

honour our parents and all those placed in authority over us. Think of the sad story of Absalom who refused to honour David as his father and as king, and what a tragic end he came to. On the other hand, think of the story in Jeremiah 38:7ff about the Ethiopian, Ebedmelech, and how he showed honour and respect for the prophet Jeremiah and how God also then blessed him as you can read in the last verses of Jeremiah 39. Listen to Scripture verses like Proverbs 30:17 where we read God saying, *“The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it”*, and know God is very serious also about us keeping the fifth commandment and showing and teaching respect! Reading God’s Word and meditating thereon, asking for God’s Spirit to make it clear to us and open our hearts to receive it, so also you and I learn about the way to show and teach respect in line with the fifth commandment.

I must hasten to my third and last point about which I can only be very brief. We have seen the warrant for showing and teaching respect, and something of the way to do so, and what now is the worth of doing so? The worth of showing and teaching respect as God’s fifth commandment demands is that in so doing you promote the way and blessedness of true religion, the way and blessedness of stability in family life and society life, and you become a salt and light in a decadent world of so much disrespect on almost every front. Will you and do you and I live showing and teaching respect as God calls for it? The fifth commandment is one with a promise, not in promotion of works religion but in promotion of the one and only true religion of grace and truth. Thus says the Lord, *“Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long, [or you might say today, ‘that it may go well with you’] in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”*

The way of sin and disrespect is always something destructive, but the way of godliness and respect, in line with God’s fifth commandment, is always something constructive. What kind of person and influence are you and will you be? Are you showing and teaching respect, by the grace of God and for the glory of God, looking to Jesus and following after Him? Amen.

Hans Overduin, Radio Pastor

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT [2]

Showing and teaching respect - is that what you are about too? Do you also see the great need for this in our day of so much disrespect on almost every front? Where is the respect today for parents, teachers, and all those in authority over us? We are thinking about these matters in studying the fifth of God’s Ten Commandments. God says in Exodus 20:12, *“Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”* This is God’s law for us, for all people really, and all God’s true people desire to live in all their ways in obedience to all God’s law. Is that what you want too? Are you living showing respect and honour to God and His laws, including showing respect and honour to your parents and all in authority over you?

This is the second of two messages on the fifth commandment. Our focus is on how this commandment calls us to honour and respect especially our parents and all those placed in authority over us. In underscoring this matter we are following three main points, the warrant for respecting our parents and those in authority over us, the way to do so, and the worth of doing so. We moved last time already from speaking of the warrant for this command to the way to show respect and to honour those in authority over us.

The first way and most obvious is by example. This is where we left off last time. Showing and teaching respect, especially from the family setting and up is something that is done by example particularly and perhaps even mostly. What do you and I model, and what are we examples of? The fifth commandment is about showing and encouraging honour to whom it is due and where it is due. Is this what you too are about? Do you have an older parent perhaps in a nursing home? When did you last visit your mom or dad? Do you show and teach respect, dear friends, to your parents and those in authority over us? The way to show and teach respect is to be examples of showing respect! Will you and do you obey the fifth commandment in this way?

There is a second fundamental way to show and teach respect and that is by acknowledging and honoring God Triune and showing respect and honour for all that He is about in His church and kingdom. Respecting others and showing respect to the authorities is rooted in, and flows down

from, an acknowledgement of God as supreme and all His Word and will as right. We can say as a matter of fact even that very related to the decline of respect in every facet of society today is the decline of true religion, the refusal to acknowledge God as Lord over all. The moral code of the Ten Commandments becomes invalid as an absolute standard for all if there is no one true supreme God! On the other hand, there is such reasonableness to being respectful when that very principle is rooted in the existence and authority and character of God. If being respectful is related also to being accountable before the one only true God and the fact that there is a judgment day to come, it makes being respectful all that more significant and important and urgent even.

Thinking of Who God Triune is and of all His works in creation and providence and especially also in and with the salvation of sinners through the person and work of Jesus Christ as the once crucified and now ever risen and triumphant Saviour of sinners, is there not every reason to be respectful and to show so much respect before the Lord? Who are we as guilty lost sinners of ourselves that God should so seek and save the lost, even giving His only beloved begotten Son for undeserving and often still such ungrateful sinners like ourselves? How could God not only come up with, but also perfectly accomplish, so great a way of salvation as made known in and with our Lord Jesus Christ? All glory and honour and power are forever due to our Triune God, says the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:35, "*For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to Whom be glory forever!*" Anything short of wholehearted honoring and respect for God in Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords has to mean still living in gross disrespect really. Do you know and believe this too? When a person won't live in humble holy respect for God Triune above all, he or she is still living in terrible disrespect which, if not repented of, can only lead to a just and eternal condemnation and punishment. Is it so with you perhaps that you live still in disrespect of the God Who made you and provides for you and Who alone can save you? Or do you live in humble respect and devotion before Him?

Is a most high and glorious view of God and always again acknowledging Him and honouring Him as revealed in His Word and worshipped in His Church what you are about and want to be about too, or not so? The way to promote true respect also in our homes is to show utmost respect above all for the highest authority and rule, namely that of God Himself as revealed in Jesus Christ the Saviour and His holy Word. Do you as parents, or even as grandparents, acknowledge God as supreme over all and always worthy of infinite respect and unending honour and glory?

Let me apply this a little deeper. How do we show true respect for God and His Word, and for His Son, Jesus Christ, the Saviour? Is it not by taking most seriously what the Bible teaches about man guilty and lost in sin by nature, and acknowledging Jesus Christ as the only Saviour from sin for

us and our children? Do you show serious respect for the call of God to repent of sin and to trust and obey the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit and truth? God invites us so to plead with Him in relation to His covenant and gospel promises. In your prayers do you have respect for God, not only as to His person but to all His Word and promises in Christ Jesus? Do you go to Him once, and again and again, for the fulfillment of all His promises in regards to yourself and to your loved ones and in regards to His church and the coming of His kingdom?

Do you have such respect for God and His Word and covenant that you daily live in humble reliance and devotion before Him, or do you live mostly just ignoring God and His Word and covenant and His church and kingdom? Do you see how this all is related to the fifth commandment and to showing and teaching respect?

Let me give yet a third way of showing and teaching respect and that is by reading the Bible much, not only personally but also in the home with the family. The Bible is full of stories, true stories, about people who lived in respect of God and others and also of people who did not but lived more in disrespect and defiance of God and others. How good it is to know and be well acquainted with what God's Word teaches us. As the hymn writer also put it: "Happy the home, where prayer is heard, And praise each day does rise. Where parents loved the sacred Word, and all it's wisdom prize!" Take here for example Palm 119, a psalm that speaks in every verse something about the preciousness and helpfulness of God's Word to guide us in right ways, and God-honouring ways, and ways good for our neighbour too. The word "Honour" in the fifth commandment has to do with "giving weight to something", that is, recognizing something to be noteworthy and impressive. The psalmist, David, so viewed the Scriptures and he had respect unto God's Word, so that he looked into it and fed on it, and lived by it and hid it in his heart; He esteemed God's Word as more precious than all riches of this world.

If you and I would show and teach respect in the way God's fifth commandment calls for, we must be much into God's Word. Just think here of the few examples I now will give from the Bible calling for living in respect of others and the blessing thereof and some examples of living in disrespect of our parents and others and the curses and trouble that brings. Listen to this verse in Leviticus 19:32. "*You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord.*" See how God calls for respect for our older people? Listen on the other hand to this story in II Kings 2:23 where we are told about some youths mocking the prophet, Elisha, as he went from Jericho to Bethel. They said to him mockingly, "*Go up you bald head; go up you bald head!*" and the result was that God through His prophet sent two female bears out of the woods that mauled forty-two of the youth. You hear how God reinforces His command to