

Rather it becomes a blessing. Isaiah 57:1-2 *The righteous man perishes, and no one lays it to heart... For the righteous man is taken away from calamity; he enters into peace; they rest in their beds who walk in their uprightness.*

#### Discussion Questions

- Can you think of any difficulties this past week that are hard for you to see as blessings? Pray that God would change your perspective on your hard times.
- How does Jesus' suffering on earth help us in our own times of suffering?

#### **Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse**

We have been talking this week about the promised blessing in the fifth commandment. Paul reminds us that this is the first commandment (and only one of the ten) that includes a promise. We considered earlier that all of God's commandments include blessings for those who believe in Jesus Christ. Yet, why did God particularly chose the fifth commandment to single out for a dedicated promise? Perhaps it has something to do with the nature of being a child who needs to follow God. If you are growing up in a Christian home your parents and pastors are teaching you about following Jesus. Hopefully you have some good examples of what godly faith and life look like. Yet, you can't just expect to receive the blessings of God simply by being in a Christian home, or attending a Christian church. When the people of Israel entered the promised land and raised children there, those children were faced with the commandment. Would they try to enjoy the blessings of their parents, or would they follow God themselves, and continue to receive those blessings. While the generation of Joshua was blessed in the land, their later descendants lost that blessing because they didn't follow their parents instructions. As a child in a Christian home, you must decide whether you will try to follow on your parents coat tails, or whether you will follow Jesus for yourself. Listen to the voice of your parents and pastors and believe in Jesus for yourself. Then you will have life!

#### Discussion Questions

- What happens to families and churches when children assume they are Christian without ever coming to Jesus themselves?
- Have you trusted in Jesus for forgiveness and eternal life? If not, pray to him today.

# Baptist Catechism

## Family Worship Guide



### West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

#### Baptist Catechism Question #71

**Q:** What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

**A:** *The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.*

#### Suggested Memory Verse

***Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."***

## Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

This week our question looks at the promised blessing of the fifth commandment. The Apostle Paul reminds us that this is the first commandment with a promise. How true this is! In fact, it is the only commandment of the Ten Commandments that includes its own blessing. We will look a little further on at why the blessing is included here. For today we want to consider what blessing is being promised. Exodus 20:12 *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.* The blessing speaks of long life in the promised land. The Ten Commandments were given to the people of Israel as they prepared to enter the promised land of Canaan. It is important for us to remember that the blessing of that land were temporary. They were not the final blessing that God's people were to hope in. The blessing of long life in the land of Canaan was meant to be a picture pointing to greater Life in a greater Inheritance. While there was a promise for the Old Testament people to have a good and long life in a blessed land, the final promise is for those who would trust in Jesus Christ. To us is promised Eternal Life in the New Heavens and the New Earth. Jesus earned eternal life by keeping all of the commandments of God perfectly for us. He gives us this blessing as a gift when we believe in him.

### Discussion Questions

- Do you think the fifth commandment is the only one with any blessing for keeping it? Why or why not?
- How did Jesus keep the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment for us?

## Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The fifth commandment promises long life in the land for those who honor their parents. Yesterday we remembered how the temporal blessings of the Old Testament point us forward to the future and complete blessings of the New Covenant. We who believe in Jesus inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of God. It would be a mistake to think that there are no longer any temporal blessings to be enjoyed as a result of obedience to God's law. This is surely one reason Paul reminds children to obey their parents in light of the promise. God really does bless those who obey his law and live holy lives. The book of Proverbs is filled with reminders that God blesses the wise and righteous man while he brings hardship on the disobedient. Psalms also is filled with such reminders. Psalm 34:11-14 Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. Note the Psalmist speaks as a father calling on his children to fear God and obey his law. This means it is the obedient children who gain *life, many days, and see good.* Children, if you listen to your parents and church leaders you have a hope of many blessings in this life as you learn to follow God.

### Discussion Questions

- Why do you think we sometimes forget that God blesses those who obey him?
- What is the difference between a Christian who obeys God hoping for blessing, and an unbeliever who obeys God's law to gain a blessing?

## Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Yesterday we considered the blessings that God gives those who obey him in this life. He often showers his good things on his children who fear and love him. But is this always the case? Sometimes don't the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper? This is especially the case in times of persecution when the unbelievers seek to harm God's people. Even in places without persecution we can be tempted to look around and ask, "God, why do your people suffer and the unrighteous enjoy so many blessings?" Job 21:7 *Why do the wicked live, reach old age, and grow mighty in power?* Job himself was a righteous man who was suffering greatly while many around him had plenty. Psalm 73:2-3 *But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.* The Psalmist was tempted to envy the wicked because they seemed to have so much. How does the Bible resolve this question? It isn't by telling us to have more faith so that God will bless us too. Rather, God teaches us in his word to keep our eyes on eternity. Psalm 73:17-18 *I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin.* Though the wicked may prosper in this life they will one day be brought to ruin. In that day their blessings will do nothing but increase their judgment.

### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever found yourself envying those around you in the world? What sort of things do you wish you had?
- What can we do to gain a better perspective on the world and its blessings?

## Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The fifth commandment promises long life in the land for those who honor their parents. Our catechism answer this week notes an important caveat to this promise. It is promised only *as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good.* God's blessings in this life are given for a purpose that goes beyond our own enjoyment of them. God's glory is utmost in God's mind as he dispenses his blessings. Closely tied to this is His desire to only do us true good. This means that sometimes God gives us shortened lives away from the goodness of the land. The Psalmist describes such a time in his own life. Psalm 102:23 *He has broken my strength in midcourse; he has shortened my days.* How is the believer to reconcile such hard times with the promise of God in Romans 8:28? *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.* When we are suffering it can be difficult to see how God is working for our good. God uses times like this for sanctification. He refines us in the fire of trials to bring about our growth in the image of Christ. For the believer, even death is no loss.