

Department: Teen Department
Article: Honoring Your Parents (Part 1)
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The highest priority in life is to obey God—to give to Him first place in life. This tells us, therefore, that it is essential to learn how He wants us to live, what He wants us to do, and to do it. Thus it is entirely appropriate that the first of the Ten Commandments given to Moses at Mt. Sinai required all men to give first place to God.

“You shall have no other gods before Me.” (Exodus 20:3)

Although you may not have considered that this commandment demands full obedience of all men unto the only God, this is exactly what is commanded of every person. No other and no thing is to be given the place in any person’s life that properly belongs to our Creator. There is one God. He is the Creator of all things. This includes men and angels. Therefore, it is entirely appropriate that every living thing that God created that has been given a free will, the freedom of choice, acknowledge God’s ownership and providence (i.e., that He is the One Who sustains and guides human destiny) and be willing to submit and conform to those purposes in existence to which they were designed to fit in.

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power;
for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and
were created.” (Revelation 4:11)

As the Creator of all, is God not entitled to demand of what is His that His will be given the highest priority in life? The fact that everyone has been given a free will does allow that a person may choose to ignore our Creator, that he may refuse to bow to His rule—in this life; however, this does not mean that a person will not be required to give an accounting to God as to how he lived his life on this planet or that those who reject God’s rule over them in this life should not and will not suffer the consequence of eternal punishment that is to be meted out for refusal to obey Him.

- **One’s duty to God is greater than one’s duty to any other.**

The universe and every thing that has life in it was created by God and belongs to Him. Every man, woman, boy, and girl is God’s property. As man’s Creator, God gave to man a stewardship over his own life. Behind this obligation of man to be a good steward of that which he has been entrusted is the providence of God—that He may do with His creation, and require of it, what He pleases. Therefore, every person will be required to give an account of how he conducted himself in life towards God and towards his fellowman—in the use of his time and his money, and of how he obtained and what he did with the things he gained in life.

“But why do you judge thy brother? Or why doe you set at nought
thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

For it is written, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess [in regard] to God. So then every one of us shall give account concerning himself to God.”
(Romans 14:10-12)

Let this be such a warning to you that you will be motivated to learn what God’s will is for your life and to do it. God has so warned us of what is ahead that we may be moved to “remove the flaws from our conduct while they can yet be removed, which must be done before we are dead.” (Lenski, *Romans* 329.) If you have not been honoring your parents in the manner God requires, you need to change your attitude towards Him and towards them. God, being the Creator of everything, has given to man the moral laws that men are to live by, and what every man will be held accountable for.

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He does according to His will in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand [Heb. -- strike with the hand = oppose Him], or say of Him [in the sense of admonish, show disapproval by demanding an explanation of], What are You doing?”
(Daniel 4:35)

It was God’s sole decision to create man and to place him on this earth to learn to live in obedience to Him. This is the most fundamental fact of our existence. The design of God goes so far that even our though life is to be purged of impure thoughts. God is to be truly the central focus of our lives.

“Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

A second fundamental fact of man’s existence on this planet is that:

- **Men are born into this world as rebels against God. Apart from God’s alteration of the nature of man, none live in and to righteousness. All oppose God’s rule over them.**

What this means is that man, in his natural state, does not want to obey God. This awesome truth stems from the decision of the first man and the first woman to rebel against a single command of God—in essence to defy and disbelieve Him, and thus to fall from a state of innocence to being rebels against Him. As the result of that betrayal, all who have been born into the human race were born with an innate animosity toward God and do not want to obey Him—or God ordained authority. That is why we have so much conflict in the world, so much hatred, and crime, and terrorism. Due to their selfishness, men oppose and fight each other; and nations are often in conflict—and many choose to go to war against each other. Both men and nations often want things that rightfully belong to another, and are unwilling to submit to the rule of love in their attitudes toward others. The selfishness of man leads to the coveting of what others have,

of jealousy, and anger, and hatred, and the maiming and rape and killing of one's fellowman. Today we live on a planet that is seething in violence.

God never purposed that men live in this manner. Sin entered into the human race and dominates man with the purpose to bring man to eternal ruin. If you will accept this, you can better understand why it is that people experience hardships in life and suffer and die, why there is so much sickness in the world, and why only God can deliver man from his rebellion against Him.

In order to gain spiritual revelation of the true meaning and purpose of life, a person must be willing to accept as truth what God has revealed about the fallen condition of man and that this is the real root of man's rebellion. Then, in order for a person to gain freedom from the bondage to sin that man is in, a person must be willing to accept God's solution to this crisis and to cooperate with Him in what he would have a person to do to get out of the mess, the unprofitable condition, he was born into.

Be it known to you that because of the fall of man, and until a man comes to Jesus, every person desires to run his own life and does not like being told what he can or cannot do. Most people soon learn that they must operate within the laws of society or face the consequences for their opposition to its rules. The sooner you come to understand and accept that God rules in the heavens and on the earth, that you are His property, that He has a right to command of you your submission to Him, and then commit to live to please Him, the sooner you will open yourself up to receive His forgiveness and blessing in your life.

A third fundamental truth you need to appreciate is that which relates to parenthood and the family.

- **Parenthood and the family was designed by God for the carrying out of God's purposes for man.**

Knowing in eternity, before He created man, what the first man and the first woman would do, in being given the freedom of choice, and precisely what their rebellion would lead to, God so designed how the race of man would increase and be enabled to prosper with His continued involvement and deliverance of man from his state of rebellion to Him. He knew how best to work in and with men to change them from being rebellious and self-serving, opponents of Him, to being yielded and loving children who seek to live to please Him. Within His ordering of creation God made a man and a woman to come together in a committed marriage relationship and birth children and be a family. Thus God created the family as the primary unit of society; and He determined to work with the family, in regard to both the individual and as a unit, to train men, women, and children up to know and do what He required of them.

Of course, this requires that parents or adults, who give spiritual and moral counsel to others, and especially their children, understand the depravity of man, that man wants to be his own god, and that God sent His Son to bear the judgment that was due man for his

rebellion against Him—in order to provide for man a way of escape from bondage to sin and death. Through the Spirit of God working in man, God purposed to transform him into a new creation, making man willing to accept God’s help and to cooperate with Him in order to learn to obey His Creator.

We give you this background because we cannot assume you know the nature of the situation into which you were born or why it is that all people rebel against God, or God’s design in the structure of the family. Here are two Scriptures that verify the truth of what has just been stated about the selfishness of man and which affirm man’s strong inclination to rebel against the commandments of his Creator.

“The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that does good, no not one.” (Psalm 14: 2-3)

The apostle Paul repeats this truth in Romans:

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one...Destruction and misery are in their ways; And the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Romans 2:10-12,16-18)

Scripture makes it plain that all people are born rebels. This can be seen at a very early age in all children and continues until God is able to bring a change into their lives. Do you understand that all men are born under condemnation and that this is a just judgment of God? The ramification of this is that once a person has reached an age of accountability (which God alone decides), that should he die while living in a state of rebellion against God, he will perish in eternal ruin. The deliverance of man from the curse he is under as the result of Adam’s rebellion is a factor in God’s design of marriage and parenthood. A fourth fundamental truth you need to know is that:

- **God holds parents accountable for training up their children to obey God.**

Parents are to work with their children, to teach them their accountability to God, their need of Jesus Christ, how they are to live, and what they need to know to please Him. Although no parent knows God’s detailed plan for any of the children God gives to be a part of his or her family, He has not left people to struggle through life without proper instruction as to what He requires of man and of how man is to conduct his life on this earth. He has given sufficient knowledge of His general will and purpose for man that man can know how to obtain God’s sure aid and guidance in the course of life. God has given to man the holy Scriptures, and pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc., to make people aware of the consequences of sinning against God, to stir people to get right with God, to

make it the priority of their lives to please Him, and to enable man to obtain everything he needs to live a victorious life, a life of triumph over one's enemies, in connection with Him.

This article is written for teens. So we instruct you that as the fifth fundamental truth you need to realize and accept is that you are to honor your parents. And how is this to be done?

- **You are to honor your father and mother by loving them and in submitting, without defiance, to their rule over you.**

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), That it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth.”
(Ephesians 6:1-3).

In knowing what God's will is for your life and in doing what he commands of you, you obey Him. As you honor your parents by loving them and submitting to their rule over you, you honor the Lord. Thus to defy and oppose your parents is to defy and oppose God's rule over your life. That is simple truth to know, but not necessarily easy to apply; nevertheless, this is what is commanded of you in order to please God.

Have you ever given serious consideration as to why you are on this planet—with the design to learn what your true purpose is in being here? Have you ever been made aware that you will be required to give an account to our Creator of how you lived in this life and of why you did the things you did? Do you realize and are you willing to accept that God has a right to command of you what you should and should not do—and that it is your responsibility to do what He tells you is acceptable and to avoid doing that which he tells you not to do? Has it been made plain to you that since everyone has a responsibility before God to obey Him that this includes that children are to obey their parents?

This is the truth of the matter: We did not create ourselves. God gave existence to man. He gave to a man and a woman the ability to have children—but this is only to take place in a marriage relationship. He holds everyone accountable for what each knows, for the things each one does, and for the sins each commits before Him. And the sins a person commits against His love will continue to be held against him until he comes to Jesus, repents of his rebellion against Him, asks God's forgiveness for his sins and for having chosen to remain a rebel, and commits to live to know and obey His will. All of this you need to understand and to apply to your life—for no one will escape accountability to God.

Here are two additional Scriptures that shows that God has commanded this obedience of children to their parents.

“Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land...” (Exodus 20:12a)

“Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.” (Colossians 3:20)

Young person, you need to realize that to obey your parents is the commandment of the Lord, and your obedience is to arise out of the recognition of the Lord’s ownership of you, of your parents and, indeed, of all people. Therefore, you need to understand that, since the Lord owns all, to obey your parents is not to be related to how good or bad or wise or foolish your parents may be or may seem to be to you; but your obedience is to be given because the Lord commands you to submit to the authority He has given them over you, which includes their guidance and overseership. God has entrusted you to your parents, to submit to their rule over you; and he also holds them accountable for how they treat or mistreat you.

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