properly discipline their children
- A. By being too lenient - by not applying enough discipline or proper discipline  
 This is far too common today
    1. There is a total breakdown of discipline today - even among Christians
      - a. We are guilty of turning our children into objects of worship
      - b. Most parents pander to their children  
 The children rule the home
    2. Even worse our culture has rejected the proper discipline of children
      - a. Many are appalled today at the thought of spanking children
      - b. This is because they don't have a proper concept of accountability. Corporal punishment teaches children that there are consequences to their actions.
      - c. There is a false view of man - that he is basically good. The truth is children are depraved and must be taught subjection to authority.

- d. There must be consequences for actions - it must begin at the home and then to society as a whole. We can witness of the breakdown in proper child rearing as our prisons are overflowing.
3. Children must be disciplined including the use of the rod
- a. Because God demands it - has modern man become wiser than God?  
**Proverbs 22:6** – “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
- b. Because of the nature of the child  
**Proverbs 22:15** – “Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”  
 See **Ephesians 2:2-3**  
 He is governed by the wrong influences  
 He lives by the will of the flesh  
 He is naturally a child of disobedience and a child of wrath
- c. Because it shall save him from a miserable life now and in eternity  
**Prov 23:13-14** – “Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. <sup>14</sup> Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.”
- d. Because love demands it  
**Proverbs 13:24** – “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”
- e. Because of the consequences of a child left to himself  
 Withholding the rod will provoke him to wrath  
**Proverbs 29:15** – “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.”  
**Proverbs 29:17** – “Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”
4. What does it mean to be too lenient in discipline?
- a. Mistakes demand guidance, not discipline.
- b. The moment a child demonstrates rebellion it must be addressed
- c. Tantrums are efforts of a child to manifest autonomy. They are saying, “My will hasn’t been honored and I am letting everyone know.” Young children must be taught that their wills are subject to the authority of their parents. This is what is meant by authority.  
A tantrum must never go unaddressed
- d. Open disobedience must never go unaddressed.
- e. At what age. As soon as they are able to purposely manifest their wills against yours. We call them the terrible twos because there is a battle of the wills going on. The child must not win this battle.
- B. By being inconsistent
1. The secret to proper child discipline is consistency. The reward of consistent discipline when the child is young is a well behaved respectful young adult.  
 You are seeking to win their heart.
2. There must be rules and there must be consequences for breaking the rules.

A. W. Pink – “The least offense of a child against the rulers of the home ought not to pass without due correction, for if it find leniency in one direction toward one offense, it will expect the same towards others, and then disobedience will become more frequent till the parent has no control except that of brute force.”

3. Inconsistency is either changing the rules or changing the consequences
4. Children need to have consistency and order. Rules need to be known and their enforcement must be the same every time.
5. You are provoking your child to wrath when you are inconsistent. They will assume they can disregard your will and get away with it.
6. You are also inconsistent if you discipline one child more or harsher than the others. You must be consistent and equal among all.

C. By being too severe

1. By making impossible demands or being overly critical –
  - a. You must remember their weakness just as God remembers yours.  
**Psalm 103:13-14** – “Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. <sup>14</sup> For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.”
  - b. We should guard against harsh criticism or harsh cutting words
2. Again, you must remember there is a great difference between defiance and a mistake.
3. You must be careful and patient with development
  - a. They are prone to forget - short attention spans  
Their minds are not fully developed  
They do not give great attention to detail
  - b. Their coordination is not developed - poor skills
4. The punishment must be appropriate to the infraction
  - a. Rebellion must be punished quickly and harshly
  - b. Disobedience stemming from forgetfulness receives less severe punishment
5. Discipline must have a redemptive purpose. You are teaching your children that their actions should honor God.

II. We can provoke our children to wrath by failing to keep our position as parent

- A. The great error of many parents is seeking the friendship of their children
  1. They fear the disapproval of their children
  2. They give them everything they demand because they want their children to love them
  3. The sad consequence is while they are seeking the love and approval of their children their children will actually despise them.
  4. Such parents will lose the hearts of their children thus provoking them to wrath.
- B. Your purpose is not to become the friend of your children – it is to be the parent
  1. Parenting is hard work and it is fulltime work
  2. Sometimes you will have to make unpopular decisions
- C. The Fifth Commandment commands the honor and respect of your children
  1. Your job as parent is to demand that respect  
But if you make a mistake, admit it – they will respect you for it.

2. As a family you can play and enjoy life together but you must never cease to maintain your position as parent.
  3. You must also teach your children to respect other adults. Other adults should be able to correct your children by simply speaking words of correction.
- III. We can provoke our children to wrath by a failure to demonstrate unconditional love
- A. Your child should know that you love them unconditionally
    1. They must know that you don't love them more or less based upon their actions
    2. You should be reflecting God's love for you.
    3. Pharisaical demands of obedience without love as the motive builds up resentment.
  - B. You are provoking your child to wrath if they feel that they are earning your love
    1. They must understand that your discipline is the result of your love for them
    2. Never discipline in anger. They must understand your motive is repentance not revenge
    3. It is good to explain to them why they are being spanked and then after they have stopped crying explain how much it hurt you to spank them but you can't allow them to disobey you.
- IV. You can provoke your children to wrath when you don't allow them to voice their thoughts
- A. While you demand obedience and respect you should be approachable
    1. This is the nature of our relationship with our heavenly Father
    2. God says obey. He makes absolute demands. Yet we can go to Him in prayer and express our heart
  - B. You must maintain dialogue with your children
    1. You make rules but you should explain why.
    2. If they disobey they should be allowed to explain the reason for their disobedience.
    3. When they speak listen with your heart – hear what their concerns are
- V. We can provoke our children to wrath by a failure to teach them religiously and nurture early piety.
- A. The danger among reformed churches to suppress early signs of piety  
We must not discourage and hinder these tender ones
    1. This takes much care and wisdom
    2. We must allow the Holy Spirit to do His perfect work but not prohibit the little one from coming.
  - B. As parents you must bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord  
**Ephesians 6:4** – “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”
    1. There are three precepts taught here
      - a. Bring them up - ἐκτρέφω – means “to nourish to maturity”
      - b. nurture - παιδεία – refers to proper discipline and training
      - c. admonition - νουθεσία – refers to instruction

2. Bring them up - ἐκτρέφω – means “to nourish to maturity”
    - a. We owe them protection – a safe loving home
    - b. We owe them provision – this doesn’t mean a new car or designer clothes
  3. Nurture - παιδεία – refers to proper discipline and training  
We owe them discipline and correction
  4. Admonition - νουθεσία – Refers to instruction
    - a. We owe them secular training – all from a Christian biblical perspective. If you have decided to home school you must commit yourself to it.
    - b. We owe them religious and moral training  
**Deuteronomy 6:6-7** – “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”
- C. You provoke them to wrath if they see inconsistency in your own life
1. If they see hypocrisy in how you relate to God they will come to despise your God.
  2. Don’t expect them to be truthful if you are not truthful. Don’t expect them to be honest if you are not honest.
  3. “Do as I say and not as I do” is a bad method of teaching your children
  4. This doesn’t mean that there are not privileges of adulthood that children must respect. For example we can stay up later, we can drive a car – adults go through the supper line first as a sign of respect.

#### Conclusion:

1. Children owe to their parents love, honor, and respect. Parents owe to their children love and godly training to the honor of God. The God who created us demands these things of us.
2. The family is the first institution upon the earth.  
**Genesis 2:24** – “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”
3. Parents. You are training up the next generation of adults. This demands much time and energy. So many parents today put their children in day care during the day and get baby sitters at night. They are allowing other people to raise their children.
4. There is a high responsibility place upon both parents and children. When the biblical model is followed children and parents will be a joy to each other and they will be glorifying to God.