



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

God's Top Ten Series, Lesson 37

Lesson Title: Honor Parents

Take Home Point: Honor parents.

Warm-Up:

There are so many different ways to honor parents. When they are not well or need elder care, we can care for them. We can accept the choices they make as adults, even if we don't agree. We cannot talk bad about them in front of them or behind their back. We can listen to their stories (even if we've heard them many times before!) and laugh or cry with them. We can advise them when they need help. We can keep in touch with them and keep other family members such as grandchildren in touch with them, too. We can do work for them they can't do themselves. We can treat them as we would any other adult, with politeness and respect. We can pray for them. Sometimes very few of these are possible because of how they choose to live and act toward us. Giving such a situation to the Lord is also a manner of honor.

Read: Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6: 1-4, 2 Samuel 15-18

Observation (What happened?):

What conditional promise did God make in Exodus 20:12?

In what different ways did Absalom dishonor his father?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What do you think it means to honor your parents?

Why did Paul include instructions for fathers immediately after encouraging children to obey their parents?

Insight:

Isn't it interesting that in the midst of his most important rules of life – rules of relationship with God Almighty and relationship with humanity – God includes this one about relationship with two very specific people in each person's life? Why did he get so specific in this one case? I believe it is for two reasons. First, those two people were given the awesome privilege of creating a new soul, unique in all creation and eternal. That is very special in God's eyes and deserves honor all by itself. Second, how we treat our parents reflects our view of God and how we relate to him as our true parent. Do we honor and respect him? By obeying him even better than our earthly parents? Or, as occasionally happens with children, do we have selective hearing, listening to and obeying only the part of God's Word that we wish? The commandment God gives is conditional, but the condition is on the consequence, not the doing. Even when circumstances make it hard, God wants us to honor him and our parents.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What does it mean to you to honor your parents? What can you do this week to honor them?

Pray for your small group to learn to honor their parents regardless of circumstances.