

Our Father – Exodus 20:12

We spend a lot of time thinking about how to raise children, but perhaps we spend less time thinking about what it means to be one.

At the centre of the Ten Commandments, God gives a word that speaks to all people of every generation: honour your father and mother. But what does that actually look like? How might it change as we grow older? And how do we honour parents who have let us down, navigate the tension between respect and independence, or deal with the guilt of relationships that are complicated or unfinished?

In this sermon, Lewis Roderick continues our series on The Family Business and shows us Jesus, the obedient Son whose life can transform our relationship with our parents.

For personal reflection/ community discussion:

1. What is one thing you received from your parents (or whoever raised you) that you're genuinely grateful for?

2. Read aloud the verses Lewis' referred to during the sermon. How do these words, and others that touch on honouring our parents, affect you?

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father… I am the Lord your God… My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching… He who does violence to his father and chases away his mother is a son who brings shame and

reproach… Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old... Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, "That is no transgression," is a companion to a man who destroys... You shall stand up before the grey head, and honour the face of the old man, and you shall fear the LORD your God... Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord… But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. Ephesians 6: 1; Leviticus 19: 3; Proverbs 6: 20, 19: 26, 23: 22, 28: 24; Leviticus 19: 32; Colossians 3: 20; 1 Timothy 5: 4

3. The sermon named a cultural narrative that sees parents as "problems to solve" and "burdens that get in the way of my life." Where have you absorbed that story?

4. Which of the three obstacles is most true of you right now: **culture** (my parents are an inconvenience), **hurt** (they failed me and I'm still carrying it), or **idolatry** (I need their approval more than I need God's)? What would it cost you to turn away from this destructive influence, and towards Jesus?

5. The sermon said Jesus is not just giving us an example to follow but a righteousness to claim. How is that different from hearing this passage as a command to try harder? How does knowing you are a "rebellious child" who has been forgiven change the way you approach your own parents' failures?

6. Consider the implications Lewis offered at the sermon's close. Read aloud the following questions and ask the group to reflect on the question most relevant for their stage in life.

For young people still at home: *Where is obedience hardest right now? What's one area where you will obey without arguing or complaining?*
For adults: *What is one concrete act of honour you could do this week? It could be a phone call, a visit, a thank-you, an apology, a question asking for their advice, or a decision to speak well of them to others.*
For those caring for ageing parents: *Where do you need help, rest or support? Who can carry some of the weight with you?*
For those with wounded relationships: *What is one step toward forgiveness you could take, even if reconciliation isn't possible? Who could walk with you in it?*

7. What is one thing you sensed God saying to you tonight?