

Exodus 20: 12 – The Ten Commandments, part 5: “Honor your father and mother.”¹



Main point: Give respect and care to parents, made in God’s image; a legacy of respect continues.

Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.

Background: The Ten Commandments are God’s laws of love. God saved his people from slavery in Egypt, and then God defines the relationship: I love you, and this is how you love me back.

Exodus 20:1-11

- The first commandment: “Thou shalt have no other God before me.” God says: You’re my number one, because I saved you from slavery and made you my special people. Therefore, make ME number one for you!
- The second commandment: Don’t make an image of me. Don’t try to create me in YOUR image, to do what YOU want. Trust me and follow me as I am.
- The third commandment: Don’t use my name in vain. Wear my name well, reflecting Me.
- The fourth commandment: Remember the Sabbath day. God provides!

Study: 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.”

[Note: This section lends itself to lots of reminiscing about parents. If someone talks about their parents as if they were still alive, don’t correct them; focus on and affirm the sentiments of love: “They sound really great! What wonderful teachers they must be!”]

1. *So: What is the fifth commandment?*
 - a. Honor mother and father.
2. *How might you rephrase “honor your father and mother”?*
 - a. Treat parents with respect; obey; take care of them when they need help (old, sick, sad...)
3. *How is this commandment different than the four that come before it? (Review the first 4 briefly.)*
 - a. The first four are about our relationship with God; vertical.
 - b. This commandment turns to how we treat others: horizontal.
 - i. *Specifically, this one is about how we treat ... who?*
 - 1) Our parents.
4. *Tell me about your parents. What favorite qualities can you share about your parents?*
5. *What was dinnertime like in your family? What kinds of rules did you have to follow?*
6. *What other rules were part of your household?*
7. *What lessons did you learn from your parents? What values and beliefs were most important to your parents, that they passed along to you?*
8. *As you grew up and left your first home and became an adult, what did you do with what you learned from your parents?*
 - a. Hopefully, learned that you are loved! Security, and the ability to love others.

¹ Some material gratefully borrowed from Fellowship Monrovia: <https://madeforfellowship.com/>

- b. Learn the fundamentals of how to live and navigate the world: respect, honor humanity, be honest, work hard.
 - c. Take those values into society and live them out in your own life.
9. *In this particular commandment, what is the promise that goes along with honoring your parents?*
- a. “That your days may be long in the land.” Meaning: You’ll live well! Those values and qualities that parents taught you will help you along the way in your own life. That legacy continues far past your parents’ lifetimes.
10. *When you were little, were your parents perfect in every way? In what ways did your parents show, or did you see, imperfection?*
- a. Conclusion: We are all imperfect, including parents.
 - b. *Does the fact that parents are not perfect erase the commandment to honor them?*
 - i. No. The commandment never stops, no matter how parents were or are. No qualifiers.
11. *Whose image are our parents made in?*
- a. God’s image!
 - b. God says: “Your parents, like you, are all my children; and as you love me, you need to love them.”

This commandment, as with all the others, is about LOVE. Summary of The Ten Commandments: A love letter! An invitation to *love*, not a burden of law. It’s a beautiful invitation to relationship with another.

- Ask for any prayer requests for today.
- Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
- End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20: 1-17: And God spoke all these words, saying,

² “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

³ “You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath ...

⁷ “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates....

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³ “You shall not murder.

¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”