The Fifth Commandment

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Preacher: Stephen Murray

[0:00] If you've got a Bible, you can turn to the book of Exodus, Exodus chapter 20 and verse 1.

So we're back in this very well-known section of the Bible, Exodus chapter 20 verse 1.
And God spoke all these words. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.
You shall not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands.
You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.
[1:21] On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male or female servant, or his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.
When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, Speak to us yourself and we will listen, but do not have God speak to us or we will die.
Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. God has come to test you so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning. The people remained at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.
[2:34] This is the word of the Lord. Let's ask for God's help as we study this together. Father, this is your truth.

And we long to have you speak truth not just into our heads but into our hearts this morning. Our exercises when we gather for worship and when we study the Bible is not to become like encyclopedias and go back knowing a little bit more than we knew when we came in.
We do want to know more, but we want to be changed by the experience of studying your word, Lord. And that's what you promise in your word. You promise that your word is living and active and that it does accomplish the work that you sent it out for.
That your spirit takes this word and does something in our hearts. And so we pray for that this morning. Meet with us by your spirit and change us. Show us your son Jesus and let us be changed by what we see there.
We ask this in Jesus' holy name. Amen. It's like it's taking me a long time. And you might come in here as a visitor today and go, wow, how cliched.
[3:46] We're doing a series of Ten Commandments. And I guess not what all churches do, like the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. It's actually taken me my entire ministry career to do a sermon series on the Ten Commandments.

And I'm very, very glad that I did. Because there's just so much in this, in my studies each week as I try and go through this. There are so many things that I feel like I missed and I really should have been taught earlier on in life. And I would have made a big difference to how I think about Christianity.

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And this particular commandment is no different from the other ones we've looked at. So there was just so much coming at me this week. And I've tried to get it all down. And they say you should never really make apologies at the beginning of your sermon.
But I'm going to do that anyway because I feel like I've got a bit of grace with you guys. So I've tried to get it all in. In many ways, this is just a taster of what this command means. And it's for you to go out and think about it more deeply.
And read more deeply around it and apply it. Now when you get to commands 5 through 10, it starts to look like the commands get very, very specific, very narrow in their application.
[4:48] So take the sixth commandment, for example, the one we'll do next week. You shall not murder. I can, true story, I can honestly say that I have never been tempted to literally murder someone.

In my weaker moments, perhaps I wanted to inflict pain on certain individuals like football referees or cold calling estate agents or Cape Town drivers in general.
But I've never actually wanted to murder somebody. And so you might look at that and say, well then does the sixth commandment apply to me? And what I want to do this morning is I want to try and show you that all of these commands, even the ones, even as they tend to be a bit narrower in their specificity, actually have really broad ranging implications for all of us.
Hence their inclusion in the summary of God's moral law, which is the Ten Commandments. And this fifth commandment really helps us to see this. So here's the command to be readed to you, Exodus 20 verse 12.
So we're going to do two things this morning. Number one, I want you to see how big this command is. And then number two, like Lindsay, I've got sub points in my points here.
[6:01] So I'm going to give you three ways of applying it. How big this command is and three ways of applying it. So here's the big command. In some ways, this could be a really, really short sermon. So we could just actually call all the kids out of Sunday school, get them to sit right next to their parents and then say, children, stop misbehaving and giving your parents a hard time.

Just stop it. The Bible says stop it, so just stop it, like that Bob Newhart meme on YouTube. Just stop it. Now, parents would love that because now the minister is saying it with the Bible and we could all go home early.
But actually, the fifth commandment is much, much broader than policing the behavior of children. So think about it this way. On the 19th of September this year, many eyes in the world were glued to television sets as Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest.
And whenever there is some sort of big event involving the monarchy, one particular debate always kind of comes up in the media and opinion pieces, and that is, should we still have a monarchy in this day and age?
Now, five days after the funeral, Alex O'Connor, who's a well-known YouTuber, writes on philosophy and theology, he's a skeptic himself, but very articulate young YouTuber, he released a video entitled, Why the Monarchy Should Die with the Queen.
[7:20] And he said this, he said, I do respect the queen. What I don't respect is the institution of hereditary monarchy, which is not the same thing. We have not just been asked these past weeks to respect a monarch as a human being, which is perfectly reasonable, but to respect and celebrate the monarchy as a legitimate political and cultural institution by recognizing the seriousness in the death of this particular elderly lady as far more deserving of attention and respect than any other of the few hundred thousand people who also died on the 8th of September.

Now, friends, I don't know where you, as you said to this morning, and I'm sure there's a diversity of views here, where you sit on that issue, where you lie on the issue of the monarchy. There's a spectrum, right, on the monarchy, from people over here who want to abolish the monarchy altogether to people over here who have lifetime subscriptions to Hello! magazine.
But it does, it raises a bigger question about how we think about structural authority in our present culture. So a key feature of the post-enlightenment world that you and I live in is the elevation of the self and the throwing off of authority that inhibits us from being truly free.
And then you read the news today. So you read the news today, and it feels like we have really, really good reasons to scrap authority. We have so many examples of bad authority out there today. We have corruption in government.
We have corruption and abuse in big business. We have corruption and abuse even in the church. It's understandable why we might get together and think, well, maybe this world would be a better

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place if we just scrapped that whole kind of superior-inferior distinction altogether.
[9:05] Now, how are Christians supposed to think about this? Well, enter the fifth commandment. See, it's a commandment that says, at the level of the most fundamental human relationship, that between a child and a parent, the child should honor the parent.

There should be a respecting of the established authority structure. Now, here's why I think this particular command applies way beyond just the parent-child relationship.
Cast your minds back. You might remember when we started this micro-series on the Ten Commandments, we said that the Ten Commandments can be divided up into two parts. The first four commandments, and then the second part being the six remaining commandments.
They're what we call the First Table of the Law and the Second Table of the Law, which actually, by the way, have nothing to do with the fact that they were written on two tablets. That was just two copies of the entire law. But the First Table of the Law and the Second Table of the Law. The First Table of the Law contains the laws that pertain to our relationship with God, right?
The Second Table of the Law, five onwards, pertain to the laws that pertain to our relationship to fellow human beings. Now, you actually see something in this in Jesus' thinking himself.
[10:18] So, Jesus, when he has an interaction with the religious law experts of his day, Matthew 22, verse 34 to 40, he says this. Well, it starts a little bit further back.

It says, Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together, one of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question. Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?
And Jesus replied, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commands.
So, Jesus summarizes the law as love for God and love for neighbor. The same distinction that we generally see in the Ten Commandments, the first table and the second table. Now, that means, in terms of placement, the fifth commandment is the first and most foundational commandment for the second table of the law.
It's the foundational commandment for love of neighbor, in the same way that the first commandment is foundational for love of God. And so, any sermon, any talk, really, that you do on the fifth commandment shouldn't just be about how to get your kids not to eye roll when you make bad dad jokes, but it should touch on broader subjects of structures of authority in our society, that God has built into the fabric of this world.
[11:41] And interestingly, that's exactly where the Apostle Paul goes when he discusses the fifth commandment in the New Testament. So, here's Ephesians chapter 6 and verses 1 to 9.

So, Paul speaks directly to the church.
He talks to the children in the church in Ephesus. And he tells them, obey the fifth commandment. It's still binding, obey it. Then, he expands that. And he talks to parents about how they might, in light of the fifth commandment, conduct their parenting in a godly way.
And then, and here's the big surprise, he moves on to the social institution of slavery and the authority structures of the first century. Now, I don't have time this morning to talk about the issue of slavery in the Bible. We've done talks on it in the past.
I don't want that to sidetrack you right now. You can come chat to me about that afterwards. What I want you to see is how Paul expands the scope of the fifth commandment, from children to parents to other authority structures in the society of his day.
[13:35] And so, that's why if you go, for example, to something like the Westminster Larger Catechism, you go to its section, it's got a whole long section of questions and answers on how to understand the ten commandments.

When you get to the fifth commandment, question 126, what is the general scope of the fifth commandment? And the answer is, the general scope of the fifth commandment is the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations as inferiors, superiors, or equals.
So, the guys who wrote it, the Westminster divines who wrote it, they didn't use the language of superior, inferior, or equal in terms of value or dignity. They're very clear in the rest of the Westminster standards that all people have equal value and dignity.
They use those terms to refer to stations in life that we find ourselves in by God's providence. You see, following the example of Paul that they see in the New Testament, the divines thought that this

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command, the fifth command, has a bearing on how you relate to your parents, on how you relate to government, on how you relate to your employer, on how you relate to church leadership even, and there are several questions where they expand on all of this.
And so this broad scope then helps us to explain a bunch of different things. For example, it helps us to explain the commentary that we see around this particular law in the rest of the Old Testament even. Helps us to explain the promise that's attached to the law.
[15:03] Did you see there was a promise there attached to this law? Paul even makes a point that this is the first law that has a promise attached to it. Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

Now, that's not a scientific statement about the average lifespan of obedience. If it was, I wouldn't be alive today. It's a general rule of thumb, almost like a proverb saying, look guys, life goes better when the integrity of the foundational authority structure of the family is kept in place.
It goes better. And listen, there's actually a mountain of social science data out there confirming this. Kids raised in healthy two-parent homes with clear boundaries and disciplines score better across all the metrics.
Education, mental health, physical health. And that has a knock-on effect to the broader society as well because healthy, educated children grow up and they grow the economy, they provide social stability.
This is actually not a controversial thing in social sciences, even people across the ideological spectrum. The dot is pretty fixed. Now, that doesn't mean there aren't exceptions, but on average, when the fifth commandment is kept, the whole society benefits.
[16:22] That's the rule of thumb promise. Second thing that it helps us to understand is the scope of the commandment also helps us understand the harsh civil penalties that are prescribed in the law of Moses for disobedient children.

So you'll notice if you go and you keep reading now through the five books of Moses, you'll notice that the punishment for breaking the fifth commandment is particularly harsh. Leviticus chapter 20 verse 9, anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death because they have cursed their father or mother, their blood will be on their own head.
Deuteronomy chapter 21 verse 18 to 21, if someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town.
They shall say to the elders, this son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard. Then all the men of his town are to stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you.
All Israel will hear of it and be afraid. Now remember as we talked about the law and how to understand law, these are part of the civil components of the law. They are not binding upon New Testament believers because we don't live in a theocracy anymore with God as direct king mediating his law.
[17:43] So please, please, please, please don't go home and stone your children after the service today because they didn't clean your bedroom when you ask them to, or their bedroom when you ask them to. I know you want to, but don't. But if you're like me, you might wince when you read the harsh penalty of the civil law here.

Why is it so harsh? And there are other verses I could have read as well. Why is it so harsh? I think it's so harsh because of how foundational this command is to human flourishing.
Remember the law is trying to teach us something. Israel is an object lesson to the rest of the world in that sense. Break the authority structure of the family unit and you break society altogether.
We see this in our own country. I think one of the most devastating brutalities of the apartheid regime was the implementation of widespread migrant labor.
It ripped families apart. It took fathers away and put them in housing hundreds of kilometers away from their children, their wives. And we are still experiencing the fallout of that today.
[18:57] And we will for generations probably. There's an incredibly, incredibly dark stain upon our history and upon our country, especially, and I think especially for us as Christians, when we remember that many of the law and policy makers who implemented migrant labor in the country back then also attended churches where the reformed catechisms were taught, upholding the importance and the scope of the fifth commandment.

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This is a big commandment. And we violate it not just to the detriment of our own personal family units, we violate it to the detriment of our broader society.
Now let me give you three applications. Number one, Christians can't be anarchists. So you need to put your spray paint down.
While we are definitely committed to equal value, worth, and dignity of all people, regardless of their station in life, I do not think the Bible allows us to be full-on egalitarians and throw off all authority structures.
I just don't think you can reconcile that with Scripture. In fact, the Bible goes further and it warns that when we do throw off authority, we wreck ourselves and we wreck this world.
[20:21] And so if that is the case, then I think we need to, as Christians, reject trends that lead us in that direction. And there are a lot of trends around different areas in the culture like that at the moment.

I'll give you just one example in the area of parenting. Parenting philosophies that are premised on taking away the distinction between the authoritative parent and the submissive child where the parent and the child basically just treat each other as peers, as best buddies.
Those sorts of philosophies are, I think, at odds with the fifth commandment. They don't work. And listen, this is not just about kind of pragmatically finding the best parenting strategy that works to keep your house at peace and to make sure your kids turn out sort of all right.
This actually has theological ramifications. You see, if healthy parenting isn't demonstrated and practiced, your children are going to grow up having a really, really hard time getting their heads around the authority of a sovereign God.
If they don't understand authority as a concept in the home, they're going to have a really hard time when they get to the Bible and discover there's this guy named God who has ultimate authority, supreme authority, by virtue of who He is.
[21:35] And so I don't think, I do not think we can be anarchists in the way we think about authority. Number two, Christians should show respect for designated authority even when they don't agree with that authority.

Now this is a really tough one, I think. I think it's a really, really tough one. One of the reasons the culture pushes for more extreme forms of egalitarianism is because of abuse and power of authority that exists out there.
And we see it and it's rampant and it's widespread and it is not okay. I'm completely sympathetic to that impulse to wanting to strip away authority to its absolute minimum because of all the stories you just hear all the time of abuse of authority.
But then I'm confronted by the Bible often because here's the Apostle Paul, Romans chapter 13, verse 1. He says, let everyone be subject to the governing authorities for there is no authority except that which God has established.
The authorities that exist have been established by God. So Paul says, governing authorities are established by God for His purposes and for that fact alone we ought to honor authority.
[22:53] But what makes these words by Paul truly, truly, truly stunning is when you realize the brutal nature of the governing authorities of his day that he was speaking about.

Christians were systematically beaten and broken down physically, socially, and economically by these governing authorities that Paul speaks about and yet in the face of that overt persecution Paul says, authority is good.
And he's talking about secular authority there. Authority is good, it's from God, it's serving purposes don't denigrate authority, he says. It is a remarkable, remarkable passage in the New Testament of what patient, faithful obedience to God looks like in difficult circumstances.
Friends, I think we need to be very, very, very careful in light of this in how we view and how we speak about authority figures. I'm not saying that there aren't limits to the honor or the submission we give to them and we're going to talk about that in a second, but we need to be very careful about our speech, I think, in particular.
So trash-talking the government in this country is a national pastime. It really, really is. And certainly, we must point out the clear failures and the dereliction of duty in our elected officials.
[24:24] Our democratic system makes ample space for us to be able to do that. Christians can protest, Christians can critique. There's no blanket ban on that sort of stuff. But we must do this in as objective, civil, and respectful way as we possibly, possibly can.

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Ad hominem attacks, gossip, mocking, ridiculing have no place on the lips of Christians. Listen, friends, I think trash-talking is so embedded in this culture, in fact, it's so embedded in me that I suspect if we are to take this fifth commandment seriously, we'd often be those awkward friends around the braai and the dinner table when certain subjects come up.
But we must. We must, I think, we must have the same conviction that Paul has. In the face of that despotic Roman empire, he says, respect authority. Not because the individuals in authority have always earned that respect in their conduct, but because their authority has been established by God.
Now let me say just a further implication about this for the parent-child relationship, and particularly when it comes to adult children, because there's a lot of adult children here this morning. we grow up, hopefully we become responsible adults, and our parents get older.
There's no longer this kind of direct superior-inferior relationship because we're able to do all the things that we were unable to do as children that they needed to hold our hand along the journey in. And so at this point it becomes really, really easy, I think, to lose respect and honor for our aging parents.
[26:08] They don't keep up with technology in quite the same way we do. They don't tick-tock. They don't know about the corn song. They grew up in a different cultural environment, a more traditional one than the progressive one that we have.

And so they might have certain ideas that we think are a little bit backwards and regressive. And it becomes incredibly easy at that point to become very patronizing, to slip into patronizing thought and speech regarding our parents.
thought and speech that denigrates the God-ordained parent-child relationship. Friends, that's a violation of the fifth commandment. Your aging parents don't suddenly lose that honor due to them just because you're now suddenly more competent in life than you used to be.
For the most part, the reason you're more competent in life is because of their patient sacrificial input into you over decades. Don't dishonor them now. that would be incredibly offensive to them and incredibly offensive to God.
And then number three, there are limits to how we should be subject to authority. The Paul who writes Romans 13 is the same Paul who often runs afoul of governing authorities for preaching the gospel in direct contradiction to their rules and their regulations.
[27:34] And you'll see instances of Christians, of believers bucking authority that are approvingly set out in scripture. So the midwives lying to Pharaoh to save baby boys at the beginning of Exodus.

The Magi dodging Herod to keep baby Jesus safe. Peter and John rejecting the Sanhedrin's command to stop preaching about Jesus. There are plenty of examples out there that demonstrate that honor and obedience to human authority has limits.
It's not absolute. And it's not absolute because we have an allegiance to a higher authority that is absolute. You see that?
Our authority, our allegiance to other authorities is not absolute because we have a higher allegiance to one authority that is absolute. Remember Ephesians 6, Paul says, children obey your parents in the Lord, he says.
Obey your parents in the Lord. There's a qualifier there. Ultimate allegiance to the Lord is the qualifier. when authority forces you to undermine that ultimate allegiance then and only then are we as Christians permitted to go against it.
[28:43] So children, you are not under the authority of your parents when your parents command you to transgress God's law. Christian, you are not under the authority of the government when the government commands you to transgress God's law.

Congregation, you are not under the authority of the elders when the elders command you to transgress God's law. There is a limit to the authority and that limit is the authority of God.
Now let me close with this this morning. Perhaps the most difficult part of the fifth commandment is applying it to situations where your parents really didn't carry their God-given authority in a way befitting that role.
Right? Parents that neglected you, that abandoned you, that abused you, you. How do we think about the fifth commandment in those sorts of instances? Well, we certainly don't excuse that terrible behavior on the part of the parents.

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We definitely don't do that. The command has much to say to parents as it has to children. Paul realizes that. That's why he includes the line, fathers, do not exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
[29:54] He realizes that while the original command is directed to children, it also has implications for parents, that parents parent their children in a way that is befitting of the call that God has placed upon their life to look after those children.

Fathers are to reflect God's fatherly love to their children. Mothers are to reflect God's tender care to their children. And when parents don't do that, when they wound their children emotionally and psychologically and physically, they are not only doing incalculable damage to their child, they are also defacing that little child's vision of the beautiful creator God of this universe.
That's what they're doing. And so we must lament abusive and neglectful parenting. We must not excuse it. We must build systems that protect against it and even to the point, I think, of discipline in the church to protect children and honor God.
But maybe you had horrible, horrible parents and you listened to this command and you listened to the weight of this command and you think, I don't know how I do that. I don't know how I honor my parents.
Or maybe, maybe like me, you look back on how you've parented your own kids up to this point and you think, oh man, I have not lived up to the office of authority that God has called me to.
[31:20] I've not represented God well to my children. Maybe you're about to have children and you're terrified of that yourself. Maybe you sit here as an adult child and you think, I have violated this command for so long.

I have denigrated my hardworking, sacrificial parents in so many ways that it's shameful to even speak about it. We all sit here in the brokenness of this world with our own sinfulness, under the judgment, really, of the fifth commandment.
When we look at its scope, how important it is, those feelings of condemnation just kind of rise up inside of us. Like those disobedient children in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, maybe we are the ones who deserve the punishment for breaking the fifth commandment.
And so friends, if you feel that, if you feel that condemnation, or if you feel like you don't have the strength to obey this commandment, can I remind you of who our eternal father really is, our eternal parent, who he really is.
Remember that punishment for disobedient children in Deuteronomy 22, that rebellious children should be stoned? It says there that the parents are actually supposed to take the kid to the elders at the town gate.
[32:35] And they're supposed to say these words, the son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard. And then all the men in the town are to stone him to death. And that harsh punishment hits you.

It hits me every time, even though I know the theological explanations for it, it hits me every single time I read it. It hits you hard. And then, though, then you turn to the New Testament and you read these words.
Luke's Gospel. There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, Father, give me my share of the estate. And so he divided his property, really his life, between them.
Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and squandered his wealth in wild living. So he was a drunkard and a glutton. And after he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country and he began to be in need.
And so he went and he hired himself out to a citizen of that country who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.
[33:44] And when he came to his senses, he said, how many of my father's hired servants have food to spare and here I am starving to death. I will, I'll set out and go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

I am no longer worthy to be your son. Make me like one of your hired servants. And so he got up and he went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, was filled with compassion for him.
He ran to his son. He threw his arms around him and he kissed him. He was still a long time ago.

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The glutton, the drunkard, the rebellious, disobedient son who wishes his father dead. He doesn't get stones.
He doesn't get stones. He gets his father full of compassion, running to him, embracing him, kissing him, putting the finest clothes on him, spreading the finest feast before him.
[35:02] Friends, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. When we come to our senses and repent of our sin, and it's an ongoing process, it's a daily process, and return to our father, trusting in his son, Jesus Christ, we don't receive stones.

We receive the father's warm, lasting, eternal embrace. This is a hard command. It's a big command.
It touches so many areas of our life. But with that kind of a father giving us this command, I think we can do it. I think we can do it. Let's pray.
Let's pray. Our Lord and our God, we start every prayer off often by calling you father.
And that's just not a, it's not a random title that we throw out there to fill the gap, the space in the prayer. It is the description of who you are to us.
[36:16] You are to us. Our father, our loving father. And Lord, we need that. Some of us have had good fathers, good earthly fathers. Some of us have had really bad earthly fathers.

Some of us have strained relations with authority because of our experiences. We've been hurt. We've been broken down. We've been bruised. We've been battered. And so it is an enormous comfort for us then, Lord, to know that there is a father out there who is a good father.
A kind father. A loving father. Who doesn't hold our sins against us. Our failings against us. Our brokenness against us. When we turn to him in Jesus, he embraces us.
And gives us more than we deserve or merit. That is wonderful grace, Lord. Help us to rest in your fatherly grace to us.
Help us to enjoy it and help us to then tap into it as a sense of strength and power so that we might do authority well in the spheres where we are.
[37:26] That we might be good, graceful parents. That those of us who are in positions of authority and leadership might walk humbly with that warm, loving grace of God at the heart of how we conduct our leadership.

That we might, in a very respectful and clear and objective way, call out bad leadership where we see it and ensure that we build structures and systems that protect from bad and abusive leadership.
Lord, we need your help in this because it's such a hard thing in this current world. Lord, don't let us throw the baby out of the bathwater on this subject of authority just because we have seen bad things.
Help us to demonstrate a better, more beautiful, graceful view of authority. Lord, I pray for any person here this morning, Lord, who doesn't have you as their father.
Who comes in here and has just really heard a lecture on authority. I ask that you would help them see their own need for you.
[38:31] Their own need to be brought into your family to have you as their father. Have mercy on their soul, I pray. And I ask all these things in Christ's holy name. Amen.

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