

5 – HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

6 – THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Week #3 of a 5-Week Series, "The 10 Commandments of Abundance"

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Alright; you ready? So I've been doing the 10 Commandments of ... [drops notes]. I'll be back! [Bends over to pick up notes - congregants laugh]

I've been doing "The 10 Commandments of Abundance." And today we're going to focus on the 5th and the 6th commandment.

But before we get there, I want to go back to the first four. Because the first four really are the ones that set the spiritual foundation for living a more abundant life. The last six I believe are about human behavior and about how we have a responsibility -- if we want to live a more abundant life -- we have a responsibility for what we're doing ... the actions we're taking.

But the first four really set the spiritual foundation for living a greater life. The first one is: We should have only one Source: God. The second one: That we should have no image of lack; no graven images. The third one is: No limiting speech. Four is that: We shall honor the Sabbath by learning to let go and let God.

And those really are the four foundational spiritual principles. One is that God has to come first. That we will hold no image of lack. And that's a hard one! I mean, that may be the hardest one of them all! Because each and every one of us has experienced a level of lack in our life and our past; in our childhood. And the idea of actually erasing from our consciousness images of lack when sometimes they've seemed so prevalent. But this (second) commandment is that we will have no graven images: no images of lack. And so we have to really do our inner work. That if you're holding images of lack or limitation that we be willing to give those back. We be willing to forgive; we be willing to release those. And then no limiting speech. And four is that we will honor the creative process by learning to let go and let God.

So let's get to five. **The fifth commandment is that we are called to honor our father and our mother.** Exodus 20:12 says:

"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God has given you."

And I want you to really see what that means to us. Because some of us sometimes have issues with our parents. Now, you don't have to raise your hand, but sometimes some of us haven't felt like ... sometimes it's a bit of a stretch for us to honor our father and our mother. It's like, "*Whaaaaat? Wait; back this up! What does this mean?*" Right? Because I really want us to look at this!

Because if we're going to talk about prosperity and abundance, we have to start with the beginning. So who are the first people that taught you about abundance? Who are the first people that taught you about the way the world works? And so tonight, I want you to be willing to honor what they gave you.

Now, if you honor it and truly honor what they gave you, does that mean that you can't take it higher than that? No; of course not! But you have to honor where you came from! And many times we are so resistant to what our parents taught us about all kinds of things that we don't really honor it. And when we honor it, we can actually go beyond that.

So tonight, are you willing to look at your parents' relationship with abundance? What did they teach you about abundance? Did they teach you there was enough to go around? That you could be generous? That you would always have enough? Or did they teach you there wasn't enough to go around? That you couldn't be generous? That you had to watch out for other people? That other people would take advantage of you? And that life was hard or life was painful? What did you learn from your parents about the nature of life and, especially, about the nature of abundance?

Because I want you to see it. What did they teach you about abundance? And what did they teach you about lack? Because those things -- when we're learning them at those defining young ages -- can be incredibly powerful. So instead of resisting their understanding -- instead of resisting what they gave you -- I want you to be willing to acknowledge it.

Now, if you had a great mother and a great father that only taught you that there was only abundance in the world, and that you could be generous and loving and giving all the time, I think that's fabulous! But no matter what your relationship with your parents was, I want you to be willing to honor it so that we can transcend it. Like, honoring it doesn't mean that we don't have to do our forgiveness work! It doesn't mean that we can't see their limitations; their disappointments; their frustrations. But it doesn't mean that we have to be defined by it any longer. That when we truly honor, we actually set ourselves free to move beyond.

Someone sent me an article -- a blog -- that I want to share with you. It says:

"You are the product of your parents, and so is your relationship with money. Take a moment to think about your parents and their experiences with money. Did they grow up wealthy? Poor? Middle class? What was that like for them? Were they satisfied with their socioeconomic status as kids? Were they dissatisfied? Did they feel shame about having too little or too much money compared to those around them? Were they raised knowing that they would have family financial support when they needed it, or were they cut loose at an early age knowing they had to sink or swim on their own? What lessons did your grandparents teach them? What cultural and/or historical events impacted their relationship with money? And how would you rate their satisfaction with their financial status in adulthood? Were they happy with their achievements? Did they feel remorse or despair?"

Don't be surprised if you don't know the answers to these questions. After all, money is a taboo topic in our culture. Many of us feel shame around money, and it can be difficult to think about, let alone talk to your children about. However, your parents' experiences around money have had a dramatic impact on your relationship with money. Shedding light on their experience can help you make sense of your own financial beliefs and behaviors. If your parents are still alive, sit down with them and interview them about their relationship with money. If not, try to interview aunts, uncles or cousins. Ask them questions about your grandparents and any stories they heard about their people. In terms of understanding and mastering your own financial psychology, uncovering the details of your family history is pure gold."

"I honor my father and my mother."

Together: [with congregation] *"I honor my father and mother."*

Now, I believe that what happens when we really get clear and just acknowledge the blessings that we were given -- and to honor our father and our mother -- believe what it allows us to do is then transcend their experience and have our own relationship with God.

See, whatever their experience was: it's their experience. And we might have learned from their experience at a very early age, but it was just their experience. What I want you to be really clear about

is: As you honor their experience, you get to create your own relationship with God that I believe has infinite possibilities. That is actually greater than you can even imagine.

And when we look at Scripture, over and over again we are taught that there is an abundance of God. There is an abundance of good.

Luke 12:32:

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

John 10:10:

"The thief comes to steal, to kill, to destroy; but Jesus said, 'I came that you might have life and have it more abundantly.'"

And one of my favorite teachings is when the rich, young man came to Jesus and asked him about how he could get to eternal life. And Jesus kind of just gave him a blow-off answer. Now, this is how it sounds for me. You might read the Scripture differently than I do. [Congregation laughs] But I think that he just gave the man a blow-off answer. He said, *"Go live the 10 Commandments."*

And this rich, young guy was raised in the church and said, *"I've been living the 10 Commandments my whole life; what else ya got?"*

And I believe in that moment, Jesus stopped and just looked him over. And he looked into his soul. And he knew that the young man was hungry; he was spiritually hungry. That he wanted a greater relationship with God. He wanted a greater relationship with life.

And he said, *"Okay; if you want to be perfect, go and sell all that you have; give the money to the poor; and come and follow me."* And the man stopped. And I believe, for a moment, he thought about it.

See, he had a history. And his history was that, because of the money his father had, he got the best of everything. He was defined. He got to sit in the best seats in the church and he got to eat at the best restaurants. And he got to drive the best cars and he got to wear the best clothes. He got to have everything. And in that moment, that young man didn't know who he would be if he didn't have his daddy's money. And at that moment, the idea of giving it all away was so scary. It was so scary that he turned and he walked away sadly.

Because as much as he wanted a spiritual experience -- as much as he wanted to know God in a profound and deep way and have God as the center of his life -- the idea of giving away his daddy's money was so scary that he couldn't imagine doing it. So he walked away.

Now, did Jesus want him poor? No! Because the whole basis of the universe is: As you give, so shall you ... [Congregation: *"Receive!"*] ... receive! So if you give it all away, what's going to happen, right? Consciousness attracts! If you give it all away, it's going to come back to you over and over and over again, because you can't give away ... Because it was in him; it was his consciousness. It was going to come back to him over and over again.

But it was so scary to think about not being a rich, young man that he had to just walk away. Because his daddy's money meant something. It meant that he was okay. That he was safe. And the idea that he could have a direct relationship with God -- as much as he wanted it -- was too scary. There wasn't a safety net. And he turned and he left.

And then Jesus taught into that moment:

"And Jesus then turned to his disciples and said, 'Truly, truly I say to you, it will be harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'"

Now, we have to explain that. Because for many years -- hundreds and thousands of years -- this has been taught as a statement against abundance. This has been taught as a statement that rich people cannot get into heaven. And that's not what it teaches at all! And we have to put it into a historical context so this Scripture makes sense. Because it looks like rich people have no chance in [pauses] heaven [congregation laughs] ... Right? To get to heaven, right? That's what it looks like!

But we have to understand the context! Like, in Jesus' time, every walled city had a main gate. And during the day, they would open the main gate and all the commerce and all the camels and all the people and all the caravans would come and go out of the main gate. And the main gate was large and it could handle lots of people, and people could come in and out. At night -- for the protection of the city -- they would lock the main gates. They would shut them and lock the main gates. And there would usually be one gate about the size that would allow an unpacked camel to enter into the city ... one at a time. So they could defend that one gate, because it wasn't just wide open. Only a camel that was unpacked could enter into the city one at a time.

So what I believe Jesus was saying was that it's easier to unpack your camel than it is to trust God. It's this idea that it's easier for you to unpack all your old beliefs than it is sometimes trusting God. And so over and over again, we've heard that Scripture, and we've misunderstood it. Because the reality is: God doesn't want any of us poor! God doesn't want any of us living in lack! But we have to rework our old beliefs, our old ideas, our old mindset so that we're not continuing to drag old mindsets into new experiences. That we can actually unpack those old ideas, those limiting beliefs, those old fears so that we are open and receptive to receive all the good that God is.

And tonight, I want you to look at those old beliefs that you were given when you were too young to say "Yes" or "No" to them. When we're small -- when we're young and we hear things -- we just accept it's true. But later on, we have to go back and say: *"Is this true for me? I honor that it was true for my mother and my father ... but is this true for me? And does this align with the spiritual truth that I know today?"*

And as we do that, we actually unpack all the erroneous, self-defeating beliefs, and we are open and receptive to move into a higher level of good than we have ever known before.

See, I believe that we absolutely have to honor our mother and our father so that we can truly honor God. Because, as we can let go of those old, erroneous belief and celebrate and give thanks for the beliefs that are absolutely in alignment with the spiritual truth that we know, that we are ready for all the good that God is. That we are blessed. And we are meant to be a blessed people!

But we have to be willing, over and over again, to unpack ourselves -- to unpack our camel -- from all the old, erroneous beliefs so that we can actually live our best life.

Alright. Let's get to six.

The six commandment is thou shall not kill.

Now, does that seem reasonable? [Congregation laughs] Right? Thou shall not kill. Now, there are two levels to that commandment, right? There are two levels of life. Do you know what those two levels are? There is physical life and there is spiritual life. And most of the time when we think about, "Thou shall not kill," we are thinking about physical life. And what I think that Jesus was saying over and over again is -- he invited us to look at: What is the spiritual life? And are we living spiritually alive?

In John 3 we read:

"Now, there was a man, a Pharisee, and his name was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night ..."

Now, why did he go to Jesus by night? Why did Nicodemus go to Jesus by night? Because he didn't want anybody to see him! Right? He was in charge of the Jews. Jesus was a problem. Jesus was a trouble-maker. Jesus was saying this crazy stuff. And he knew ... In fact, he goes on to say:

"Rabbi, we know that you're a teacher from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

Right? I don't want anybody else to know I'm here, but I know you're the real deal! So then he goes on ...

"Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'"

Right? Unless one is born anew ... Is that talking about a physical birth or a spiritual birth? Spiritual birth! Okay?

"Unless one is born anew, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus has a problem with this:

"Nicodemus said, 'How can a man be born when he is old?'"

Right? Can't you just see a guy and his ego? Just wanting to just push back a little back? Right?

"How can he be born again if he's old? And how can a man who is old enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" And Jesus says, 'Truly, truly,'"

Like, just imagine [flips hand back and forth] ... [congregation laughs] Like, he just wants to slap him. At least my Jesus wants to slap him. [Congregation laughs] I'm sure your Jesus is much nicer than my Jesus, right?

"Truly, truly, I say, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel at what I say. You must be born anew."

Right? So was Jesus really clear that there's two levels of life? There's physical life and there's spiritual life. And what we sometimes get confused with is that physical life is a great gift from God. We have all been given this physical gift: the physical gift of birth. But the other aspect is actually more foundationally important: that before you were given physical life, you were given spiritual life. And spiritual life is eternal. It never ceases to exist. You can't kill it. You can't! You cannot kill spirit; you cannot destroy energy. You can't kill it.

So, what is the lesson here? Well, I believe the lesson here in this commandment is that we are sometimes led that -- when God drops in a great idea into our consciousness, into our mind, into our heart -- we don't believe in that much good, and so we dismiss the idea. In so doing, we deny the goodness of God. And I believe that the greatest that we are given spiritually is wisdom.

Now, for most of us, when we pray -- even if we pray for abundance -- most of us do not open our eyes after a time of prayer and have an extra \$10,000 in our lap. I am willing for that; I just want to say I'm willing for it! But it's never happened to me, not even once.

But what happens when I pray for abundance is that I am led to greater ideas; greater possibilities. My thinking is changed. And then when my thinking is changed, I can take new actions and allow myself to create a higher level of abundance.

There is an uncanonized Jewish text that was written about 1st Century BCE. And it's called "The Book of Wisdom." And in this text, it is though Solomon is talking about wisdom. And I want to read it to you, because I just think it's so profound. Again, "The Book of Wisdom," and I'm going to be reading beginning with Chapter 7, Verse 7:

*"Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given me;
I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.
I preferred her to scepters and thrones,
and I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison with her.
Neither did I liken to her to any priceless gems,
because all gold is but a little sand in her sight
and all silver will be accounted as clay before her.
I loved her more than wealth and beauty,
and I chose to have her rather than light,
because her radiance never ceases.
All good things came to me along with her
and in her hands uncounted wealth.
I rejoiced in them all, because wisdom leads them.
But I did not know that she was their mother.
I learned without guile and I imparted without grudging;
I did not hide her wealth.
For it is an unfailing treasure for men;
those who get it obtain friendship with God,
commended for the gifts that come from instruction."*

So what's he talking about? He's talking about wisdom. He's talking about spiritual ideas! And I really want you to hear this, because I believe, for many of us, this is our missing piece. And the missing piece is that we're praying for "stuff" when we need to be praying for wisdom. And if we pray for wisdom -- spiritual wisdom -- our mind, our heart, our soul is open to possibilities that before were not available to us.

That, if you want a greater life, pray for the wisdom that would allow that greater life to be possible, even more so than you're praying for the thing. Like, there's really nothing wrong with praying for a car, or praying for this, or praying for that. But it's not even nearly as powerful as praying for the wisdom that allows all that to be possible.

And as spiritual people, we're functioning at a physical level. And we could be praying at a purely spiritual level when we pray for wisdom. So whatever it is that you seek, I want you to see tonight that, I believe, to truly transform our life -- to live our greatest possible life -- every day we need to be praying for wisdom. If you want a healing, you can pray for the healing. But I think it's more impactful to pray for the wisdom that allows that healing to happen. If you want a greater relationship, you can pray for the greater relationship, but I believe it's more impactful to pray for the wisdom to know how to create that greater relationship.

When we have wisdom, we actually have everything. When we lack wisdom, we can pray for the thing, but then we're just operating from the physical dimension. We're not truly allowing our spiritual life to be used at its greatest level.

You know, when we look at the stories of Solomon, Solomon prayed for wisdom and he got it all. He got it all! When you truly look at what you want in your life -- no matter what it is -- pray for the wisdom and then you can have it all. But when we don't pray for the wisdom, we're not truly praying for the deepest level of transformation; for the deepest level of change. And the wiser we become, the more blessed we become.

"I am wise with the goodness of God."

Will you say that with me? [With congregation]: *"I am wise with the goodness of God."*

One more time: [with congregation] *"I am wise with the goodness of God."*

Alright? So I want you to really get clear in your life what it is that you want the most right now. If you were going to live a more abundant life -- and I asked this on the first night! If you were going to live a more abundant life, what would that look like for you? Would it look like prosperity? Would it look like health? Would it look like greater relationship? Would it look like harmony in your family? What would abundance look like? And tonight, instead of praying for it, I want you to pray for the wisdom.

And I want you to see, over and over again: As you pray for wisdom, everything becomes available to you.

And without wisdom ... because I think we've all experienced this! Without wisdom, we tend to go through the same problems over and over and over again, because we don't have a breakthrough. If we pray for wisdom, we get the breakthrough first, and then everything else is ours.

Will you pray with me?

I invite you to open your mind, your heart, your soul to the activity of God. And today, we ask for wisdom. We do! God, give me the wisdom to live my best life! Give me the wisdom to be the man or the woman that I was called to be! Give me the wisdom to live the most loving and appropriate, spiritual, abundant, fun, great life! I'm ready for wisdom. I've been praying for everything else. Tonight, I'm going to pray for wisdom. Give me the wisdom to know how to live my life in the highest level. Give me the wisdom to be the person you've created me to be. Tonight, I pray for wisdom. And I am ready for you to fill my mind and heart and soul with ideas that I've never held before. So in all things we look to God, and in all things we give thanks. And so it is. Amen.