

# It Starts At Home

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, hey, good morning. My name is Ray Sweep from First Christian Church in Greensburg, Indiana. As always, you can check us out at FCCGreensburg.com or you can go to the FCC Greensburg Facebook page.

But hey, thank you for tuning in today. We are all about preaching the Word of God, getting into God's Word, but most importantly, letting this Word get into us and transform these hearts more and more into the image of Christ.

Now, I want to start out this Mother's Day with what is a top five list of you know you're a mom when. Okay, so here we go. Kind of old David Letterman style here.

You know you're a mom when, number five, you find yourself singing, let it go, let it go from Frozen as you're doing laundry. All right, number four, you know you're a mom when you can never go to the bathroom without someone screaming outside the door or pushing their little fingers under the door.

Number three, when you weep when Dumbo's mom is taken away, and we won't even talk about what Bambi does to you. Number two, you know you're a mom when you've gotten so into kids' crafts that you've thought about writing a book called 101 Fun Crafts to do with dryer lint and eggshells.

[ 1 : 20 ] And number one, you know you're a mom when you're on a nice romantic date with your husband, have an adult conversation over a meal when suddenly you realize that you reached over to cut up his steak and then you gave him a spit bath when you were done.

Now we're just having some fun, but we truly are thankful for not just the moms, but all the ladies in our church and just what you mean to FCC.

But I think it's fitting that probably six to nine months ago, as I felt the Lord place this sermon series over the Ten Commandments on my heart, I started to figure out where to put it out on the calendar. I knew this series would take me about 11 weeks. I wanted to spend one week on each commandment with a week for introduction, and it really worked out well that I had exactly 11 weeks after Easter, so Sunday after Easter, until our former lead pastor Danny Wolford comes to preach on June the 23rd.

But then I remembered Mother's Day on May the 12th, and I started to wonder, I wonder which commandment it falls on. So I started to count down Sundays on the calendar, and guess what commandment just so happened to be for today?

[ 2 : 33 ] Yep, number five. Honor your father and mother. As Tammy Leak always said to me when I was a new believer, she'd say, that's not odd, that's God.

But then I got to thinking, okay, I believe that. But then on Father's Day, we're talking about not coveting your neighbor's wife. So Houston, maybe there's a problem there. But hey, welcome back to week number six in our series called Ten.

You can grab your Bibles if you'd like to follow along. Turn to Exodus chapter 20, second book of your Bible, real easy to find, right after Genesis, Exodus 20. Last week you heard Pastor Tyler share about keeping the Sabbath day holy.

And I got to be honest with you, I gave him a tough one that some wonderful Bible-believing scholars may see a little differently. And I thought he did a good job of studying the Word and bringing us to the heart of it all.

But today, let's talk about this commandment to honor your father and your mother. And I want to give this disclaimer before we get rolling. There are some of you listening today that may struggle with this topic.

[ 3 : 37 ] Maybe you weren't blessed to be born into a family with good parents who loved and nurtured you. Maybe you come from an abusive environment where it was just awful and there's baggage.

That hurt, that anger are real for you. It could be all kinds of things. First, let me just say that I'm really sorry for what you have walked through in your life. And yet, I want you to know that you have a perfect Heavenly Father who wants to bring that healing into your heart and care for you even better than you wish you'd had as a kid.

And we'll talk later a little bit about how you can honor God by honoring parents who maybe even let you down, maybe even in big ways. That will show that you are a child of the King.

But let's start today by looking here at Exodus chapter 20, verse 12. God the Father has surrounded His people, the Israelites, with His majesty and glory in the form of lightning and thunder on full display.

He's speaking these Ten Commandments from the mountain. And then He comes to number five that says, Honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God has given you.

[ 4 : 46 ] So let's answer a few questions today that's just going to help us get our arms around this commandment a little bit better. The first question asks, Why is this commandment important?

So why does this matter? If you remember the first week of this series, we talked about how Jesus summed these commandments up by telling us to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and love our neighbor as ourself.

So love God, love people. The first four were vertical, right? All about how we honor God. And it was led by you shall have no other gods kind of being the foundation of those others.

Okay? So the first four teach us how to love God. The last six are horizontal. They teach us how to love our neighbor by showing that we are a child of the King.

Now, Jewish authorities see this a touch different. They have a little different perspective here where they will actually divide them up into five and five. Placing honor your parents in the loving God section because they think if we can learn how to show respect and authority to an earthly parent, then that carries over to loving our Heavenly Father with a proper reverence and all.

[ 5 : 59 ] Others say, No, I get the point. But it's still the first one in the list of loving your neighbor. But it's the most important one because it sets this foundation for every other area of our lives.

So if you can learn how to honor, obey, love your parents as this earthly authority that God has placed over you, then you have built this incredible foundation that will bless your life in every way. If you can learn how to properly treat your parents, then that will shape the rest of your relationships in a healthy way. In fact, the early church father named Augustine, he once went as far to say this. He said, If anyone fails to honor his parents, is there anyone he will spare? And you could prove that by going into our prison system. These are men and women made in the image of God just as much as you and I.

And yet, while you can't put every situation into a box, the stereotype exists for a reason. The statistics back it up that most come, most in prison come from a broken home where they weren't loved the way they deserved.

[ 7 : 08 ] So that foundation of love and respect for their parents, for authorities, wasn't taught a lot of times. Because when you're simply trying to survive, you're probably not going to thrive.

And what does that generational cycle often produce? It doesn't have to, but what does it often produce? Exactly what Augustine said. If you don't learn how to properly respect your parents and authorities, then no one is safe.

Because what do hurt people do? Hurt people hurt people. Or you can simplify it down with the words of Kevin DeYoung. He said, It's not too much to say that loving your neighbor begins with listening to mom and dad.

It's really that important. So you have these two foundations of no other God, but the one true God. And that implies that he has all of me.

So that's the vertical worship. And then we see the foundation of love your mother and father, the horizontal, as you learn how to honor and respect authorities on all levels.

[ 8 : 09 ] That's God, parents, government, church, work, and the list goes on. And these two actually set the stage for us to be able to glorify God by obeying the other eight.

Wow. You just thought this was another boring sermon in the series. No, it's an important boring sermon in the series that will set the stage for the next five commandments. So let me talk quickly with anyone listening who is still under their parents' leadership living at home.

If you're in those preteen years, I know sometimes your parents' rules seem a little bit strict. They don't always make sense to you. Trust me, your parents aren't perfect. Just like I'm not as a parent, just like you won't be either as a parent someday.

But they love you. They have your best interest at heart. So honor the Lord by honoring them.

That's one way you show your love for Jesus. And I know we also have some teenagers in here, and I get it.

Sometimes your parents seem like the dumbest people in the world. I thought the same thing about my parents as a teenager. But trust me, there will come a day where they will suddenly get smarter.

[ 9 : 16 ] And things they did will start to make more sense. They have walked where you are. They understand better than you might think. So respect God by respecting them, even when it doesn't add up right now.

And then, and you just have to take my word for this, you will even find yourself saying something in the future where you're like, oh wow, did I just sound like my mom? Did I just sound like my dad?

I mean, you're shaking your head no, but trust me, you will. Okay? And one thing I say to my kids a lot is this phrase, knock it off. I mean, they know I'm serious when that phrase comes out in a strong tone.

But then one day, we were at my parents' house and my dad was playing with my kids, his grandkids, and he jokingly said, knock it off. And I was like, oh, that's why I say that.

That's where that comes from. So my kids and I have joked that someday when I'm on my deathbed, I'm going to call them all over. I'm going to be like, Joes, Jovi, Lila, I love you with all my heart.

[ 10 : 19 ] I'm so proud of you three, but knock it off. And then I'm going to take my last breath and go be with Jesus. Okay? Hashtag famous last words. So the answer to why is commandment five so important?

Here it is. It's foundational to loving your neighbor well. It's the foundation to loving your neighbor well. It has to start here.

And I'm sure you've probably heard this before, but you can't lead well until you learn how to follow imperfect people. You can't be a healthy leader that God has designed you to be until you learn how to submit to God's leadership and even the authority that he places over you.

And that starts at home. Question two, what does it mean to honor my parents? So what's the practical part? What does this look like? Well, the actual word used here in this commandment for honor is the Hebrew word kabad or kabad, which means to be heavy, to be weighty, even means the word glory.

So when God says, honor your father and mother, it means to put a lot of weight towards them, to revere them as very weighty, as very important.

[ 11 : 35 ] And listen, this isn't just when you're under 18. It's also when you're a young adult, maybe college, late 20s, early 30s, when you are middle-aged, which is where I've landed, unfortunately, or even when you become a senior adult yourself.

I know we have a lady in our church who just honored her mother with a 100th birthday celebration.

What a great daughter and what a joy to have her with you at 100. So biblically speaking, let's answer that question with three ways that we can honor our parents.

And here's the first one. I choose obedience. I choose to obey. And as we look at Colossians chapter 3, we see the Apostle Paul, led by the Holy Spirit, writing about what God calls the family unit to look like.

He speaks to wives and then he speaks to husbands about living your marriage and your family God's way, not the world's ways, which, man, it's so easy to do because we're immersed in this culture.

But he says, do it God's way, not the world's ways. And then he says this to children in Colossians 3.20. He says, children, obey your parents in everything for this pleases the Lord.

[ 12 : 48 ] Now, are there any biblical exceptions to this? Yeah. When you have a parent who demands you go against God's word, just like Peter and the rest of the apostles, if you look at Acts chapter 5, we're told also to submit to government authorities.

And so, in Acts chapter 5, verse 29, the governments tell them to do one thing and they say, no, we must choose to obey God rather than man. So, outside of disobeying the first commandment or even an abusive environment that you just got to get out of, we choose obedience.

And I found it really convicting that in Romans chapter 1, we see this picture of what it looks like to turn away from God and to do life our own way. We even see where it leads sexually.

And boy, does it look a lot like America today that even people who claim to be a part of the church are ignoring what God's word teaches on a lot of sexual purity issues.

And then we come to this list at the end of Romans 1 where Paul shares what it looks like to go your own way and to completely reject God. He even uses behaviors like wickedness and greed and murder, deceit.

[13:58] He calls them God-haters and arrogant. And then in that same breath, that same list, he says, they disobey their parents. That's how serious this is.

Even in 1 Timothy 3, starting in verse 1, Paul puts it like this. He says, but mark this, there will be terrible times in the last days.

So he's talking about in the last days, just wicked behavior. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive. Now listen to this, disobedient to their parents.

And then he keeps going, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power.

And then he says, have nothing to do with such people. And disobedience to parents is in that list. So we see this connection in scripture to how seriously God calls us to obedience as children.

[15:02] But we also see that when we disobey parents, that it's kind of like a gateway drug in a sense that leads you down other dangerous paths because honoring parents is foundational to every relationship we have.

I choose to honor God by showing obedience to my parents. Second, I choose respect. Respect. Now, for the last seven months, my family hasn't had any TV programming.

So Bethany and the kids will come home from the library with a stack of DVDs and one day she came home with season one of Little House on the Prairie. And to be honest with you, I'd never seen it before.

Never read the books. I guess I'm kind of behind what a lot of other people have read or seen. But I really got into it as there was just something kind of refreshing and wholesome about this family in Walnut Grove from the late 1800s when you compare it to the trash that we often see on TV.

But right away, I noticed a common theme from the children. When they spoke to adults, especially their parents, it was yes, sir, or no, ma'am. Even the rougher kids, minus maybe Nellie Olson, sometimes showed a respect for their parents.

[16:13] Even spoiled little Nellie and Willie could be respectful at times. And if you've watched the series, you know that most in their town were committed to Christ and His Word.

And that's where this attitude of respect to parents had originated. See, respect doesn't always mean that I agree with you. In fact, there were many times if you watched it where Laura Ingalls, because she was kind of a little bit of a rebellious kid in some way, she just had a fire in her belly, where there were times where she or maybe you with your parents, maybe where you had to bite your tongue a little bit, right?

Because you disagreed. You disagreed. And yet, you still held your parents with weight, with honor, as those who brought you into this world. Those who got in trouble trusted to raise you.

And then third, I choose devotion. This commitment really makes even more sense when you're grown. For many, you get married and you follow God's Word.

In Genesis 2.24, it teaches us to leave our mother and father and cleave to our spouse, becoming one flesh. Now, I'll tell you, some families are better at leaving and cleaving than others.

[17:21] And sometimes, with your outlaws, I mean in-laws, you have to set some boundaries, right? There's got to be a new family that forms and there's got to be healthy, God-honoring boundaries.

And it's always interesting when you put a husband and a wife together who grew up in families that do things a little differently. And all of a sudden, there's this shift in your relationship where now, instead of my parents, my spouse, after God, takes first place in my life.

They, and if you have kids, become your priority. And yet, that doesn't change the fact that you're still called to show your parents proper love and devotion. It just looks a little different than when you were 10 years old.

In fact, Paul, in 1 Timothy 5.4, actually puts it like this. He says, but if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn, first of all, to put their religion into practice.

What does that mean? Don't just talk the talk. If you're going to call yourself a Christian, walk in the power of Christ. Walk in the ways that the Holy Spirit will lead you in through the Word of God.

[18:27] So, he says, put your religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents for this is pleasing to God.

So, it's funny how the tables can turn from your parents caring for you to the day where you end up caring for your elderly parents. And while I'm not at that season of life, possibly yet, I've walked alongside enough of you that have been through this and I know it's tough and that's an understatement.

Hard decisions like taking away the car keys or making them go into assisted living for their own benefit. I mean, there's all kinds of decisions that have to be made and let's just be honest, they can be as rebellious as we were when we were kids because once you've changed somebody's diaper, you don't want them telling you what to do, right?

And yet, we're called as Christians to look different than the world. We're called to a devotion to our parents where we show that we believe in the sanctity of life from conception in the womb all the way to old age when we take our last breath.

That we will honor, that we will love those among us who probably have a lot of wisdom to teach us. And you know what? That may cost us a lot of money or time or stress or energy or devotion or our patience and yet, I think any of you who've cared for an elderly parent would be the first one to say that while it is exhausting, you also wouldn't take that precious time back that you got to share in their last days on this earth.

[20:03] And you know what? Even for those who didn't hit the jackpot in the parent department or maybe just one of your parents, you have a chance to show devotion to them even if they never showed it to you.

I'll never forget asking a man one time, I knew he had a really rough childhood in a lot of ways, and I asked him, why would you love and take care of your elderly parents the way you do when they hurt you in your childhood the way they did?

And his answer flowed from a heart of grace. He said, you know, if I treated my parents the way they treated me, I'd be just like them. In other words, he was saying, I'm a child of God and I can shine Jesus by how I love my parents.

Now here's how Proverbs 23, 22 through 24 puts that. It says, listen to your father who gave you life and don't despise your mother when she is old.

Get the truth and never sell it. Also get wisdom, discipline, and good judgment. The father of godly children has cause for joy. What a pleasure to have children who are wise.

[21:12] So let's kind of shift gears here with question number three. What's my role as a parent? So for those of you listening who are parents, what's your role?

This was the point as I was preparing that I realized, man, this should have been a two-week message right here. But remember, I didn't have an extra week in there. So much to cover here, honestly, on this topic.

So I'm probably not going to do it complete justice, but let's just read two kind of big picture passages here that are going to help us. First is Proverbs 22, verse 6.

Start children off on the way they should go or train your children up, as you've heard it often said, and even when they are old, they will not depart from it. And then I love this passage that is a part of the Shema from Deuteronomy 6, starting in verse 6.

And I'm not going to read it all by any means, but here's just a small segment of this where Moses says, these commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

[22:16] And then he says this, impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Is it the children's director's job to solely disciple your kids?

Is it the youth pastor's job to be the primary teacher for your children, for your grandkids? Is it my job alone to make sure they follow Jesus as I preach most weeks at our church?

Biblically, no. And yet people would often say, well, yeah, it is. But biblically, no. We have our roles as staff members at church and we want to pour into your kids.

Please don't misunderstand me. We want to give them solid Bible teaching. We want to be that village that comes around you and your family. We want to be a support system to give you the resources you need to be the parent you're called to be.

We want to walk in these buildings on a Wednesday or a Sunday and we want to grow deeper. We want you and I both to grow deeper in our walk with Christ. But God's word is clear.

[ 23 : 21 ] That starts at home. And this ruffles some people's feathers. I mean, you mean to tell me that I can't just drop my kids off at the door on Sunday and expect them to get everything they need spiritually?

You're saying that one week of church camp a year isn't enough? Yeah, that's exactly what not I, but God's word is saying. So what's the quick answer to this?

What's my role as a parent? I would sum it up this way. Love God with all your heart and teach your kids to do the same. Love God with all my heart and teach my kids to do the same.

Model that to them. Sit down. Be intentional. Listen, I didn't come here today to use God's word as a club to beat you over the head because all of us parents, I mean, this is convicting stuff.

We can all grow for sure, including me, a lot. But I want you to see this powerful picture that God paints for us. That if we as parents can pursue the heart of God, disciple our kids the way that we're called to, the way God's word models for us, we are helping them create a foundation built on the rock of Jesus Christ.

[ 24 : 30 ] And as they come to understand authority from God and from parents, and as that translates into respect and obedience and devotion, you're going to see some kids grow into some powerful vessels as adults that God can use to change this world.

And you know what? He can use them as kids as well. So, what was the promise given in this command? He said, honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God has given you.

Now, let's just kind of put this in context. This was a specific promise to the Israelites heading into the promised land. So, I don't see this as just a general promise, okay, I honor mom and dad, I'm going to live to 101.

Okay? I don't think anybody, any scholars are interpreting that that way. Instead, this is a powerful promise showing exactly what happens when you build your life on the rock of Jesus Christ, when you teach your children to do the same, when you honor God by putting him alone on the throne, learning how to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and as you learn that respect to God, you will show that to parents who gave you life.

You learn how to love your neighbor as yourself. And listen, God will bless that house built on the rock of Jesus Christ and you will live in his grace and his provision.

[ 25 : 52 ] You know, there was a little boy who came up to his mom one cold January day and he said, can I go help daddy put the snow chains on the car? I promise I know all the words to say.

Parents, you won't be perfect. And I hate it that I probably had words flow out that did not honor God at all. Things will come out at times that you wish wouldn't have.

Your anger may get the best of you at different times with your kids. I'm guilty as well. But listen, I am so thankful for God's grace. I'm so thankful for children who can be so very forgiving.

But the big picture today is this. You have a chance to model what it looks like to love the Lord and then teach your kids to pursue his heart and build their life on the rock of Jesus Christ.

So it really is true. It starts at home. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we just honor you today.

[ 26 : 56 ] We just lift you up, magnify your name because you are good and holy and righteous and majestic and full of grace and mercy and yet you are the perfect judge at the same time.

It's hard to wrap our minds around just the perfection God that you are. But if anything, that teaches us that you are God and we are not.

That you are awesome and holy and we are so very far from it and we need you. We can't do this life without you. So Father, I just thank you for everything that we learned today that our number one goal is to love you with all of our heart and when we learn how to truly worship you and adore you and live for you the way you call, then we're going to be able to love our neighbor as ourselves. We're going to be able to start that foundation with how we love our parents. So Father, if we have failed in this way in any way, will you forgive us?

I know that that's every one of us because this is hard. Whether we're a kid or an adult, it's so easy to disobey parents, to not show them the love and the respect that they are due.

[ 28 : 10 ] And Father, I just pray also for anyone listening to my voice who maybe didn't have the parents that they wish they'd had. And maybe this is a very touchy subject and I just pray for healing and for your grace to come into this.

But Father, I just pray that as we let these words stir in our hearts that you may mold us and shape us more and more into the image of Christ, we give you that permission, Lord.

Take our hearts and make us more like Jesus, we pray. In his precious name, the name above all names, we pray, the name of Jesus. God's people said, amen and amen.

Hey, let me give just this quick invitation. If you have some faith questions, maybe you want to talk about surrendering your life to the Lord. Listen, I've had amazing people come alongside me in my life and help me when I needed it so dearly.

We would love to do that for you. So give us a call. Once again, First Christian Church, Greensburg, Indiana. My name is Ray Sweet. I'm the lead pastor here. We would love to help you. So you can call us at 812-663-8488.

[ 29 : 16 ] That's 812-663-8488. Or you can email me at ray at FCCGreensburg.com. Hey, God bless you and we hope that you have an outstanding week.