



February 19, 2023

Abounding Grace: The Grace of the Law Relational Stewardship

Exodus 20:12

For Discussion and Reflection

1. The word for “honor” is a common word, often translated “glory.” It means to give someone “weight” in your life, or to esteem them. The commandment doesn’t discount appropriate boundaries of the “one flesh” relationship of a marriage, or wise boundaries for ungodly people. Once we leave home, we don’t have to obey. Adult children are not told to obey but they must still esteem their parents. The focus is on our relational responsibilities within the basic unit of society, the family. How would you apply this commandment in your situation?
2. While the commandment focuses on the basic unit of society, it has direct application to all relationships in an ordered society. The implication is to start with the smallest unit and work your way out to larger units. Our responsibility to parents communicates our responsibilities to employers, princes, prophets, etc. Those in authority are often given paternal or maternal titles: Genesis 45:8, Leviticus 19:32, Judges 5:7, 2 Kings 5:13 and 13:14, Isaiah 49:23, 1 Corinthians 4:15, Hebrews 12:9. How does an ordered society depend on “esteeming” authority structures?
3. Scripture records an opportunity that David had to kill King Saul. Remember that Saul was unjustly trying to kill David. Why won’t David kill Saul? What does that communicate about his understanding of Saul’s authority? How should that apply to how we treat and talk about people that God has placed over us?
4. Read the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q/A 127-132. What responsibilities do superiors, inferiors, and equals have with each other?
5. Scripture records several striking illustrations of bad parenting. Read these texts and comment on their meaning and application: Genesis 37:3-4, 1 Kings 1:6-9, 1 Samuel 20:30,34.
6. Notice in the commandment that “Mother” is placed first. In a highly patriarchal culture, this is unusual. Why does God place the mother first? What is God saying about their cultural norms? Notice in Leviticus 19:3 that God does this again, tying the critical nature of the commandment to the fourth commandment and the first table of the law. What does this communicate?
7. In Ephesians 6:1-9 and Colossians 3:18-25, the apostle lays out a domestic code. Notice some things in these texts. First, children are told to obey. Here the word “children” refers to an underage child. While not mentioned in the fifth commandment, obedience is Paul’s application of its meaning. Second, notice how equals are to respond to each other (husband/wife). Finally, notice how those in authority are to treat subordinates. How does this compare to the Catechism’s statements? What do you glean from these passages?
8. Scripture connects disobedience in the home with the breakdown of society. Consider Romans 1:28-32 and 2 Timothy 3:1-9. Ed Clowney reminds us, “Satan is a destroyer, not a creator.” How is Satan attacking an ordered society? Move from large scale cultural dynamics (LGBTQA+) to smaller ones that affect home life (busyness, entertainment, social media, etc.).
9. How has the Holy Spirit spoken to you today? What steps do you need to take to grow in grace? What changes would you ask the Spirit to make in your life?