Section: Law (Commands)

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q49. Why does God give the fifth commandment: Honor your father and mother?**

So we will learn righteous submission by practicing obedience to our parents: honoring their God-given authority in attitude, word, and action. This pleases the Lord.

**Exodus 20:12** “Honor your father and your mother ...”

**Colossians 3:20** Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

**Proverbs 6:20-21** My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck.

**Proverbs 20:20** If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.

**Ephesians 6:1** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

# Introduction

Good evening family. It is a joy to be back again here with you and delivering the catechism lecture tonight. I’ll start our time by reading the catechism question and answer.

Please bow your head and join me in prayer.

I want to begin tonight by unpacking the scope of this commandment. We have said that every commandment has two major sides: “what does this commandment forbid” and “what does it require.” Each commandment must also be seen as a summary for that particular element of eternal moral law. For instance, this commandment speaks of obedience from the child to the parent; however, every God-given authority in our lives, lands under this commandment.

So the fifth commandment is for wives to submit to their husbands as to the Lord, husbands to submit to God’s design for them as husbands, citizens to submit to their governing officials and other authorities like law enforcement, students to submit to teachers, employees to submit to employers, church members submit to elders, etc. This commandment is a summary of moral truth that reveals an authority structure set up by God for all areas of your life with the ultimate authority being God Himself.

So tonight, I want to unpack three points for us in regard to this commandment.

My first point tonight will be to the child’s or the subordinate’s role as it relates to this command. My second point will be the parent’s or authority’s role as it relates to this commandment. Finally, I will end with when this commandment does not apply.

**POINT 1:** Children/subordinates must obey in attitude, speech, and action.

**POINT 2:** Parents/authorities must lead righteously.

**POINT 3:** When the commandment does not apply.

**POINT 1: Children/subordinates must obey in attitude, word, and action.**

**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.”**

How do we honor our parents? By being obedient in attitude, word, and action. Obedience is a direct way of honoring the authorities in our lives. Here’s a vital piece of this commandment, and I believe it to be the reason why this command focuses on the family unit: If you do not learn how to honor authority in what should be the first and one of the most loving relationships you have, you’re missing out on God’s gracious designed way for you to learn how to honor ALL authority in your life. One of the things I tell my girls all the time is that I’m teaching them to obey Erin and I because it will help them learn to obey God.

The two main points that start this commandment focus on children and parents. This is because if you don’t learn as a child to obey, it will become more and more evident in your life as you encounter other authorities, and it’s much more difficult for you to learn this later. God was gracious to give us a family to learn these things in while we are young. It was His goodness to us to design it this way, you must see that tonight. In all of this, the foundation for learning obedience is critical and it is why God commands that we do this from the start of our lives. The older you get the more entrenched your bad habits and pride becomes. When you are a child looking up to your parents in stature it is not nearly as difficult to see that you are not in charge. However when you are looking someone eye to eye or maybe even looking down upon them, the simple physical difference can become a stumbling block for your obedience due to our prideful hearts.

Often times we adopt unbiblical views of submission to authorities. For example we tend to think if someone doesn’t lead well we do not have to obey their leadership. We tend to think if someone doesn’t seem to like us or know us deeply, we don’t have to obey or honor their position of leadership. However, the authorities in your life don’t have to meet any extra-biblical prerequisites you may have made up— you, according to God’s command, have to honor them. Your bosses do not have to like you in order for you to honor them for the position they have. You don’t have to like the president of the United States, but you do have to honor him for the position he has. And so on.

God puts our rulers in place, and the Scripture calls us to the obedience of our governing officials. Not because we like them, but because God is the One who placed them there. When you’re dishonoring the president, you’re ultimately dishonoring the God who placed him in office. If in your head you’re arguing with me at this point, let us turn to the Scriptures and see what God says about this.

**Romans 13:1-2 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. (2) Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.**

Now I can hear the argument that these authorities are supposed to be for our good. That is true they are; that was the original design, and they will have to answer for the way they used their authority. However, this does not nullify our honoring and obedience to God. God will never let you “off the hook” to obeying HIS commands because someone else didn’t perform perfectly. God will hold every individual responsible for his or her obedience regardless of others. Our obedience is first and foremost to God. That is why it is my joy to obey in difficult circumstances. When everyone obeys like they are supposed to, it makes my obedience easy and therefore never challenges my heart. When things are tough and others are disobedient, it makes my obedience harder and therefore reveals the heart behind my obedience.

As a side note, no one can make you sin. Church we have to remember that when someone sins against us it certainly does not excuse us to then sin in return. We, all of us, every individual person, is responsible for their own sin.

Just think of this, if we are only commanded to obey when others lead perfectly, then we will never actually have to obey. When we are talking about our earthly authorities, we cannot demand perfection. If you want to obey a perfect leadership then obey Christ who was perfect. Since Christ Jesus calls us to obey our parents (and other imperfect people in positions of authority) then we obey the imperfect authorities based upon the finished work of our perfect Authority—Christ the King!

You see when human authorities fail, that’s precisely when we have a unique chance to honor God above all things in the brokenness and prove that we live for Him and not for our own selfish desires to be fulfilled. If this obedience sounds like a burden, it is because we’re missing this point! Putting God first in our life in all areas causes us to strive for obedience even in the worst situations; that is a beautiful way we honor God by being obedient. Jesus said in John 14:15, “If you love me, you’ll keep my commandments.” When we’re grateful for God’s salvation of our souls from the wrath we deserve for our sinning and offenses to Him, these commandments will be addressed with joy. Our overwhelming joy to serve your Lord when things are hardest is far more evidence of our love, and far more honoring to Him, than the easier obeying when everything goes our way. The fifth commandment encompasses all of these areas of leadership and submission.

Let’s continue in this first point by showing you children or subordinates how serious God takes obedience. If you are in this room, you are a child of someone or are subordinate to someone, so this is important for all of us!

**Deuteronomy 21:18-21 "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”**

Wow-- did you guys see that? The punishment for a disobedient son in the Old Covenant was death by public stoning. By a show of hands how many of you think you may not have survived this law if you were born under the old covenant? God clearly places an extremely high weight on obedience. When you are disobedient to your parents, you are disobedient to God. When you are disobedient to God, the just penalty for this sin is death. Romans would say it this way: *the wages of sin is death*. Disobedience to God deserves, or better said it earns, death. Now there is definitely some context to the passage in Deuteronomy about the disobedient son, but what we can clearly see is the high weight God placed upon disobedience.

Children, the honoring of your parents reflects your honoring of God. Students, when you don’t obey a parent or even a leader, you dishonor God. This is why I take it seriously when you disobey myself or other leaders. My aim, though I am not perfect, is to get to the heart of the issue; namely, that you’re dishonoring God through your disobedience to human authority, and I would not be loving you well to simply ignore and allow that. This is also why if I see you dishonor your parent I will say something to you then as well. My aim is not to overstep you parents but to partner with you in addressing the youth because this is a big deal to God. I would be unloving, and your parents would be unloving to let you build those habits or to think that type of behavior is acceptable.

Look with me at:

**Romans 1:29-32 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.**

Doesn’t it seem weird that among all these other heinous sins there we find disobedience to parents? Paul caps his point off by saying though they know that those who do such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. So please hear my heart, especially my students: when I make a big deal about you guys not obeying, it is because I love my God and cannot be ok with or give approval to your disobedience. It is also because I love you and this verse shows us that if you live this way, the just penalty for this sin is death. Ultimately your disobedience is a dishonoring of God and the authorities He has placed in your life.

Christian when someone discipling you points out your sin and offense against God, this is a loving act of someone who cares and does not want to be a part of this Romans 1 verse of approving sin. It is in fact a very vital part of discipleship.

The reality is we practice this disobedience way more than we realize. If you have ever been disobedient to an authority in front of others, then you have practiced disobedience and shown others that you approve of this practice. Parents, has it ever outraged you when your children are disobedient or dishonoring to you? But get this, you were more than likely outraged at their disobedience for personal reasons instead of the disregard of God’s holiness. Everything that we do must be grounded in the God we serve. Understanding first and foremost that your disobedience is ultimately a disobedience to God is vitally important. Parents, is this your focus when addressing your child’s disobedience? If not, we have got to make this change; it is crucial. It is vital that our discipline and instruction be founded in our desire to glorify God. Our offense to disobedience must first bother us because of the offense and dishonoring of God.

Now there is another even more practical truth here. Children, if you do not obey your parents, then the risks that could take your life will increase. If Arylah does not listen to or obey my instructions for her to not play in the street, how’s that going to go for her? How about this: if I teach my children that it’s okay to disobey and not listen the first time I say something, their risk of getting hurt or killed will increase greatly. Voddie Bauchum says this in many of his sermons on training up children, he says, “Delayed obedience is disobedience.”

Parents we have to think about what we are training our children to do? If the car is on fire and you tell your children to get out of the car, will they argue with you or listen immediately? How have you trained them to respond?

This is a great example of the danger of the “counting discipline” for kids. When you count to three, you’re telling your children that they are allowed to disobey your command as long as they don’t do it for too long. Think about how that would apply in an emergency. The cars on fire you’re yelling for them to get out but you’ve got to count to three before they will listen. I think we often miss these things and it truly can create a bad habit, even a false approval of disobedience.

If your children don’t learn to obey, they will likely not succeed in other areas of their life as well. In this situation, even if they live a long life, their quality of life will not be very good. Employees struggling to honor their bosses, citizens struggling to honor law enforcement, church members struggling to honor the elders or other delegated authorities, and wives struggling to honor their husbands.

This is part and parcel with the main verse for this commandment. Let’s look at our commandment verse and at the New Testament version of this verse.

**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.”**

**Ephesians 6:1 Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, this is the first commandment with a promise that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.**

These two verses sound similar, and they are. Paul is quoting Exodus, but he is applying it to people living in the new covenant. The part of the Exodus verse that reads “that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you” is referring to God bringing his people into the Promised Land: the land flowing with milk and honey. God is saying not only will you live long, but the quality of your life will be good. So when Paul quotes this verse, he takes the “land that the LORD your God is giving you” and translates it to “that it may go well with you and you may live long in the land.” You see, God’s promise here is that your quality and length of life will be better if you obey your parents. Ultimately this is because if you’re obeying your parents, you’re also obeying God and you’re trained well to obey other authorities God puts over you. Now this is not a prosperity type promise; it is a general promise of God, but it will not apply the same way to every life. There are and will be children who obey well that God will take home at an early age. Obeying is not a magic trick to get a prosperous long life.

One of the coolest things I stole from the Tedd Tripp Shepherding a Child’s Heart book was this: Whenever Azaria is being disobedient, we ask her to tell us what Eph. 6 says. She has it memorized and will say it back to us. This is an easy way to undergird your expectations of obedience and your follow through of discipline with the Scriptures. Azaria knows well that her good and long life depends on her honoring or obeying her mother and me. She also knows that I want her to live a good, long life. She knows when I spank her, it is because daddy wants her to have a good, long life and to honor God. Children, listen to me: if your parents don’t expect you to honor them or obey them, then that’s dangerous for you. Parents, teaching our kids from Scripture what God requires of them is a practical way as parents you can address your children with God’s glory and your love for them as the foundation.

Children, instead of being angry that your parent is disciplining you, be thankful that you have a parent who cares enough to fight for your good, long life. Now again, this is a rule, and there are exceptions. Some very obedient children have died young: this is the exception. For the most part, the rule and promise of God is long and rich life through the honoring and obedience to your parents. This is not about self-seeking prosperity though. Please don’t misunderstand this. This is about natural order and God’s design.

Don’t obey your parents: you put yourself at many risks; do obey your parents, generally speaking, you avoid unnecessary risks and get to enjoy God’s creation more fully. Now, as I’ve been saying, this flows into other areas relatively easily. Let me explain: if you obey and honor your bosses at your work, you typically have a good, long job. There are again exceptions of course but generally speaking, this is true. If you obey the law and honor your governing officials, you don’t get speeding tickets or get arrested. This of course has exceptions where mistakes are made, but that’s the exception and not the rule. Parents, if we prepare our children well to respect and honor authority, we then prepare them well for a good, long life. Children, if you learn now to obey and honor authorities, it will give you the greatest chance at a good long life.

Students, when I get all poppa Steve-o on you and discipline you, it is not because I hate you or I am singling you out; rather, it is because I love you, and I want you to live a good, long life. The same applies to the other leaders volunteering their time to serve in youth, as well as the Elders…. it’s out of love that they are there to support your growth in truth, sometimes through discipline. But, if you continue to disobey and do what you want with disregard to the authorities in your life, it will go bad for you. I care—we care— to not simply allow you to live like that. When we rebuke those around us, we do it because of our love for you. We want to see you excel, we want it to go good for you, and we truly do love you and want what’s best for you. So our aim when we confront you is to point you back to God’s commands, because that is where you will be best off. That is where God said you will flourish!

Christians in the room listen to this verse:

**Col 3:20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.**

If you claim to be a Christian, then your aim is always to please the Lord in all that you do. So that whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, you do all things for God’s glory! If you claim to be a Christian but do not honor your parents you’re not acting like a Christian!

Now, a few more key things before we move on- God commands obedience for every authority he places in our lives. This obedience is not dependent upon the authority’s perfection (or lack thereof).

What I mean is if your boss is a horrible boss, (so long as you have the job and you’re not asked to do anything that would break the governing law of the land or Gods law), then you obey them even if they are horrible. If your parents are not godly they are still your parents, and (so as long as they are not requiring you to do anything outside of Gods law) then you’re called to obey them. Wives, in the same way, if your husband is a lame or harsh leader (or worse yet, an unbeliever) you are still called to honor—to obey—him, per God’s design and command, as we see for example in Eph 5:24 “…wives should submit to their husbands in everything.”.

Our obedience to human authorities in our lives is not dependent upon our opinion of their leadership.

You have been commanded by God to obey the authorities He has defined. Christians we obey the authorities God has placed in our lives so that we’re obedient to God and glorifying Him. This is the big point of tonight’s lesson, don’t miss: All of this is ultimately about undeserving sinners who’ve received God’s grace living from that reality by denying ourselves to live for God’s glory. Do you see that? Do you get that? We obey the authorities God has placed in our lives so that we’re obedient to God and glorifying Him!

God commands our obedience to come from our joyful hearts so that it is not a begrudging or moaning type of obedience. What I mean is we don’t obey as we groan and dread every second of whatever we are being told to do. We obey with joy because we trust in and long to glorify God. We obey with joy because God has saved us from the wrath we deserve. Obedience in attitude is having a cheerful heart when obeying.

God commands our obedience in attitude, speech, and action. I just explained the attitude part, but how about our actions and our speech? How many of you said you would do something for your parents, but you didn’t end up doing it? Jesus has an interesting parable in Mathew 21 about two sons. One said they would not obey but later had a change of heart and did what was commanded of him. The other son said he would obey, but he did not do what was commanded. Which of these sons obeyed? The one who acted, the one who actually did what he was commanded to do. Your actions are the way you show obedience. You obey when you do what is commanded of you (with the right heart).

So what about in our word? Don’t make this too complicated. When you communicate with your parents and/or authorities, be respectful. Talk to them as you would speak to an officer who pulled you over on the freeway, or a principle who has called you to his office. Be respectful, and when you’re commanded to do something, even if it is not what you wanted to do, respond properly and appropriately. One of the things we explain to our daughters is this: we first want your acknowledgement and response to be to the obedience of our command. After that is clear to us, then we can discuss any problems or thoughts you have.

So here’s how this practically happens: I’ll come home and before I check in with my wife, I will see something I think Azaria needs to do. I’ll call to her and say, “Azaria, pick this up.” When her first response is “why” or “but I,” that is being disobedient and will typically be punished with a spanking. When I ask her what her response should be, she will say something like this: “I should say ok. I want to obey, and I heard you ask me to do this. I will do what you’ve asked; is it ok if I talk to you first?”

Most of the time when she responds this way, my answer is of course, then she will say, “I was doing something mommy told me to do. I need to finish obeying her first.” To that I say yes and amen; thank you, kiddo, for being obedient. So simply put, even if there’s a good argument to be made, acknowledge the commandment, state your desire to obey, then ask if you can converse about it. This is one practical, easy way my daughter obeys me with her word. Showing her desire to obey and honor my request first is important.

Another way we obey in word is to honor our parents with our mouths. If you talk bad about your parents, you are gossips and disobedient with your words. If you talk back to your parents or speak harshly to your parents, you’re being disobedient in your word. If my parents say something to me about the way I am raising my children or acting toward them and I bark at them, I am being disobedient in word. Yes, I am 39 years old, and I am still commanded to honor my parents with the way I speak to them. As an adult, can I disagree with what they are saying? Yes, of course, but there is a way to do that honorably, and there is a way to do that disobediently. This is obeying with my word. Even at 39, I am called to obey my parents in attitude, action, and word. This is done differently than it was done as a child, but it is still done. Let’s look at a verse where Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for their failure to obey and honor their parents and points to their word to show their failure:

**Matthew 15:1-9 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,”he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:**

**“‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’”**

You see, even as adults we are to honor our parents in action in attitude and in word. Jesus said in verse 18 of this same chapter:

**But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.**

What comes out of your mouth is from your heart; your words reveal your heart. If you speak poorly of your parents or to your parents, it reveals a disobedient heart; that is sinful. If you honor God with your lips but not with your heart, your worship is done in vain! Notice how this verse is speaking to grown adults and how they are caring for their grown parents. This is an ongoing honoring and obeying of your parents. Now there is a lot to say about the changes of this relationship when we become adults, and I do not have the time to unpack that fully here. Please see that this relationship still requires a honoring into old age of your parents.

So children/subordinates, you need to obey in “attitude, word, and action.” This is how you honor your mother and father or the authorities in your life.

If you don’t learn to obey in the family setting, it is highly unlikely that you’ll obey your elders/church leaders, your boss, your husband, and most importantly, you will not obey God. Disobedience to God invites dysfunction and even death, and rightfully so. This is the foundation of the fifth commandment, and it leads me well into the second point. The fifth commandment requires parents and all those in authority to lead their children or subordinates in a loving, God-honoring way.

**POINT 2: Parents/authorities must lead righteously.**

In one of my favorite football movies, there is a scene where this statement is made: “Attitude reflects leadership, captain.” I have already clearly stated that your obedience is not dependent upon others’ obedience. So I do not want to confuse you here. Your obedience is not dependent on others; however, a good leader knows that the way in which they lead can encourage obedience or discourage it. In this commandment, the leadership of the parents is supposed to encourage obedience. Parents and those given authority must lead righteously, that is also contained in the 5th commandment and the rest of Scripture. We see this charge to dads (for example) in the Ephesians 6 passage:

**Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

So this verse, which comes immediately after Paul quotes the 5th commandment, goes directly to how we lead. Fathers (speaking directly to the head of the household per God’s design. Not that, due to the oneness of marriage and the design of the family, this is the requirement of mothers as well), don’t provoke in your leading; don’t be sinfully harsh and provoke your children to anger/disobedience. Instead, lead them this way. What way does the verse give? Bring them up (raise them) in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. What does this (discipline and instruction) look like according to the Scriptures? Proverbs has a lot to say about both of these.

**Pro 6:20-23 My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,**

**Pro 13:24 Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.**

**Pro 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.**

**Pro 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.**

Looking to the first Proverb, we read 6:20-23. Let’s break it down a bit for our understanding tonight. Our instruction to our children (or, as we’ve discussed, in the wider application, the instruction of any leader to his subordinates) should be for their good! It should be something that is consistent in both the giving of it and the content given. How else are they to store up in their hearts your teaching? How do you memorize something? By repeating it over and over. When you the parent, are consistent in your instruction and in your content, that’s when you enable your children to store up in their hearts and wear the commandments around their necks.

Our instruction leads them when they walk throughout their day and when they lie down. Our instruction watches over them. It keeps them safe while they sleep; it provides peaceful rest to them. When they wake up, our instruction keeps them company. It rings in their ears, so that the decisions they make are made through our instruction to them. Our commandment and our teaching provides a light to them so that even in the darkest of moments, it leads them through the night, and it guides their paths.

And our discipline brings them life! Does the way you discipline your child produce conversations and room to instruct? Do you follow up your discipline with love and correction so that your children can change their path, so they can repent and head in a new direction? Parents, pay attention to the way you teach, command, and discipline your kids so that you are bringing them to the truth of life, not ways of death.

Now what do these verses mean when they say the rod? This word rod in the Hebrew is commonly defined as branch or staff. This rod is a form of physical discipline, it is quick, it hurts and it begins to set right and restore the path and relationship that is broken by sin. It cannot fully restore this relationship alone however; it must be followed with love, with forgiveness, and with instruction to your child, so that they can avoid this failure in the future. Please don’t make the cultural argument that you know better than God and spanking your children isn’t necessary. Physical discipline is part of the biblical leadership of your children and if this is totally absent you are in violation of the fifth commandment.

On the flip side, if you are abusive in any way, that is also not disciplining with the rod in a biblical way. It is sinful you must stop and you need to repent. If you discipline in anger you are sinning against your children and this is the worst time to use the rod. If you’re affected by anger, DO NOT discipline.

If you’re disciplining because you’re offended STOP. Your discipline should first and foremost be because your God has been offended. When you discipline with this undergirding you will not do it in anger. Do not sin when you discipline your kids, it teaches them incorrectly and completely ruins the purpose of discipline.

Fathers to bring your children up in the discipline of the Lord is to not spare them from the rod for this would spoil them and would also signify your hatred of them. You may think its loving to be little in discipline, but, according to God, it is not loving to be lacking in biblical discipline. We must conform our minds and actions to God, not the world’s philosophies.

Let me be blunt and honest here, for some, this is an issue of laziness more than anything. What I mean is, the reason some fathers are slow to discipline is often because it is causing us more work. To discipline well includes time, effort, forgiveness, and instruction. It is a lot of work and conversation. Don’t forget discipline and instruction work together.

Again, this often gets missed because of a sheer laziness on behalf of the father/leader in the current situation. It takes a lot of work to instruct your children. Try to remember if you can when you were punished for something you didn’t understand? Do you remember how hurt you were? Do you remember the anger and confusion you had? When we fail to instruct our children but we remember to discipline them, then this is the mixed bottle of emotions where you end up leaving them.

You will undoubtedly provoke your children to anger if you do this. The reverse works the same, if you instruct all the time but never discipline never show the authority that such instruction comes from, you will provoke your children to anger because you will teach them that they don’t have to obey instruction. When they get a job and get instructed by their boss to do something, they will experience the discipline of being fired when they do not obey their boss…this will make them angry. Now like everything there will be exceptions to the rule. It is possible for you to raise your child in a home with discipline and instruction and love and yet have a totally rebellious child. This is however the exception not the rule.

I need to say one more thing about this instruction and discipline. It is always to be done in the Lord. I know I have made this emphasis already, but if we do not lead in the Lord (make our leadership about God and His instruction), then we are in sin. This must be the foundation of our leadership. Yes, there are a million things that are liberty types of decisions in leadership…(what time your family eats dinner, what color your mini-van will be, and so on)…as long as biblical wisdom is in play, a leader makes those decisions for those he leads. But, when there is God’s law in play, there must be direct obedience. A father is not permitted to lead his family into credit card debt. A mother is not permitted to lead her children into unhealthy eating habits. A husband is not permitted to ignore his wife’s spiritual needs. A boss is not permitted to abuse his employees. An elder is not permitted to teach his own ideas in the place of God’s word. A law enforcement officer is not permitted to command a citizen to give up their rights. On and on. Where Scripture speaks to how each role is to function (how a person of authority is to live and lead), a leader may NOT disregard God’s word—His design. Their disobedience to God in that would be sin, and they will have to give an account to God.

So, as we have been saying, all roles of authority: husbands and wives, bosses and employees, governments and citizens, elders and church members, humans and God…all of these areas fall under this commandment. There is so much to be said and so many scriptures, but we do not have time for all of this tonight, so let me say this. We each have God ordained roles, and these roles have biblical mandates that we are to follow or we are in sin. This is God’s word; take it seriously, because God is worthy of our obedience.

All of these examples fit under the fifth commandment. I hope you can clearly see that every area of authority or headship, from parents, to fathers, to husbands, to elders, to men and women, to governing officials, every area has God-given ways that they are required to lead. This is the end of my second point that parents/authorities must lead children/subordinates righteously, and when we don’t, we are in violation of the fifth commandment.

Let us move to my last point for the night:

**POINT 3: When you must disobey!**

**Acts 5:27-29 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, (28) saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." (29) But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.”**

When any authority in your life commands you to do something that would be disobedient to God, then you must obey God, not man. You must obey God over and above all other authorities in your life. This means parents, husbands, governing officials, elders, etc. God is the ultimate authority and must be obeyed over all other authorities. Now this obedience requires a few very important parts to it. Let me give you two:

1. You must be certain that the command you are given is actually a breaking of Gods commands. It is so easy for us to become wise in our own eyes. Please be cautious of this attitude and humble your mind when being addressed about possible sin in your life. Especially when it is being addressed by those whom God has given authority, like the elders, your disciple-maker. Etc. I have seen that there is a strong temptation for many to not obey their authorities, due to them twisting some truth of God to imply their leader is wrong or unwise. Do not do this, do not twist God’s word in order to find a loophole to disobey. One way to test this is what is your general disposition towards and reputation in how you interact with those in authority…have you struggled with this in life? What would others say about you in this—we’re often not the best evaluators of ourselves. When you are faithful in submission and known for that faithfulness, when you need to question a leader’s ways or decisions, you’re in a trusted position to do that. Let us now be known for trying to insist on our own ways instead of submitting well. I’ll say it again: You must be certain that the command you are given is actually a breaking of Gods commands. It is so easy for us to become wise in our own eyes. Please be cautious of this attitude and humble your mind when being addressed about possible sin in your life.

Boss asking me to sign something for them…

1. When you do disobey the authority, be prepared to take the earthly consequence for that disobedience.

**Acts 5:40-42: and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. (41) Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. (42) And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.**

The disciples did not complain or fight against the punishment; they instead rejoiced that they would be counted worthy to suffer for their obedience to God. This is huge! Our country is passing laws that will affect and is already affecting our religious freedoms, but we must face the fact that we will have consequences for our obedience to God and should count it joy to suffer for His name.

This doesn’t mean that we don’t try and vote for laws that protect this freedom, but when the law does not, we accept the punishment and glorify the Lord. I know this may sound counter cultural but the disciples, all but John, died for obeying God. They simply proclaimed Christ to the very end and glorified God through their obedience.

They counted the earthly punishment as a joy to suffer in the name of God. Death for teaching the truth is unfair, but that is not the response or example that Christ gave on the cross. If ever there was a time to call out injustice and unfairness, the cross is it. But Christ for the joy set before Him, namely obeying the Father, endured the cross.

In closing, this commandment has so many implications it would be impossible to exhaust them here tonight. We covered our duty as authorities in regards to this command, our duty as subordinates in regards to this command, and when it is required of us to disobey earthly authorities. Remember for those of us in authority roles, it is our job to be righteous in our role, so we do not add temptation to those we lead. For those of us in subordinate roles, it is our duty to obey in attitude, speech, and action, and when it comes to disobeying lower authorities in order to obey God, be careful. Get counsel and be certain so that God sees your desire to glorify Him to the utmost.

All of this lesson can be summed up in the truth that we should **love God above all else, and love our neighbor rightly.**

When leaders do this, they lead well. When those following do this, they follow well. God’s design is for His glory and our good. Do you see that? I pray your flesh hasn’t tuned this teaching out, or you mind been constantly saying “yeah, but…”. I pray you have heard God’s design through this command, and you are wanting to honor God in word, deed, and attitude, even when it’s hard.

Q49. Why does God give the fifth commandment: Honor your father and mother?

So we will learn righteous submission by practicing obedience to our parents: honoring their God-given authority in attitude, word, and action. This pleases the Lord.

Be a blessing to those who lead you, by honoring God’s design for all of this. Even consider as you process this teaching tonight, do you have some confession and repentance to do here? That should include you going to those you’ve disobeyed in attitude, word, or action to confess to them and seek unity with them. Then take up a new course in joyful submission. Be steadfast in faith unto living this out righteously.

We are blessed to be a blessing….is that you in this topic? I pray it our repentance gets us there. For God’s glory and the good of His church. Let me pray.