

END-TIMES ISSUES



#93 Commandment #5 – Honor (2) and respect/fear (1).

AND BEYONDI

GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS. HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

1

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"Honor your father and your mother, ..."

Exodus 20:12a / Deuteronomy 5:16a (NIV)

What does the word "HONOR" mean?

- Derived from a basic root word that refers to "heaviness" or "weightiness," honor focuses on the "weightiness" of a person's dignity, respect, authority, recognition, etc.
- When applied to God, it is often translated as "glory," and can refer to his being, as well as his presence, name, moral perfection, etc.
- To honor someone (or God) involves both the *internal attitude* of recognizing the individual's value, as well as the appropriate *external response*.

2

The contrast between the "weight" of honor and its opposite.

- The "weightiness" of dignity, respect, importance, etc., is the opposite of the "lightness" of insignificance, without value, not worthy of respect, etc. To treat people "lightly" would be the *opposite* of honoring them.

Illustrating this "weightiness" vs. "lightness" concept.

- Paul illustrates this by contrasting the "weightiness" of our future glory to the "lightness" of our present-day trials.

For our **momentary light affliction** is producing for us an absolutely incomparable **eternal weight of glory**.

2 Corinthians 4:17 (CSB)

- Psalm 1 is a *picture* of this concept (though it does not use the word "honor/glory"). The wicked are compared to "chaff" – empty grain husks that are easily blown-away by the wind (v.5). This would be "lightness," contrasted to the firm stability ("weight") of the righteous (who are like a firmly-planted tree).

3

OUR OBLIGATION TO HONOR SOMEONE DOES NOT DEPEND ON OUR OPINION ABOUT THAT PERSON.

Scripture tells us who we are to honor. We are to do so, even if we do not like them.

- Our obligation is based on the "weight" of their value, importance, etc., not the "feelings" we have toward them, or even the sins they may be committing.
- Those we are to honor are *sinners*. But so are we – and our sins can complicate the relationship just like *theirs* can. They will be judged for what they do... just like we will.

Though sin complicates matters, it doesn't cancel the obligation.

- We are not to approve of their sin, but we *are* to recognize that the individual is "heavy" with value, importance, etc. – because God had placed them in that position, and because they are made in the image of God (just as we are).
- Those who are to be honored also have responsibilities toward those who honor them. (We will look at this issue in the future.)

4

EXAMPLES of how evil leaders are to be treated.

- Elijah and Obadiah vs. King Ahab. (1 Kings 18)
 - Elijah, as a *prophet* from God, had *higher* authority than did King Ahab. So he was able to speak to Ahab in ways that Obadiah, a *servant* of the king, could not.
 - Though Ahab was evil, Obadiah *still* maintained a godly attitude toward him, while, *at the same time*, protecting 100 prophets of God, so that they wouldn't be put to death by the king's wife!
 - He served the king faithfully... and he did it in a way that honored God. This means he was fulfilling *both* of the great commandments (love for God and for neighbor) *at the same time* – just like we should.
 - Elijah, in contrast, rebuked Ahab. He told him that Israel's trouble had its origin in him and his family (1 Kings 18:18). He also told Ahab about the judgment that would be coming upon him and his family, because of their sin. Speaking truthfully was an expression of love, a warning, and an opportunity for Ahab to repent.

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- The apostles and the religious leaders.
 - They had to boldly speak the truth, which tended to make the leaders angry.
 - When the leaders persecuted them, they did *not* malign, slander or curse the leaders. There was no tirade, rage, backbiting, slander...
 - They also recognized (and acknowledged) that:
 - What the leaders had done to Jesus was done in ignorance of the Scriptures – Acts 3:17.
 - God sovereignly used the leaders' sins to accomplish good – Acts 3:18; 4:27-28.

There are many good examples of *godly* responses to sinful leaders, in history, and even today. These leaders could be in any walk of life – church, work, government, family, etc.

There are also examples of *sinful* responses to leaders – and we need to learn to recognize the difference!

6

We may need to speak against a leader's sin. But the way we do it will depend on our level of authority, and the type of situation we are in.

★ **Either way, that doesn't mean we can start sinning against them.** ★

MORE EXAMPLES:

- Samuel and King Saul – 1 Samuel 13:11, 13-14; 15:22-23, 35.
- David and King Saul – 1 Samuel 24:6-22; 26:8-25; 2 Samuel 1:1-27 (even after Saul died).
- Jeremiah – Jeremiah 26:12-15 (willing to speak the truth, regardless of what they might do him); 15:15 (letting God avenge for him).
- The apostle Paul and the (apostate) high priest – Acts 23:1-5.
- Jesus and the religious leaders – Matthew 23:1-36 (note vs. 2-4); etc.
- Jesus and Pilate – John 18:33-37; 19:9-11; Luke 23:34; etc.

At Jesus' trial and crucifixion, he had many opportunities to curse or threaten his enemies, to seek vengeance, etc. He did none of this. 1 Peter 2:21-24; 1 Timothy 6:13.

7

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT HONOR/GLORY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- There are many verses dealing with the *concept* of honor.
- There are many verses about *having* honor or *receiving* it; also verses about being *worthy* of having or receiving it.
- There are verses that *command* us to honor God, and other verses about the people who *do* this.
- There are situations in which *God* will honor *people* – such as in Psalm 91:15 (about people who call on him).
- There may be situations in which honor can be *requested* – such as when Saul asked Samuel to honor him in front of the people – 1 Samuel 15:30. (It wasn't necessarily an *earned* or *deserved* honor.)
- People can be honored even when they are dead. This is seen by the honor given to Hezekiah at his death – 2 Chronicles 32:33; and by David's attitude after King Saul died – 2 Samuel 1. In Jesus' day, the religious leaders honored (hypocritically) the Old Testament prophets – Matthew 23:26-31.

8

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT HONOR/GLORY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- Some verses focus on the honor/glory of nations, people, things, etc. – either having it, or receiving it. Sometimes the focus is on the *temporary nature* of this honor/glory.
- Most passages are about God/Jesus having glory/honor, because of who he is and what he does. This glory extends to everything related to God. This glory is a *fact*; and our only legitimate response is to give him the honor he *deserves*. People are to acknowledge it, and respond appropriately, by "glorifying" him. (The wicked don't do this.)
- Many Scriptures tell us that God's people will receive glory from God – examples: Romans 2:10; 8:18 and 2 Corinthians 4:17.
- All humans have the obligation to glorify God – Revelation 14:7. We do this by our conduct and our words (such as public praise). We are to do *everything* in a way that honors God – 1 Corinthians 10:31.
- In a few passages, one of the N.T. Greek words focuses on the *value* or *price* of something – examples: Matthew 17:9, Acts 5:2; 19:19.

9

WHAT ABOUT COMMANDS TO HONOR PEOPLE?

- **Old Testament commands are few.** Most passages simply state the *fact* that someone is honorable and should be honored.
 - ✓ We are *commanded* to honor father and mother (Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:16).
 - ✓ Since this command *represents all similar commands* within the Fourth Commandment "category," it would *imply* obligations toward other authorities, even though there might not be direct *commands* related to them. (It's often stated as a *fact*, though.)
- **In the New Testament, commands to the Jews are few** – probably because of what they *already knew* about the Fourth Commandment.
 - ✓ On two different occasions, *Jesus* reaffirms the *command* to honor father and mother: ① in Matthew 19:18-19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20 – as a commandment to be obeyed; and ② in Matthew 15:4; Mark 7:10 – as a command from God, given through Moses, which, if violated, makes a person worthy of death.

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- **In the New Testament, commands to the Gentiles (or to mixed groups) were many.** The Gentiles tended to *not* be knowledgeable in Old Testament teachings, and needed more explanation.
 - ✓ The audience *Peter* wrote to was probably a mixture of dispersed Jews and saved Gentiles. He points out the need to honor:
 - ♦ All people – 1 Peter 2:17.
 - ♦ The king (representing government authority) – 1 Peter 2:17.
 - ♦ Wives – 1 Peter 3:7.
 - ✓ *Paul*, who's primary ministry was to Gentiles, had much to say about this matter. He points out the need to honor:
 - ♦ One's parents – Ephesians 6:2.
 But he also shows the application of the Fourth Commandment to:
 - ♦ Each other – Romans 12:10.
 - ♦ Each person to whom honor is owed – Romans 13:7.
 - ♦ Well-serving leaders – 1 Timothy 5:17.
 - ♦ Masters – 1 Timothy 6:1.
 - ♦ Widows – 1 Timothy 5:3.

NOTE: Some translations may use other words, such as "respect," in place of "honor."

11

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"Each of you must **respect** his mother and father..."

Leviticus 19:3a (BSB)

What does this word "**RESPECT**" mean?

- **This word is translated as *fear* in most passages!** It is the *same* word used to describe our *required* attitude toward God – usually expressed as the "*fear* of God."
- **Until about 100 years ago, the word was translated as "*fear*" in Leviticus 19:3!** More recently, there has been a tendency to change it to "respect" or "revere/reverence" (except in some of the more "literal" translations).

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What happened? Why the word change?

- ⇒ Prior to about 100 years ago, "fear" was considered the correct term. But two factors have joined together to change this.
- ⇒ **First:** In the last 100 years, we've seen a **growing spirit of rebellion** against parental authority, or *any* form of authority – especially since the 1960's. The greater focus is now on the "individual" (who becomes the center of attention), rather than on the "family" (and the appropriate parental leadership), or even the "community."
 - So in most of society, anything that implies obligations toward parents (or society) tends to be received negatively.
- ⇒ **Second:** For many people, **the meaning of "fear" has changed.**
 - People who are highly influenced by Scripture tend to be more receptive to the concept, because they know that Scripture often uses the word "fear" to describe very *positive* relationships.
 - People with less influence from Scripture tend to view "fear" in only *negative* terms.

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For many, "fear" has come to mean nothing more than "to be afraid" – and this is not what Leviticus 19:3 (and many other passages) refers to!

- ⇒ **Combining these two issues:** Some people have an increasing hostility toward using the word "fear" in *any* context that involves authority. Since they consider that word as having only *negative* connotations, their view of "fearing" authority implies that the *authority* is in the wrong (and the *individual* isn't).
- This attitude is even transferred over to God. People (even church-goers) have become increasingly *hostile* to the idea of "fearing God," even though Scripture mentions it quite often as a *necessary requirement* for all people!

What if authority *is* in the wrong? That does not justify *our* choosing to be in the wrong, along with them!

If we choose to do wrong, then we have *earned* any "negative fear" of the resulting consequences (as in Romans 13:3).

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WHAT ARE OUR TRANSLATION OPTIONS?

- ⇒ **The word "fear"?** Many "literal" word-for-word translations still use the word "*fear*."
- ⇒ **The word "revere" (or "reverence")?** Some "literal" word-for-word translations use the word "*revere*" (or "*reverence*"), instead of "fear."
- ⇒ **The word "respect"?** This tends to be the preferred choice among translations that are less "literal." In this group are:
 - ✓ Many "meaning-for-meaning" translations (some of which are quite good).
 - ✓ Paraphrases (= a greater tendency to include *opinion* in the text).
 - ✓ Poor translations – those that aren't too concerned with accuracy, or which want to revise the text to "fit" modern society.
- ⇒ **Some other way?** A few "easy-to-read" translations use the word "*honor*." These are designed for people who have a limited English vocabulary. Their concept of "fear" would be incorrect, and words like "revere" or "respect" would be above their reading level.

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Which option is best?

- ⇒ **It is *best*** if we use the word "fear" *and* have a renewed mind (Romans 12:2) that enables us to understand and accept what Scripture says.
- ⇒ **We may have to settle for *second best*:** using a different word, since many readers will read *into* the passage a false idea that Scripture doesn't teach. The words "respect" and "reverence" may be acceptable, but we still need to understand that it refers to having *the same type of attitude* that Scripture tells us we need to have toward God!
 - In fact, in two passages, this word "fear" is mentioned *one time*, yet is applied equally to *both* God and people:

As a FACT: ... all the people greatly **fear**ed the LORD and Samuel.

1 Samuel 12:18b (BSB)

As a COMMAND: My son, **fear** the LORD and the king ...

Proverbs 24:21a (BSB)

16

Background issue: Word change is not always good.

- ⇒ Words *do* change. But this specific example involves a greater issue: a *spiritual* issue. It's not a mere "coincidence" that the same thing is happening to *many* Bible concepts, *all at the same time*.
- ⇒ There are people who consider the Bible to be a horrible *man-made* document that promotes values they oppose. They know that, if word definitions are changed, then people can no longer accurately understand (and follow) the Bible. (The devil also knows this.)

"Replacement words" can have their own problems.

- ⇒ Of our two "replacement word" options, there seems to be an increasing danger with the word "respect." This is because some people have changed *its* meaning also – reducing it to little more than an expression of "politeness."

I RESPECT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

BUT IN REALITY, I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

17

Some word changes are *legitimate and natural*.

- ⇒ **"Plastic"** originally meant something that could be molded. It was pliable, flexible, capable of bending. Later, people used chemistry to develop products that were flexible – and they called it "plastic." The word also started being used for other types of "plastic" that *weren't* flexible, but rigid.
- ⇒ The word **"train"** (the noun) has had a variety of meanings. One of these involves something that follows behind, or is pulled along by, something else. The word is used to describe part of a long wedding gown – the part that follows behind the bride. Later, when people invented an engine that could be put on a track and would pull a row of containers on wheels... they called it a "train."
- ⇒ The word **"bug"** is often used to describe a type of insect. In the early days of computer technology, a "bug" (actually, a moth) was found to be the cause of a computer malfunction. Today, the word "bug" is often used in reference to computer or software problems.

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Other word changes are *done with evil intent*.

- ⇒ These are often deliberate changes made at the level of academia – universities, philosophers, scientists, psychologists, politicians, and the like – people who have specific views that they want to push on society. Many have a very intense hatred for the Bible, and are openly anti-God. Others want to "revise" what the Bible says, to make it more "acceptable" to the world.
- ⇒ It may take many years, and much effort, before such views become accepted by "mainstream society." When it does, most people have little awareness of the long process that brought them to that point.
- ⇒ Rarely will the people who do this "redefining" recognize that there is a *spiritual* battle going on in the world ... and that they are merely "pawns" in the battle.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12 (BSB)

19

Godly concepts are often stripped of their meaning and significance, distorted, or even dropped from our vocabulary. Evil concepts are redefined as "good." *This is not a mere "natural change" in language, nor "accidental," but a deliberate spiritual attack against God and the Bible.*

Examples.

- ⇒ We've already seen issues with the word "**fear**," in the removal of the "positive" aspects of this concept.
- ⇒ The meaning of "**faith**" has been *deliberately changed* from "accepting the truth and living by it" to "the opposite of fact," or to "make-believe." It is often viewed as the *opposite* of "science and facts" – mere opinion. Because of this, we often have to use alternate words, such as "trust." It's true that we need to "believe" (i.e., accept the *truth*) that God exists... but our duty is to "trust" him in all of life.
- ⇒ Words like "**humility**" and "**repentance**" have been stripped of any real meaning. Today, few people use these words – and when they do, they're not usually used in a serious way.

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- ⇒ Today, the difference between "**love**" and lust is no longer recognized by most people. People are left to define "love" in any way they want, often in the most perverted ways possible.
- ⇒ "**Fornication**" is a great evil. But since so many people in the world (especially in our nation) enjoy committing this sin, they have almost entirely dropped this word from the vocabulary.
- ⇒ Scripture tells us that, in almost all contexts, "**pride**" is sin. But today, people are not only *proud* of their pride, but they actually *celebrate* it!
- ⇒ In Scripture, the phrase "**my God**" or "**Oh my God**" is used with great reverence, often in a time of great emotion. It might be part of a prayer, when a person is going through serious trials. It could be an expression of joy, when a person was overwhelmed with love for God, who he is and what he does. Today, this phrase has been reduced to something that is meaningless and trite. Even many church-goers aren't afraid to disrespect God in this manner!
- ⇒ People have *perverted* the significance God gave to the **rainbow**.

21

We need to use the correct terminology the correct way!

- ⇒ We need to *oppose* distortions, and accept concepts the way Scripture defines them. We need a "renewed" mind – one that has been changed by Scripture.

Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2 (BSB)

- ⇒ We need to *replace* what is false with truth, like Paul did, here:

We **demolish arguments and every pretension** that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ**.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

- ⇒ If words need changed, because the world has so-distorted them, we can do so. But we must choose carefully, to prevent further issues.

22

OUR MISSION: "DO" AND "DON'T"!

Do consider what we have learned so far, about the Fifth Commandment.

- We've seen that there is more to this command than most people realize – and there is even *more* to discover!

Don't treat Scripture and language the way the world does!

- When people find something in Scripture that offends them, their tendency is to respond in one of these ways:
 1. Reject what the Bible says.
 2. Condemn God.
 3. Invent a more-acceptable "meaning" (= distortion) of the text... and then mislead others with the distortions.
- Rarely do people admit that *they* and *their views* are the problem, and that *they* need to repent and accept what God says!

23

In "Middle English," the word was "dread"! (Its meaning has obviously changed.)

Ech man **drede** his fadir and his modir.
Leviticus 19:3a (Wycliffe trans; later ver.)

In "Modern English" (up to this century), the word was "fear." (The spelling has obviously changed!)

Yee shall **fear** every man his mother, and his father, ...
Leviticus 19:3a (KJV, original 1611 version)

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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