

Stronghold of the Household – Exodus 20:12

Intro:

- 1) Word picture – an ornament**
 - a. What is it? What was it created to do?
 - i. “shatterproof” – put that to the test
 - b. What if – used as baseball
 - i. Same shape, I can throw it, it would “appear” to work
 - ii. Yet – used against its design – it would shatter

- 2) Reality – many people are living God’s purposefully created life that has been given to them in a manner against its created intention**

- 3) Fact – we live in God’s world, which was created to run according to His design**
 - a. Ps. 24:1 – “The earth is the LORD’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”
 - b. The earth and it’s people were created to be subject unto the Lord

- 4) Truth – in that creation, God had designed and implemented a certain way in which His creation was to function**
 - a. When things are aligned with God’s design, they function properly and purposefully

- 5) Problem – many of the designs of God for living life on earth are under attack**
 - a. Have been since the beginning of creation – order, goodness, truth, identity, obedience, worship
 - b. Sin – characterized as disobedience/rebellion against God’s will
 - i. To miss the mark and give up the reward
 - c. Truth – we live in a sin-fallen and sin-filled world
 - i. So things are constantly challenging the purposes of God

- 6) One of the most prominent designs of God that has been under constant attack, seemingly put in the shredder, is the household**
 - a. It seems like the household no longer holds together
 - b. 3 modern enemies of the home – legislation, liberalism, and laziness

- 7) This Mother’s Day I want to look at God’s standard for the home as outlined in the fifth commandment**
 - a. The fifth commandment shows the value and vitality of the biblical household
 - b. Special focus on mothers – as it is easy to look over the necessity of biblical motherhood
 - c. I want to issue an encouragement to parents, specifically mothers, to grasp the significance you have in family and society

8) Disclaimer – many people, even Christians, have not succeeded at the design of God for the home

- a. What to do if that's you – Praise Him for His mercy, press into His grace, and be sanctified by His Word

9) Sermon: The Stronghold of the Household

- a. Text: Ex. 20:12
- b. Goal – understand the importance of the Biblical household and its Godly purposes as outlined in the 5th Commandment

The Designation

- 1) **One major aspect overlooked about the 5th Commandment which carries significant lessons to it is the designation which the Lord gives it by placing it as the 5th Commandment**

The Position of the Commandment

- 1) **Here's what I know – the placement of this commandment was not random, it was deliberate**
 - a. This commandment was uniquely and purposefully given as the 5th Commandment
- 2) **The 5th Commandment marks a major shift from the “vertical” commands to the “horizontal” commands**
 - a. Some commentators refer to this commandment as the “transitional” commandment due to its placement and purpose
- 3) **Why?**
 - a. First 4 commandments focus primarily on a person's relationship and responsibility toward God
 - b. Last 6 commandments focus on a person's relationship and responsibility in living in a community with his/her fellow man
 - c. The 5th Commandment uniquely acts as a bridge connecting the two emphases together
 - i. Understand – the 5th Commandment deals with a person's relationship with their parents
 1. Although not on the same plane as a relationship with God, this commandment still deals with an authority higher than oneself
 - d. We could say it this way – the 5th Commandment is a pivotal command which renders contemplation on how one's relationship with God affects one's relationship to everything else
 - i. IOW – This is a commandment that reveals how a right relationship with God impacts everything else
 - e. The position of the household commandment first in the “societal” commands reveals its importance in shaping all other relationships in society
 - i. “Honoring your father and mother is the foundation upon which love for neighbor is built.” – Kevin DeYoung
 - ii. “The first arena where one encounters the world is the family.” Mark Rooker

The Priority of the Commandment

- 1) **To me – the placement of this commandment seems odd**
 - a. If you were to construct a society that functioned well, survived and thrived, life was valued, and goodness was practiced – you probably wouldn't start here
 - b. Yet – before God addresses: murder, adultery, theft, lying, coveting – he addresses the home
 - c. Write down – God addresses the home before He addresses society
 - i. Before a person learns citizenship, God makes sure they learn honor at home

- 2) The priority given to this arena of life is given to make a statement**
- a. The priority is revealing it's importance
- 3) Here's what God understood – when the family breaks down, society breaks down**
- a. The home is the building block for a stable society
 - b. So true is this:
 - i. When a totalitarian regime desires to take over a nation – one of their first assaults is on the family
 - ii. The family unit is one of the first things disassembled by religious cults when they desire control
 - iii. The family unit has been attacked by anti-god ideologies – feminism, extreme liberalism, Satan himself (garden of Eden)
- 4) IOW – the 5th Commandment is far more than just putting a smile on the parent's face, it's a statement to remind us of the necessary priority the home must have**

The Pattern of the Commandment

- 1) Why is the home set forth as the pattern of building well**
- 2) The home is the formation center**
- a. Honor and authority is first learned at home
 - b. Respect, discipline, truthfulness, work ethic – are to be patterned by parents at home as a manner of example to the next generation
 - c. Prior to entering the Promised Land, God gave the Israelites His revelation after they left Egypt
 - i. Be encompassed by the Law – Deut. 4:1-14 (V9)
 - ii. Heed the Commandments – Deut. 5:6-21
 - iii. The Shema – Deut. 6:4
 - iv. Love God – the first and greatest command – Duet. 6:5
 - v. Notice the charge that follows that instruction – Deut. 6:6-9
 - 1. The home becomes the formation center of Godliness for your child's life
 - d. The home is where the great acts of God and His deliverance are learned
 - i. Ps. 78:4-8
 - ii. God designed it that His Word and Will are passed on through the home 1st
 - iii. "Parents must never go back on their God-given responsibility to be the primary source of religious instruction for their children." – Andreas Kostenberger

The home is the threshold over which the child must pass in their engagement with the world

The Definition

1) Q – What exactly does “honor” your father and mother mean?

- a. For parents – if you don’t know the definition, you won’t know what you’re aiming to institute in order to grow “honor” in the home
- b. Summary – means to recognize the God-given weight, worth, and authority of the parental office

The Meaning of honor

1) The word honor is a unique word that carries massive implications when understood

2) Textual insight

- a. Root – denotes the idea of something physically heavy
- b. Used:
 - i. To describe a large and heavy man – 1 Sam. 4:18
 - ii. To refer to a large amount of thick, heavy hair – 2 Sam. 14:26
 - iii. 13 occasions it is used in the OT in reference to the liver
 1. Perhaps because it was thought that the liver was the “heaviest” organ
- c. The word means – weighty, severe, important, substantial
 - i. Stated as an imperative – not a suggestion, it’s a command
- d. In Hebrew thought – something “heavy” was considered valuable, glorious, significant
 - i. The word is used for:
 1. God’s glory, honor, riches
 2. Ex. 14:17 – “I will get me honour upon pharaoh”
 - a. Same Hebrew root
- e. American Idiom – “that persons words carry weight”
- f. 1st usage – Ex. 14:17 – a rightful acknowledgement of the Lord

3) The meaning of this word indicates that God designed the home to have the right recognition of the parental relationship

- a. Look at how it is applied in Lev. 19:3 – “fear”

4) The word honor goes beyond simple emotion

- a. It speaks of a willing submission
 - i. Reverence, obedience, recognition
- b. IOW – a child’s view of authority often begins with the parents

The Model of honor

1) This command is stated again in Lev. 19:3

- a. God doesn't repeat to be redundant – Its emphasis

2) Fascinating – note the change in order

- a. Mother is mentioned 1st
 - i. Many commentators believe this guarded against the cultural tendencies to minimize the mother's authority in a patril-centric society
- b. God made sure to emphasize mothers when He restated this command
- c. Mothers in the Bible are pictured as valuable and vital to home life
 - i. Wives and mothers often helped name the children
 - 1. In the 46 recorded instances of naming children in the OT, 28 times the name was given by the mother
 - ii. The 5th Commandment stipulates that the child honors both father and mother
 - iii. The OT wisdom literature often set the mother's wisdom on the same parallel as the fathers – Prov. 1:8,6:20
 - iv. There's a significant portion of a wisdom chapter given to mothers (Prov. 31)

3) Understand – since, in Israel, the home was the primary place for education, the mother's example and instruction were vital

- a. AND THAT WAS TO BE HONORED

The Magnitude of honor

1) Parenthood is a sacred office

- a. God used specific titles in this command – Father and Mother
 - i. These are not words on a binary plane up for debate by the whims of society
 - ii. These are God-given, God-designed, God-defined offices that are given weight in Scripture
- b. Why is this important to know?
 - i. Its easy to get after children who fail to recognize the weight of father and/or mother
 - ii. But – it is a challenge to us to also recognize the weight of what is means to be called father or mother

2) Parenthood is a sobering office

- a. The home shapes the soul
- b. The home shapes society
- c. The home shapes success
- d. Parents mold worldviews, character, habits, priorities
- e. Q – why do you think there is a promise attached to this command?
 - i. Because being an honorable father or mother will impact the way in which the next generation succeeds or fails

3) Parenthood is a stewardship office

- a. We have the obligation to steward well honor for parents and being honorable parents
- b. John 19:26
 - i. Even while dying, Jesus honored His mother
 - ii. Why this is significant – Jesus fulfilled the Father’s will perfectly, never said a word not intended – so this little event of caring for His mother was in the perfect will of God
 - 1. Stated at the most significant time for human history

4) Mothers:

- a. Your influence is often invisible but it is immensely weighty
 - i. You may feel unnoticed – but biblically motherhood is “weighty”
 - ii. You are in the position to shape souls
 - iii. The world may not applaud you for the labor of being a godly mother, but heaven assigns enormous wight to it
- b. A mother is often the first interaction a child has with grace
 - i. A mother gives without merit
 - 1. Example – Ex. 2:1-10
 - 2. Moses’ mother:
 - a. Carried Moses, hid Moses, risked her life for Moses, surrendered Moses to God’s providence
 - 3. What did Moses do to deserve this?
 - a. Nothing
 - b. Her love was sacrificial, protective, and underserved
 - ii. Long before a child can contribute, perform, repay, or even properly appreciate – a mother gives herself away daily
 - 1. In many ways – she is the first glimpse of grace

The Disobedience

- 1) God attaches a promise to living this command out**
 - a. Paul says it this way – Eph. 6:2,3

- 2) This statement teaches us – there are certain blessings to life that are given through the godly investment of parents and the willing honor a children**
 - a. Quantity – long
 - i. Means – lengthened, prolongs
 - ii. Could indicate
 1. practical lessons (eating, speaking, lawful obedience)
 2. Spiritual – Israel’s blessing or burden was often a result of obedience to God – and home was the classroom for that
 - b. Quality – Duet. 5:16
 - i. Go well – to be good, pleased, prosperous, succeed
 - ii. Important timing – they were out from Egypt and now headed to a new land
 1. A prominent influence God wants established for success is the home

- 3) There are plenty of scriptural blessings that flow from honoring parents**
 - a. Prov. 1:8,9
 - b. Prov. 4:1-4
 - c. Prov. 6:20-23

- 4) There are also negative consequences when honor is absent**
 - a. Prov. 10:1
 - b. Prov. 17:15,21
 - c. Rom. 1:30 – context of rejecting God
 - d. 2 Tim. 3:2 – breakdown of the home was a key aspect of perilous times

- 5) So serious was the Biblical household that in theocratic Israel, a continually disobedient child was met with severe punishment**
 - a. Deut. 21:18-21
 - b. Seriousness of consequence was meant to convey the value of the topic in discussion

- 6) Here’s what we need to know**
 - a. Honor produces opportunity
 - i. Children were called to learn wisdom at home which would keep them from destructive paths
 - b. Honor produced overflowing blessings
 - i. Prosperity is begun at home
 - c. Honor produces orientation toward God
 - i. God is taught and worshipped at home 1st
 - ii. The home affects length of days while on earth, and eternity

7) Mothers

- a. Your child is called to honor you, implying that you are living in clear manner that they can honor
 - i. Notice – this command is not calling you to
 - 1. Be their best friend
 - 2. Orient life around them
 - ii. This command is calling you to take serious parenthood and speak truth, leading them to Jesus

Closing:**1) The household is to be a stronghold**

- a. Living out God's design
- b. "shatter proof" your home – do it right

2) Problem

- a. This commandment poses a problem – we all have failed at it
 - i. As children and as parents
- b. This command reminds us of the needed salvation offered in Jesus Christ
 - i. The greatest thing you can do in life is come to Jesus by faith
 - ii. The second is lead your family there