

January 27, 2021

Hindsight is 20/20. How many times have you thought: Oh, if only I had known **this**, I would have done **that**, instead of **what I did**. Hindsight can be maddening at times, especially and most particularly, when hindsight was available as foresight, but was spurned.

The fifth commandment of God's Holy Law offers us a form of hindsight. *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land that the Lord your God gives to you. Exodus 20:12*

The concept of honoring one's parents includes listening to their instruction, considering their guidance, and giving it appropriate weight and significance. In the same way the Lord has called us to seek Him first in all things, the fifth commandment instructs us to follow the guidance of our parents. Not only does the Lord tell us to honor our father and mother, He adds the promise that if we do so, our days will be long.

At the age of fifteen, I was invited to a local high school dance on a weekend that my mother was going out of town for the weekend. "You are not to go to the dance," she said to me, but then she left, so dishonoring her wishes was easy. She probably knew I would disobey, and may have spent the entire weekend in prayer for me, because my daring dash to the dance did not end so well, and I did not have a very good time. The price I paid in terms of remorse, guilt, self-respect and humiliation was not at all worth the glorious freedom I had been convinced my independence would deliver. My hindsight was 20/20, and I was forced to concede that had I trusted God, and followed his instruction to honor my mother, I would not have had to endure the consequences of my poor choice.

The book of Proverbs echoes the 5th commandment in a multitude of verses. *Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Proverbs 1:8; Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding. Proverbs 4:1 Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. Proverbs 4:10.*

Parents have life experience and life wisdom. Humility, which is a key element in walking with our Lord, is also a key element in reaching out and accepting the guidance of Mom and Dad. Everyone wants independence, needing no guidance, instruction, or assistance but we were not made to act independently, of either our God or our parents.

I invite each of you into the book of Proverbs. It is rich with promises of how wisdom, gained through the worship of God and the instruction of our parents, will give us joy, happiness and peace. It also paints the contrasting picture of where rebellion takes the rash and unruly. *The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble. Proverbs 4:18-19.*

When you are unsure of what to do, when you are having difficulty hearing the answer from above, turn to your parents, or your foster parents, or elders who are like your parents. Remember that the fifth commandment can guide you into wisdom and trust that God will gift you with the blessing of hindsight and 20/20 vision.