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4<sup>th</sup> Commandment

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Whenever I hear that someone has turned 100 years old I always think to myself, he must have been obedient to his parents. The Bible says, "Honor your father and mother that you may enjoy long life on the earth." He's 100 years old, he must have been obedient to his parents.

And if you think about it, it makes sense. Parents teach you to eat your vegetables. If you obey them and eat your vegetables, you'll be healthy and live longer. Your parents tell you to save your money rather than spending it. If you save your money, you'll have significantly less stress and that may contribute to a longer life. Your mom and dad teach you all kinds of useful life skills that will give you a happy and healthy life. "Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy a long life on the earth."

But the problem is that most of us do not learn this lesson until we grow up. When you were a kid, did you think to yourself, "My parents are stupid. They don't know anything. I am so much smarter than my parents." But then you grow up and you realize, "Man my parents are really smart. They were right all along."

I really regret some of the things that I said to my parents when I was a kid. Have you ever said to your parents, "You're the worst parents in the world!" Really? The worst parents in the world. I have a little guy at home, Luke. He's 6 months old. And the thing that you notice about babies is that they are completely helpless. They have no survival skills. They need to be fed when they are hungry. They need to be changed when they are wet. They need to be comforted when they cry. And that needs to be done not once a day but many times each day. Your parents did that for you because they love you and you're saying that they are the worst parents in the world. And they continued to love you as you grew up. Look around your room and honestly ask yourself, "How many things in here did my parents buy me?" Your parents did that because they love you and that automatically disqualifies them from the race for worst parents in the world. You could either wait until you grow up to appreciate your parents, or you could appreciate them right now.

There are so many times when I look back and wish that I would have followed my parents' advice. Don't be like me! Honor your father and mother.

There is also a spiritual dimension to the fourth commandment. It says, "Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving to you." (Exodus 20:12) God gave to the Old Testament Israelites a promised land: the land the LORD your God is

giving you. And God told them that if they followed all the laws that God gave them, they would stay in the land. In Deuteronomy 28 it says, "If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today...The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you." (Deuteronomy 28:2, 11). But Deuteronomy 28 also says that, "if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, You will build a house, but you will not live in it. You will plant a vineyard, but you will not even begin to enjoy its fruit... the Lord will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other." (Deut 28:15, 30, 64) In other words, if you follow all the commands in the law of Moses "you will live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you." If you do not follow the law of Moses, you will be driven away from the land and not live in it. If you follow the law you'll stay in the land. If you don't follow the law, you won't live long in the land.

What does this have to do with obeying parents? Well, it was the parents the job to teach their children the law of Moses. So if you obey your parents when they teach you God's word, then you'll live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. It was the parents job to teach their children God's word. It says in Deut. 6:6 "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Children, obey your parents especially when they teach you God's word.

When your parents get you up on Sunday and say, "Come on we're going to church," Do you grown and say, "Do we have to!" When your parents say, "We are staying for Bible class," do you say, "Come on we already went to church do we have to stay for Bible class!" **"Honor your father and mother so that you may live long."**

I often think to myself, I could have been born into a family that didn't care about Jesus, that didn't take me to church. And if I would have been born into a family that didn't care about Jesus than I probably wouldn't care about Jesus. But God ruled history in such a way, that I was born to parents who loved Jesus and who taught me to love Jesus.

One day Jesus is going to come back. And he's going to renew this world so that it is a resurrection world. And by grace I will have an inheritance in that world. And I'll have my parents to thank for it. Because they brought me to Jesus. Obey your parents when they teach you God's word and you will have a very long life indeed. In fact, you'll have an eternal life. Amen.