



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V24 N30

July 24, 2022

## TEN WORDS

“5/The Honorable Thing to Do”

Exodus 20:12

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Kindness-Goodness

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

*“Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:15



How is honor shown to parents?

The religious establishment in Jesus' day attributed his ability to cast out demons to Satan — *they had no other choice*. You see, they were put off by the fact that Jesus and his disciples did not follow their religious traditions regarding, for example, fasting (Mk 2:18; cf. Mt 9:14) and hand washing (7:1-5; cf. Mt 15:2). On top of that Jesus socialized with sinners (Mk 2:16; cf. Mt 9:10-11), something no righteous person would do. And in their view, Jesus permitted his disciples to violate the law by picking grain on the Sabbath (Mk 2:23-28; cf. Mt 12:1-8) and violated it himself by healing on the Sabbath (Mk 3:1-6; cf. Mt 12:9-14). But more importantly, he made himself equal with God by forgiving sins (2:1-7; cf. Mt 9:2-8) and by calling himself God's son (Mk 14:61-64; cf. Mt 26:62b-65). So when faced with the news of Jesus' exorcisms in Galilee, which spread like wildfire pushed by a tailwind, Mark writes: “The teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, ‘He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons’” (2:22) — an explanation Jesus proved was just plain nonsense (vv. 23-30; cf. Mt 12:22-29), just an excuse for their unbelief.

It wasn't the religious leaders' zeal for the law to which Jesus objected. It was their *hypocrisy*, something he condemned repeatedly in his ministry (see Mt 6:2, 5, 16; 7:5; 15:7; 22:18; esp. 23:13-37). Ironically, these leaders had devised ingenious ways of using their traditions to “nullify the word of God” (Mt 15:6), the best example of which was their use of “Corban” to avoid honoring their parents. Mark describes the practice to his Roman readers (Mk 7:5-13):

5 *So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”*

6 *He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:*

*“‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.*

*7 They worship me in vain;*

*their teachings are merely human rules.’*

8 *You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”*

9 *And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ 11 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God) — 12 then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. 13 Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”*

One commentator explains: “Jesus cited an example of how His critics used human traditions to set aside divine imperatives. They professed to honor Moses, through whom God commanded the Israelites to honor their parents and threatened disobedience with death (Exod. 20:12; 21:17). Honoring parents manifests itself in financial support and practical care if necessary. Mark interpreted the word *corban*, a gift devoted to God, for his Gentile readers. This word is Greek, but it transliterates a Hebrew word that the Jews used when they dedicated something to God. Jewish tradition permitted people to declare something they owned as dedicated to God. This did not mean that they had to give it to the priests, or even give up the use of it themselves. However, it freed them from giving it to someone else—even a needy parent” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Mark,” 2022 ed., 157, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/mark.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/mark.pdf)). Jewish religious leaders nullified the word of God by making their interpretations of the Old Testament subject to their religious traditions that developed later.



## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read Exodus 20:12

12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

### Read in another translation

12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the land **Yahweh** your **Elohim** is giving you." (NOG)

### Read a complementary passage Ephesians 6:1-3

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise – 3 "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "honor."
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose*.
- Circle "you."
- Underline "live long in the land."
- Circle "LORD" and "God."
- Circle "giving."

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. The fifth commandment (v. 12) is like the fourth commandment (v. 8). How so?
2. Put what “honor” means in your own words.
3. How old are those who are commanded to “honor” their parents?
4. Identify some practical implications of your answers to questions 2 and 3.
5. Mention of *both* parents in the commandment is noteworthy. Explain why.
6. Explain the *logical* relationship between the clauses in the commandment indicated by “so that.”
7. So longevity is promised to those children who honor their parents—right? Explain.
8. The qualifying phrase “in the land” affects the contemporary relevance of the commandment. How so?
9. In Ephesians 6:1-3, Paul applies this commandment to Christian households. To *whom* does he apply it and how does he *change* it?
10. **Discussion:** The commandment begs a number of unanswered questions: Does “honor” mean doing what parents say no matter what? What if parents are wrong? Is there ever a time when children outgrow this commandment? Talk about these and any others you might have.

### Commentary On The Text

Exodus 20:12 contains the fifth commandment, “Honor your father and mother,” which like the previous commandment, “Remember the Sabbath” (v. 8), is stated positively. The fifth commandment marks a shift in the direction of the commandments that most commentators recognize. One comments: “With the fifth commandment, the second basic direction of the commandments as the fundamental principles of life in covenant with Yahweh is taken. The first four commandments set forth the principles guiding Israel’s relationship to Yahweh; the last six commandments set forth the principles guiding Israel’s relationship with the covenant community, and more broadly, with the human family. As the second, third, and fourth commandments are in many ways extensions of the first commandment, the first four commandments are the foundation for the final six commandments. And all of the commandments, as principles governing covenant relationships, are founded on the ultimate OT statement of relationship, which stands as prologue to the ten commandments: ‘I am Yahweh, your God’” (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 290).

The commandment contains two clauses, an *independent* clause containing an imperative and a *dependent* clause containing the *purpose* of the imperative, making living long in the land dependent upon honoring one’s father and mother. Clearly, the meaning of the commandment revolves around the meaning of “honor.” In defining the term, keep in mind that the commandment was not given to children, so the verb’s *primary* meaning is not “obey,” although obedience may be implied when the commandment is applied to children. One commentator writes: “The commandment is not addressed to small children; it does not primarily admonish them to obey their parents, though it no doubt includes that. The commandment is spoken to adults who are not dependent on their father and mother, but whose father and mother may even be dependent on them” (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 286). The primary meaning of the verb is “to respect, to esteem, or to give priority,” the practical implications of which transition over time. When children are young, they are to respect and obey their parents; when they are older, they are to support and to care for their parents. Exactly what this might entail will differ from family to family, age to age, and culture to culture. For example, when it comes to caring for aged parents today, each family must consider what is feasi-

ble and then decide whether it’s in the best interests of a parent who is not able to cope with the normal demands of life to live in the family home or in a nursing home. On the one hand, living at home allows the parent to share life with the grandchildren, and the generations can mutually enrich one another. On the other hand, if visited frequently with love, the latter alternative may better preserve the incapacitated parent’s dignity and health. In any case, such decisions are difficult.

The *purpose* for the fifth commandment implies that it comes with a promise for obedience (cf. Eph 6:2), but the promise should not be understood in individual terms. The promise is not given to the people of Israel as individuals, meaning longevity is not granted specifically to persons who honor their parents—conversely, neither is it denied specifically to persons who don’t. The promise is given to the people of Israel as a nation, meaning longevity *in the land* is granted *corporately* to the nation if it honors its parents. Put differently, if the people of Israel honor their parents, the nation will live long in the Promised Land. “‘This “promise” is not a personal blessing, but a blessing for a people to possess a land under God’s rule and thus become a light to the nations’” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Exodus,” 2022 ed., 195, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf)).

Paul gives instructions to Christian households in his letter to the Ephesians. These instructions include his commands to wives (5:22-24), to husbands (vv. 25-33), to children (6:1-3), to fathers (v. 4), to slaves (vv. 5-8), and to masters (v. 9). His command to children, “obey your parents,” is entailed by the fifth commandment and amounts to an application of it to them. Children are to *obey* their parents because it’s *the right thing to do*, Paul says. Noting that it’s “the first commandment with a promise,” he goes on to write, “so that you may enjoy long life on earth”—changing “in the land” (Ex 20:12) to “on the earth.” On the change, *The NIV Study Bible* explains, “In Dt 5:16 (see Ex 20:12), where this commandment occurs, the ‘promise’ was expressed in terms of the anticipated occupation of the ‘land,’ i.e., Canaan. That specific application was, of course, not appropriate to the Ephesians, so the more general application is made here” (note on Eph 6:2-3).

Honoring one’s parents is the right thing to do, so younger children ought to respect and obey their parents, and older children ought to support and care for their parents.

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## Word Studies/Notes

### v. 12 *honor*

The Hebrew word means “‘honor, give weight to, glorify, esteem,’ in the sense of giving a place of precedence, of taking someone seriously . . . To ‘give honor’ to father and mother means more than to be subject to them, or respectful of their wishes: they are to be given precedence by the recognition of the importance, which is theirs by right, esteemed for their priority, and loved for it as well. As Yahweh is honored for his priority to all life, so father and mother must be honored for their priority, as Yahweh’s instruments, to the lives of their children” (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 291). “To honor one’s parents is to esteem them as having value. By esteeming them as having value, one also confers upon them value in the community. Acknowledging their honor and giving them honor go hand in hand. The English idiom of counting someone as a ‘heavyweight’ is similar, not indicating physical size but importance or weightiness in the community. ‘To honor’ exalts the object. The term is used frequently in worship (Ps. 86:9; NIV ‘glory’), and its probable parallel in Leviticus 19:3 is ‘to fear, to reverence’ (*tîrā’û*) father and mother, a term otherwise reserved for God” (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 425).

### v. 12 *so that*

The dependent clause contains the *purpose* for the commandment to “honor your father and mother.”

### v. 12 *you*

The pronoun refers to the nation *corporately* rather than to persons *individually*. In other words, the commandment should not be understood in an *individual* sense. Dishonoring one’s parents does not mean that a child (whether young or old) will die before his or her time. “The promise of longevity that accompanies the command (**live long**) refers to duration as a nation in covenant relationship with God (**in the land the LORD your God is giving you**) rather than a lengthened lifespan for each obedient individual” (John D. Hannah, “Exodus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 140).

### v. 12 *in the land*

“The present commandment looks forward to the *nation’s tenure in the land of promise*. There is *not* promise here of *individually* long life spans. Rather the promise refers to God’s protection of his covenant people if and as long as they keep his covenant” (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 462, italics added).

“‘This “promise” is not a personal blessing, but a blessing for a people to possess a land under God’s rule and thus become a light to the nations’” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Exodus,” 2022 ed., 195, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf)).

### v. 12 *the LORD your God*

Cf. “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the land *Yahweh* your *Elohim* is giving you.” (NOG)

### v. 12 *is giving*

“Giving” in fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham (cf. Ge 15:18; Ex 2:24-25; 3:8; 19:3-6).



## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Throughout our lives, we are to honor our parents – respecting and obeying them when children, supporting and caring for them when adults – because this is the right thing to do.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



## 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

Let's be frank with one another. We're all sinners who fall short of God's glory. We fail at honoring God, and we fail at honoring people. Now that that's out of the way, I have a question: do you find it easier to honor God than people? While I fail at both, I find it considerably easier to honor the perfect, holy, righteous Creator God over imperfect, messy people. Yet, as we transition from learning how to honor God to honoring those He created, He throws us a doozy of a commandment with "honor your mother and father." And that might be tricky for some folks, especially since the world tells us to point the finger at our parents for everything wrong with us (they somehow miss sin, but I digress...). According to the hierarchy of grace found in the commandments, God instructs us first to honor Him and then extend honor to those closest to us. What I've learned with age is that my parents are messed-up sinners just like me. I have a responsibility to see them through Jesus' eyes with the same grace, compassion and mercy that He does. As we're teaching our kids to honor us, a training ground for honoring God, perhaps we need to look at how we're modeling this with honoring our parents. Ouch. Perhaps this is the day to look at your parents with a holy perspective and forgive. Maybe it's time to let go of old hurts and resentments. Maybe today you'll choose to break the bonds of generational sin and lead your kids to the cross.

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 20:12

1. What is the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment?
2. Why should you honor your father and mother?
3. If you follow this commandment, where will you live?

### What Do You Think?

What does it mean to honor someone?

### What Do You Do?

What are seven different ways to honor your parents? Put this into practice by doing one of these things each day this week!

## CORE COMPETENCY: Kindness-Goodness

I treat others better than myself.

## MEMORY VERSE: Galatians 5:1

*"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week's verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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