



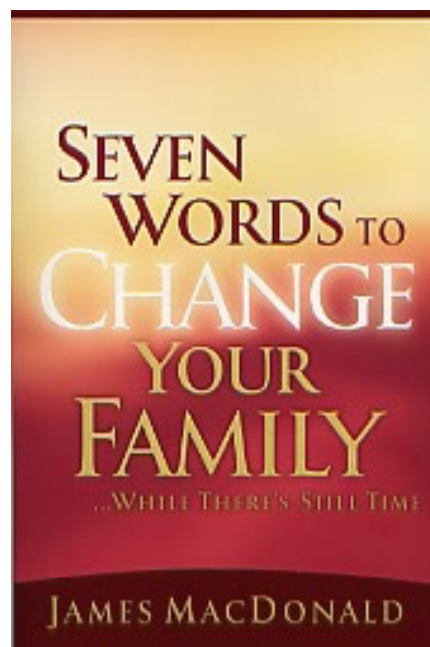
DEAN WELCH - TEACHER

I BET HE TOLD YOU I WAS SPEEDING TOO ...
[EXODUS 20: 12 & EPHESIANS 6: 1-2]

WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

DECEMBER 16, 2007

FROM THE *MASTERWORKS* SERIES STUDY OF:



I BET HE TOLD YOU I WAS SPEEDING TOO...

[EXODUS 20: 12 & EPHESIANS 6: 1-2]

Is there a difference between honor and respect? What does honor mean? While you're thinking about that, listen to this story that touches on a little honor and respect—except it's of the law.

A police officer pulled a man over for speeding and asked to see his driver's license. Calmly, the driver responded: I don't have one. I had it suspended when I got my fifth DUI.

Officer: May I see your registration?

Driver: It's not my car. I stole it.

Officer: The car is stolen?

Driver: Yeah – But, now that you mention it, I think I did see the registration in the glove box when I was putting my gun in there.

Officer: There's a gun in the glove box?

Driver: Yes, sir. I put it there after I killed the lady who owns this car and stuffed her in the trunk.

Officer: There's a BODY in the TRUNK?!?!?

Driver: Yes, sir.

Hearing this, the officer immediately called his captain. The car was quickly surrounded by police, and the captain approached the driver:

Captain: Sir, can I see your license?

Driver: Sure. Here it is.

It was valid.

Captain: Who's car is this?

Driver: It's mine, officer. Here's the registration.

Captain: Could you slowly open your glove box so I can see if there's a gun in it?

Driver: Yes, sir, but there's no gun in it.

Sure enough, there was nothing in the glove box.

Captain: Would you mind opening your trunk? I was told there's a body in it.

Driver: No problem.

The trunk was opened; no body.

Captain: I don't understand it. The officer who stopped you said you told him you didn't have a license, stole the car, had a gun in the glovebox, and that there was a dead body in the trunk.

Driver: No kidding? I'll bet he told you I was speeding, too.

Today, we continue with our third lesson from our study from Dr. James MacDonald's book, *Seven Words To Change Your Family—While There's Still Time*. Let's recap the first two weeks and see how we've progressed and if you know the first two words by now. What was our word for Week One from our lesson where we talked about *Tar Baby and B'rer Rabbit*? **[FORGIVENESS]** And what scripture verse did we learn to accompany that? Remember **Matthew 6:12 (NASB)**? *"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."* And there was another one that I passed out for you to memorize from **Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)**, ³²*"And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."*

OK, now from Week Two, last week, what was our second word that can change your family? **[BLESSING]** You will recall that we talked about the old saying, *"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me."* We decided that was not even close to the truth—that words will and DO hurt us badly. Our scripture lesson came from Genesis 27 about the blessing by Issac of Jacob.

Today our third word is what? **HONOR**. Now, most of us laugh when we hear a story like the one I opened with a moment ago. We find it humorous that the driver is able, through a series of outrageous lies to completely discredit the integrity—and the authority—of a police officer. And in a culture where authority is often seen as something to be fought tooth and nail, the driver is a hero. Why? Now, back to my opening question to you: **What does HONOR mean?** The Hebrew term for *honor* means literally *"a heavy weight"* or *"to lay it on them."* Bottom line, it means an action of *deep sincerity*—far more than surface flattery.

Turn to **EXODUS 20:12 (NKJV)** and listen to these words from the Fifth Commandment: ¹²*"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you."* If you had a list of the 10 Commandments evenly spaced on a sheet of paper and folded that sheet in half, top to bottom, the 5th Commandment would be right at the fold. Listen to the same verse from Eugene Peterson's *The Message*, *"Honor your father and mother so that you'll live a long time in the land that God, your God, is giving you."* Sounds almost identical. Simple, straight-forward and to the point!

This is a matter so important to the Lord that Scripture puts it squarely in the center of these commandments. I don't think that was an accident. I believe these words are central to the 10 Commandments—and to life itself—because they affect everything about your life and mine. Just as the fifth commandment would appear at the fold of the piece of paper, so it also appears at the fold of our lives. In many ways, our destiny hinges on how we respond to this command. It affects our futures, it affects how we process the past, and it affects our RIGHT NOW—what God can and will do in our lives today!

Did you remember that the fifth commandment is the ONLY one of the Ten Commandments with a promise attached? What does the last part of the verse say? *"...that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.* Here again, so very clearly, we can see that the motive—the operative principal—behind the Ten Commandments is God's abiding love for us. So that we might not come to destruction. So that we might enjoy God's good gifts to us through the days of our lives. The LORD is saying, *"Would you do this? Would you honor the father and mother that I gave you? And if you do, things will be well with you. If you are careful to do this, I will honor your life, I will bless your life, and I will extend your life. Because I love you, however, I must warn you: if you violate this commandment, it will affect the whole fabric of your life.*

Why should we honor father and mother? Let's look at another Old Testament reference in **DEUTERONOMY 5:16 (NIV)**. Listen to how the fifth commandment is repeated here with an expanded blessing: ¹⁶*"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you."*

So, why should we honor our father and mother? So that we might live, sure...but what else? I think so that we might not be weighed down or taken captive by bitterness. You may be thinking that this is an Old Testament rule—part of the Levitical law—and doesn't really apply today—after Christ. The fact is, this commandment applies to all of us. It applies to those who have good, godly, loving parents and to those who don't. The Lord didn't list any exceptions, exemptions or special considerations. And just to make sure we understand how profoundly this command applies to us today, He made sure it was repeated in the New Testament.

Turn to **EPHESIANS 6:1-2**. *"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth."* It applies to all of us. And please hear this, no matter what has happened to us in the past, God is interested in our RIGHT NOW. He wants to change your heart and mine right now. Not tomorrow. He wants to walk with us and fellowship with us right now, not later on, after "we get things straightened out." He wants to teach us and bless us right now. Not on some mythical future day when we're more prepared or have our act together.

So how do we do this? **How do we honor our father and mother?** Guess where children learn to honor their parents? From their parents. If an adult doesn't honor his parents then he is teaching his children not to honor him.

One of Grimm's fairy tales is about a little boy who lived with his father, his mother, and his elderly grandfather. The grandfather

was feeble and his hands shook. When he ate, the silverware rattled against the plate, and he often missed his mouth. Then the food would dribble onto the tablecloth. This upset the young mother, because she didn't want to have to deal with the extra mess and hassle of taking care of the old man. But he had nowhere else to live.

So the young parents decided to move him away from the table, into a corner, where he could sit on a stool and eat from a bowl. The young mother said, "From now on, you eat over there." And so he did, always looking at the table and wanting to be with his family but having to sit alone in the corner.

One day his hands trembled more than usual; he dropped his bowl and broke it. The young father yelled, "If you're going to eat like a pig, you're going to eat out of a pig's trough!" So they made the old man a wooden trough, put his meals in it, and told him to eat out of it. And he did.

Not long after that, the couple came upon their four-year-old son playing out in the yard with some scraps of wood. His father asked him what he was doing. The little boy looked up, smiled, and said, "I'm making a trough, to feed you and Mamma out of when I get big." The next day the old man was back at the table eating with the family from a plate, and no one ever scolded him or mistreated him again.

How could a child honor his parents if the parents had done a really lousy job of parenting? Here are 5 things we must do if we are going to truly honor our parents.

1) **LOVE THEM** -- Love, someone said, is best spelled T-I-M-E. You love someone when you spend time with that person. You may say, "I don't want to spend time with my parents." Or, "I really don't have the time to do that—they live far away." Or for you young adults, you may feel that your mother and father seem to love making your life miserable.

Whatever your reason, it's not good enough. You see, I'm reminded that first we need to obey the Lord. Why? Because the Lord has told us so. Turn to **JOHN 14:15 and 15:10**. What does the Lord tell us here? *"¹⁵If you love me keep my commandments." ... "¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."*

The best reason I can think of for obeying the Fifth Commandment about honoring our parents is first that it's one of the TEN COMMANDMENTS, which were not given as ten suggestions or recommendations. And another reason is that I want to abide in God's love, like we just read. I don't want to live or abide in any other place or for any other reason.

2) RESPECT THEM -- Children are to obey their parents. But honor or respect is more important than mere obedience. It's possible to obey without showing respect. You can do as you're told and still rebellious at heart.

It's like the little boy who was standing in the back seat of the car, riding down the road with his parents. His parents told him to sit down and put on his seat-belt because they were concerned about his safety. His father told him once, then twice, then a third time. His mother looked back and asked him to sit down. He defiantly said, "No, I will not sit down!" His father told him if he didn't sit down he would give him the spanking of his life. So the boy sat down. But then he said, "I may be sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside." I've seen that before. There's obedience, but there's no respect.

We tend to honor people whom we think deserve it or earn it – we honor great athletes with awards, we honor successful politicians with positions of authority, we honor successful people with plaques. But God says that we are to honor our parents not just because of what they have done, but simply because of who they are.

3) LET THEM KNOW YOU APPRECIATE THEIR EFFORTS --

There are some things that are just proper and right. One of those things is showing honor to the man and woman responsible for bringing you into this world, feeding you, getting your cavities filled, sitting up with you when you were sick, and doing the million and one other things that go with being a parent. So God says, "Honor your parents." It's the right thing to do. Even after children have grown up and have families of their own, they still have a responsibility to honor their parents.

Listen to the way Today's English Version translates **Proverbs 23:22**: *"When your mother is old, show her your appreciation."*

According to a recent study, a family with a child born in the year 2003 can expect to spend about \$170,630 for food, shelter and other necessities to raise that child over the next 17 years. We owe our parents a huge debt of gratitude. They deserve our honor for the simple reason that they have done so much for us!

I have no doubt at all that what has helped me more than anything else to honor my parents' efforts is being a parent myself. This is the hardest job I've ever had. It's difficult and it's costly, not just in terms of finances, but of time, energy, and emotions.

If we can honor our parents for nothing else, we can honor them because they took on a difficult job. I encourage you to let your parents know that you appreciate what they've done for you.

4) MEET THEIR NEEDS -- We read in **1 Timothy 5:4,8**. *"⁴But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.....⁸But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."*

Honor of parents involves, among other things, providing for them when they can no longer provide for themselves. Did you

notice that Paul used the word "repay" here in this verse? Obviously, simply providing financial support for one's parents in their old age falls far short of honor if it isn't done with loving personal involvement. Money can be an expression of love but it can never a substitute for love.

A child can no more honor his parents by simply paying their bills than his parents could have responsibly raised him by only paying for his food, clothes, education, and other needs apart from loving care and personal involvement. Parents need to feel that they are not an imposition in the lives of their children, that they have a place where somebody remembers them, cares about them, and takes time out of a busy life to pay attention to them.

When our parents need our help, we honor God by meeting their needs.

5) FORGIVE THEM - Now that I'm a parent and recently even a grandparent, I've finally discovered something. I've discovered that in most cases, my mother and father did what they thought was right in raising me. At the time, I thought, this can't be right. You don't like me. You hate me. You're being too hard on me. You're trying to make my life miserable. Now I realize they usually knew something I didn't: that this really was the best thing for me.

I don't know what any of you may have been through in your life. Maybe there were times in your life when it seemed that your parents did not put your best interests first -- they weren't loving enough or they spent too much time at the office and not enough time with you. One thing is for certain, we did not have perfect parents and we have not been perfect parents, but all people have worth and need to be forgiven and loved. That's probably why the **FIRST WORD** in our study a few weeks ago was forgiveness.

How we treat our parents not only impacts them, it also impacts us. There is a blessing or a curse for us based on our treatment

of our parents. To honor or fail to honor our parents is a choice that takes us down one of two roads. The choice is ours. It is important for us to honor our parents and the time to do it is now. The day will come when we will be unable to show them the honor that we would like to give.

One last word—a challenge, really—to those of us who are parents: be honorable. Even though our honor isn't based on our worthiness, we still need to live a life that makes it easy for our children to honor us.

Remember our word last week as BLESSING and we've talked about each week somehow tends to build upon what we've already learned. Please remember that when we honor our parents, it blesses US! Wow! Did you hear that? That's good news, isn't it? Here we have God giving us a little motivation in scripture by promising to bless them. **Ephesians 6:2** says, *"Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise)."* Think back to the Ten Commandments in **Exodus 20**, in which God gave the first four commandments and presented no reason or rationale for any of them. It's just like, *"Do it! I am God, and you are not!"* But then in the fifth commandment, things changed—*"that your days may be prolonged"* (verse 12), or a Paul put it in **Ephesians 6:3**, *"that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth."*

Bottom line, it's a command. The first benefit that God promised us is *"that it may be well with you"* Wow! What does that mean? What kind of promise is that? Is it health? Is it wealth? Is it safety? Is it an easier life? Is it relational favor with God? All I can tell you is this: I don't know exactly what it means, but God says good things are going to happen. When we know His Word and obey His Word, He is faithful and just to bless us.

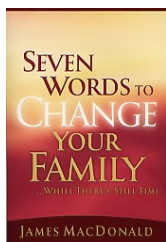
Then, *"that you may live long on the earth."* That's more specific, isn't it? Fairly obvious that those who honor their parents will live longer than those who don't. But if we look a little deeper here, I think that God is promising even more than a longer life

for the one who chooses to obey. As Dr. MacDonald said this week in our study, I believe *“that you may live long on the earth”* is also making a promise about your legacy. In the family that chooses to honor the parents, there is a ripple effect that goes on for many years. When I honor my parents, my children see something modeled, they will likely then choose to honor me, and through them the blessing of my obedience can continue into the third and fourth generation.

This week, on Day Three and Four, we studied the story of David and Absalom from 2 Samuel 13-19 and saw the tragedy that goes with not honoring our parents—it devastates them. When Absalom killed his half-brother as revenge for the rape of his sister, Tamar, the family began to break rapidly. David was so angry with Absalom that he fled Jerusalem to avoid his father’s wrath. Absalom spent three years in exile and had no contact with his father. David finally overcame his negative feelings enough to call for his son to come back home but when Absalom returned the scriptures tell us that he spent two years in Jerusalem and did not see his father, David’s, face. Trouble and more trouble resulted in David fleeing for his life and eventually with Absalom getting killed in battle—which devastates David more than anything else, even all the other innocent people that were killed fighting for him.

Go home and re-read the story of David and Absalom and take notice that the point is the relationship with our parents is so powerful that no negative circumstances can ever break this bond. Dr. MacDonald says it’s time for us to step up to the plate, as a follower of Jesus Christ, and take the initiative. We are to HONOR our parents—no matter what.

Let’s pray!



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