

The Cost of Honor

A message delivered to
MAYER COMMUNITY CHURCH

June 20, 1999

TITLE: The Cost of Honor

TEXT: Various

THEME: Father's Day

THRUST: Our road becomes our children's road!

INTRODUCTION:

Today is the Sunday set aside in June to honor our fathers.

It is scriptural that we do this.

The *First Commandment* is aimed at children,
whether they be young children or adult children,
is also the *First Commandment* with a promise.

Eph 6:2-3 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³ that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. (NAS)

God promised those who keep this Commandment
two things:

...that it may be well with you ...

· The blessing of a *good* life.

...that you may live long on the earth....

· The blessing of a *long* life.

There are also some obligations to fathers
that accompany these promises to the children:

Eph 6:4 And, fathers, *do not provoke* your children to *anger*; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (NAS)

The words *provoke* and *anger*

are one Greek word with two parts.

· *para* - which means alongside or near

· *orgidzo* - which means provoke or enrage.

The root of this word has to do with desire
and carries the meaning of stretching out.

Here is what I see:

Father's have the ability to trigger in their children such extreme stress that the anger is always near, just under the surface; and, it causes their children to be stretched to the breaking point.

We live in a time when *absentee fathers*
are becoming more common than devoted fathers.

We live in a time where violence by children

is becoming a national concern.
Do you know what we are doing about it?
We are considering stronger juvenile detention centers.
We are looking into more stringent gun laws.
We think we are doing anything and everything we can
to solve the problems of our youth,
but we continue to ignore their real need,
their desperate need for a strong father figure.
In most cases, the mother picks up the slack
and the father goes on with his own life,
oblivious to and not held responsible for
the havoc he has wreaked in the lives of his children.
Not only are fathers to guard against so wounding their children
that rage becomes a way of life.
But fathers are encouraged to make choices
that will nurture their children
and reveal to them the character of their Heavenly Father.
Amos, a prophet to Israel, warned them of coming judgment
because of refusal to turn from the sins of their fathers.

Amos 2:4 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its {punishment} because they rejected the law of the LORD and have not kept His statutes; their lies also have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked. (NAS)

Jeremiah, experienced the same mind set in Jerusalem
before it was overrun by the Babylonians.
He was dealing with a generation of individuals
that was steeped in a form of idolatry
they had learned from their fathers! (Jer 9:14).
Listen to the words of that generation:

Jer 44:16-17 "As for the message that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you! ¹⁷ "But rather we will certainly carry out every word that has proceeded from our mouths, by burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her, just as we ourselves, our forefathers, our kings and our princes did in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for {then} we had plenty of food, and were well off, and saw no misfortune. (NAS)

As a result of their defiance, judgment came
in the form of Babylon.
Ezekiel was one of the prophets God raised up

to speak to Israel while they were in captivity.
When Israel was in the Sinai wilderness,
the people rebelled against God and God brought judgment
that they would not be allowed to enter the promised land.
Ezekiel reminded those in captivity about how God
had pleaded with the children
not to follow their fathers!

Ezek 20:18-21 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: ¹⁹ I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; ²⁰ And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God. ²¹ Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness. (KJV)

Zechariah was a prophet and a priest to the remnant,
those individuals who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon.

Zech 1:4-6 Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.' But they did not listen or give heed to Me,' declares the LORD. ⁵ "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? ⁶But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said, 'As the LORD of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us.'" (NAS)

Over and over again in scripture,
the fathers are warned
about their responsibility to their children,
and the children are warned
about their responsibilities *in spite of*
what they may have learned from their fathers.
Not everyone here today is a father.
But everyone here today *is* a child.
There are two paths that we can walk ...
our fathers have much to do
with the natural choice of the path we walk,
but we, as adult children, have ultimate responsibility
for the path we choose to walk.
One of the paths we can choose to walk

is the unregenerate way of life of our fathers,
if our fathers were not walking the highway of holiness!

1 Pet 1:18-19 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, {the blood} of Christ. (NAS)

The term translated “*futile*” has a root that means:

“An unsuccessful search” or “to no purpose.”

If our fathers did not have a personal, meaningful,
relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ,
then their path, their way of life
was an unsuccessful search for meaning;
their path, their way of life had no purpose,
it was empty or futile!

In the natural realm, *that* way of life
is part of the inheritance of the children.

It is the responsibility of the child
to make sure that their generation is the generation
that changes from an empty life,
to a life that is full and meaningful.

Listen to what the Apostle John
says about such successive generations:

I Jn 2:13-17 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. ¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. ¹⁵ Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and {also} its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever. (NAS)

We are just beginning to see the results
of a generation that chose the natural path,
God alone knows how it will end.
God has compassion ... we have a responsibility!

Rom 13:7-8 Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax {is due;} custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. ⁸ Owe nothing to anyone except to

love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled {the} law. (NAS)

God said to *honor* our father and mother.

There are no stipulations.

Our responsibility is to follow the instructions
and let God deal with the injustices!

Verse 8 has always been interpreted in a financial way.

The context begs to differ.

From the context,

The questions arise:

Do you owe honor to your father and mother?

Or are you current in your payments?

Is your heavenly credit report A-1 in this area?

Or have you been going month to month,
year after year without paying what you owe?

In our society, the interest is now due on the debt
that is owed to fathers of previous generations.

The payments are higher than we expected!

God is merciful ... we are responsible!

What kind of heritage are you giving your children?
what you received from your earthly father? or,
what you received from your heavenly father?

CONCLUSION: Hymn #191 *It Is Finished!*