

# Small Group Discussion Guide

Exodus 20:12

“Honor, Duty, Glory”

Based on Sunday's  
Sermon 3/1/2026

## Background

God commands each person to honor his or her father and mother. The word for “honor” implies acknowledging the “weight” of something. In this context, it implies that people give the proper “weight” or “respect” to their parents’ position. The opposite of this would be to despise or scorn one’s parents. One who did this was in danger of being put to death (Lev 20:9), in some cases by stoning (Deut 21:18–21). Thus, respect for parents, and for authority figures in general, should be taken seriously.<sup>1</sup> “Honor” (כָּבֵד) comes from the same root from which “glory” (כְּבוֹד) comes in the phrase “glory of Yahweh.” “Give glory to your father and mother” does not overstate what Yahweh is commanding here. Yahweh makes honoring parents paramount and specific. To honor meant more than to revere. It had concrete implications that indicated a person must care for parents and respect them. It meant to listen to and to honor their store of wisdom for directing one’s life (cf. Prov 1:8–19). Children were to see that during life and in death their parents were cared for.<sup>2</sup> This commandment seems clear cut, but what if your parents are not believers, or there have been difficulties in your relationship with your parents? There is much to explore as we dig deeper into God’s fifth of the ten commandments.

## Discussion Questions

### Getting Started

1. What can we learn about your parents by the way you live your life? In other words, what characteristics of your parents are seen through you?

### Observation

2. Read Exodus 20:12. Discuss this commandment’s exact wording.
3. What promise is attached to this command, and how is it described?

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Exodus* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014), 128.

<sup>2</sup> Eugene Carpenter, *Exodus*, vol. 2, *Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), 47-48.

4. How is the fifth commandment different than the first four commandments?

#### Interpretation

5. How does this commandment apply to those who have had difficult relationships with their parents or have never known their parents? What about unbelieving parents? Are we to honor them?

6. Read Ephesians 6:1-4, Proverbs 1:8, 6:20, and 23:22. How does this command function for adults as well as children? Do adults have to “obey” their parents to “honor” them?

7. Read Romans 13:1-10. The bigger picture is honoring our authorities. Discuss the authorities in our lives, including God, governing authorities, employers, church leaders, those who are older than us and our parents. What is the overarching truth?

8. What does Jesus’ teaching in Mark 7 about the abuse of “Corban” reveal about the seriousness of neglecting the fifth commandment?

#### Application

9. How are you honoring your parents today?

10. What are some practical helps to honor our authorities, even when we don’t agree with them?

*Prayer List:*