

A Prayer For Our Fathers

- Opening Announcements
- Opening Prayer

Q: What IS honoring your father? What does the word "honor" mean?

Q: How do you "honor" your father?

The 10 Commands: A Thought...

The 10 Commandments are structured in the following way: Commands 1-3 deal with our relationship with God. Commands 4-10 deal with our relationships with others. Command 1 and 4 are often thought of as "Chief" commandments. We think of them this way because they are Chiefly important AND, all the subsequent commandments flow or follow the "chief" commandments.

Table Time...

READ: Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

NOTICE: This "Word" (command) begins what we know as the "2nd Table". It is the Chief commandment of the 2nd Table!

Q: Why did God put our relationship with our parents as the "chief"?

Q: In what ways is this commandment the most significant?

Q: What's interesting or different about this commandment from ALL the others? How might that be true?

READ: Romans 13:8-10 "Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law"

Q: In this section, scripture is teaching us about "fulfilling the Law". The 4th Commandment is the Chief Law of the 2nd Table (some of those commands are mentioned here). How does "love" fulfill the Law?

Q: How can you "love" your father today AND, why does that "honor" him? (Hint: remember what "honor" means!).

Q: How can praying for your parents help you love and "honor" your parents?

Big Group Debrief...

READ: Ephesians 6:1-4 "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

² "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise),

³ "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

Q: In this section, what are "fathers" NOT supposed to do?

Q: What does it mean to "provoke your children to anger"?

Q: How might NOT disciplining your children, actually lead to "provoking them to anger"?

A: WHAT does it mean to "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord mean?"

Q: How might that buffer from "provoking them to anger"?

Discuss: The relationship between the benefits of discipline and instruction compared to NOT having discipline and instruction and how the latter can lead to "anger" (rebellion, laziness, lack of direction or a sense of purpose)?

Q: How does a life that is disciplined and lived for God's glory, ACTUALLY "honor" your father and mother? (PS: This helps answer the question: Does this commandment apply after my parents have died?)

Q: How does keeping your parents (regardless if they had shortcomings or were exemplarily), keep you focused and oriented towards "honoring" them?

Practical Steps: IF you're a father (and even if you're not or are a Mother!), work through Proverbs 1-10 with your children! A possible approach....

Step 1: Work through a chapter a day for 10 - 14 days. As you do, write down key thoughts for YOU to work on. Write down key goals for your kids.

Step 2: Pray daily for the Wisdom of God's Word to equip you to teach your children. Pray for their challenges, insecurities and how what you're reading is specifically applicable to them.

Step 3: Work through and Pray through Proverbs 1-10 with your kids. **Helpful hint:** You might do this one on one and set up a schedule where you work with one child, then the next, etc. Another way to integrate is to work through this with your child in the morning and then in the evening, review and pray over it. This "double's up" the impact!