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“The Perfect Ten #5: Honor Your Family”

Deuteronomy 5:16, 18

Attention: In an article on the Gospel Coalition website, Courtney Reissig writes, “It doesn’t take long for us to look around and realize that in many ways everything in this world is screaming for redemption. It seems nearly every day there is some type of shooting that makes us wonder, Will my city be next? Just a few months ago, an EF-4 tornado ripped through two towns less than 45 minutes from where I live. Many lost their lives, and many more lost every earthly possession they had. I know of a guy from high school whose daughter is finally in remission from cancer. She’s barely 1 year old. By all accounts, this earth and its inhabitants are living on borrowed time and longing for a better life. It’s easy to see that creation specifically is groaning for redemption... As we watch loved ones reject Christ and make a wreck of their lives, we grieve and groan for God to make things right. Every pain-filled cry from our created bodies screams that this is not how it was supposed to be. Every bitter burial of a loved one is a groan for the dirt in the ground that swallows us up to push forth new life in the new creation.”

This is certainly true in families. We used to speak of people who came from “broken homes”, but the reality is that there is brokenness in all of our families, and there has been since the beginning.

The good news is that Jesus Christ came to heal the brokenness. As Reissig writes, “our groaning is not the final word. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead will one day raise our ailing parents, gone-too-soon children, and cancer-ridden spouses, friends, and family members (Rom. 8:11). Through our suffering we are made like him and assured that we are his children. The Spirit will give life to our mortal bodies on that last day (Rom. 8:16-17).”

In our meditations on “the Perfect Ten”, we have seen the first four of the 10 Commandments refer specifically to God. The last six apply to humanity, but they are all intertwined.

- A person may be an "other god", and for the most part we take His name in vain in conversation with another person.

- Likewise, the last six call for trust in God, obedience to Him and contentment with His graces.

All of the Commandments are observed in the presence of the family, including the spiritual family, the church, and some give instructions about it.

With regard to the family, we might say that the 5th Commandment says Honor parents, the 6th says Honor children, and the 7th says Honor your partner in love.

In the church, honor your spiritual parents, children and siblings.

1. God says the world has a damaged view of the family.

A world that emphasizes the individual self finds honoring the family a challenge.

A. We find it difficult to honor parents because they sometimes act dishonorably.

A father that has been abusive or a mother who has seldom affirmed and often criticized can cause damage to a child that can last a lifetime.

The Old Testament is full of examples of dysfunctional families.

B. We find it difficult to honor those who are dependent on us, children and the elderly, if they are a drain on our resources.

Children are aborted, neglected and abused often because they can be a burden rather than a joy, a drain of your finances, energies and entertainments.

The elderly and disabled are surrounded by discussions of their "quality of life", inferring that theirs may not worth the resources needed to maintain their lives.

One of the dangers of allowing assisted suicide is that the disabled may feel guilty for being a drain on others, and feel it their moral obligation to cease to be a burden to their families.

C. It is a challenge to honor a partner in love who fails to meet our needs.

How many marriages break up because one or both have been disloyal, unfaithful or irresponsible, and one person is not giving what is expected from the other?

trans: What is the answer to the brokenness? We know that there are real offenses in families which justify actions that bring dishonor on families.

2. The Word of God reveals the Messiah that heals families.

The honoring of family members happens when we honor the image of God in them.

A. God wants us to honor Parents: Deuteronomy 5:16 (NKJV) 'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

1. The Intention of the command is that we honor the home and family.

- There are 2 words in Hebrew for "honor"

1) "Ascribe beauty, majesty" -not used here.

2) "Make heavy, weighty" So the command is not "beautify" but "make powerful"

How is this applied?

a. Children are to heed their parent's instructions

Ephesians 6:1 (NKJV) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

b. A second way of honoring is valuing their intercession. Parents are to intercede in prayer for children, & children should covet & value this.

c. A third way is respecting their authority. God chooses the word "honor", not "obey" because "honor" includes "obey" & more.

As a child becomes an adult, obedience becomes respect for their good counsel.

d. One final thing is included in "honor," and it is ministering to their needs.

While submission to authority wanes with age, this responsibility increases.

The Bible teaches that grown Children are to support Parents in whatever needs they have. 1 Tim 5:4 (NKJV) "But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God."

Jesus is the Savior of honor to parents.

He taught that Yahweh is a Father, and he always honored Him in all that he did.

He rebuked the Pharisees for finding in their traditions a way to avoid this. Matt. 15:1-6

He himself obeyed this command, even from the cross, in caring for his Mother.

2. The Incentive to honor parents is the honor of God.

Ephesians 6:1 (NKJV) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

It is God's world, and things will go well only when lived in accord with God's law.

Also, God promises blessing to those who do so. " that your days may be long, and that it may

be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. "

This was first a national blessing, but it is also an individual one, as it is repeated in the NT.

3. This commandment reminds us that the home is given to draw you into a personal Relationship with Christ.

a. The parental Relationship teaches us about the essential nature of God the Divine parent.

- Parents are images of God to children.

- Parents are representatives of God.

To honor parents is indirectly to honor God.

b. The position of the child to his parents also teaches us about Christ and Christians.

- Jesus did His Father's will

- Jesus trusted His Father completely.

B. The second part of honoring family is that God wants us to honor children.

Jesus teaches us to honor children: Mark 9:37 (NKJV) "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me."

Mark 10:14-15 (NKJV) But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Ephesians 6:4 (HCSB) "Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

C. The third part of honoring family is that God wants us to honor your partner in love.

Deu. 5:18 "You shall not commit adultery."

I use the term, "partner in love" because the honoring of a husband or wife begins long before you marry the other person.

It starts with how you treat and what you expect from someone you are dating.

Are you mainly looking for a mate to meet your needs, or do you have a genuine admiration for that person that leads you to be more interested in bringing joy to them?

Heb. 13:4 (ESV) Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous."

Jesus empowers us to honor our partner in love.

Matthew 5:27-28 (NKJV) "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

1 Peter 3:1-7 (NKJV) "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."

The motivation for this is in vv. 15-18 (ESV) "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit".

Trans: The Word of God reveals the Messiah that heals families.

3. The way to heal families is to trust in and imitate Christ.

The spiritual power to honor the natural and spiritual family flows from Faith in the Messiah who laid down his life for the Father's spiritual children.

It sees others as gifts from God and instruments of His Grace.

Every person is made in the image of God, and when our attitude is to look for and focus on what He has done is doing or can do in them, it will release us to honor and enjoy God in them.

Even those people you find it difficult to see as a blessing, can be seen as possibilities.

A. Parents are honored with attention, obedience, respect and honor as to the Lord.

ILL: There's an Ancient story that a certain city was besieged, and at length obliged to surrender. In the city there were two brothers, who had, in some way, obliged the conquering general; and in consequence of this, received permission to leave the city before it was set on fire, taking with them as much of their property as each could carry about his person. Accordingly the two generous youths appeared at the gates of the city, one of them carrying their father, and the other their mother.

[Topic: Children, Index: 1643-1657]

B. Children are honored by teaching, training, loving nurture, providing for their needs, faithful prayer and godly discipline.

ILL: Mary Tyler Moore, in a 1993 interview, told TV Guide that she has not led the perfect life associated with her TV characters. Moore regrets not having spent more time with her only child, a son who died at 24 from an accidental, self-inflicted gunshot wound. "With what I know today, I would have made sure that I spent more time with my son than I did. But we young jerks didn't know very much about working and raising children then.

That's something I would change about my life. And if I could, I would have had more children. Because, in losing my son, I lost all the future. There is no grandchild for me." Moore said people often tell her they wanted to be like her TV character Mary Richards. "My answer has always been 'So did I.'" [Topic: Children, Subtopic: Esteemed Highly, Index: 1644]

C. You honor your partner in love, serving their needs by being faithful, being joyful, communicating, respecting their dignity, encouraging and enabling their commitment to Christ, and building their self-esteem.

Marriage is not whatever we or our society decides it is. Marriage was designed by God to show the world how beautiful, exciting and mysterious the relationship between God and the group of people called His church can be.

Is there brokenness in human marriages? Of course, because the two humans are broken, but it can also be glorious, for as each of them grows closer to Christ, there is an increasingly beautiful picture being painted.

Derek Rishmawy, a director of college and young adult ministries who has counseled many courting couples writes, "over the years I've come to see that there is one key mark of a maturing relationship centered and continually centering itself on Christ:

both of you are absolutely committed to each other's involvement in the local church.”

- To sit under Biblical Preaching that humbles you, reminds you of the gospel, and bring you into the presence of Christ,
- To meet with other believers for true fellowship,
- To receive the Lord's Supper, centering on Christ as your ultimate hope and joy,
- To worship God alone, “If for no other reason than avoiding the danger of your significant other turning your own relationship (or you!) into an idol, you want them weekly pouring out their hearts in praise to their true Redeemer and Savior.”

“Ultimately, remember, you're not the point of the relationship—Jesus is. Point each other to Christ and let Christ knit you together as he sees fit.”

The world has a damaged view of the family.

The Word of God reveals the Messiah that heals families.

The way to heal families is to trust in and imitate Christ.

Action: Ask God to show you areas where your view of the family is more the world's than God's.

Take time this week in God's Word, asking the Holy Spirit to show you the Messiah that heals families.

Write down three ways you can imitate Jesus in your natural and/or spiritual family this week.