

This Commandment Existed Before the Law—And It May Save Your Marriage

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or your sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Ex. 20:8-11).

I have taught and researched the background for this command quite a bit. I find that this is the only command that starts off with the word “remember.” This principle had existed before the law. This was a reminder to God’s people to keep doing life this way.

They were to work hard and rest well. Doing nothing is challenging, especially for us Type A Westerners. However, the person and marriage that does rest has created time for intentional relating. You can give time, attention and affection to your spouse and family during this day.

This principle of rest is important so you can both recharge. You both are about doing so much in life, so stopping and breathing allows you to fortify yourself and each other as you do marriage, family, work and life together. When you rest, you trust God. You can seek Him. A marriage that regularly obeys the command to rest will be less likely to burn out and behave poorly toward each other.

I am a strong believer in rest. I work hard, but I rest well.

I can feel when I start violating the Sabbath day. How do you and your marriage do with the Sabbath principle? How do you know if you're resting? How do you both recharge? What are the symptoms of each of you when you don't rest? If someone was watching your Sabbath, would they be able to prove you were trying to rest?

Adding intentional, consistent rest to your marriage can sustain your marriage over the decades. Doing nothing regularly is a plan to stay more content and relaxed in life and in marriage.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex. 20:12).

Here is the commandment with a promise of a long life. I think generally most of us try to honor our parents. If you're fortunate to have had godly, loving, selfless parents, this commandment is easy. They've earned a place of honor and respect. In this situation, it would be rational to respect them and allow their life and voice to have an influence in your life.

As a counselor, I know that many people reading this page had parents who were not good parents, role models or in some cases, even respectable people. You may have been neglected, abused, abandoned, not heard or not encouraged. These parents are harder to honor. They may have offended your spouse or may even have been a source of pain in your marriage.

Here, you can do what you can to honor. As adults, you're not required to obey your parents, but honor them. You and your spouse can negotiate the appropriate boundaries that can be managed and still attempt an atmosphere of honor. Two hearts committed to the principle of honor will bring more peace to your miracle of marriage. {eo}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally-known author, speaker and

licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, Miracle of Marriage. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.