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# **Honor Your Parents**

**# 721-A**

**Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)**

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# Honor Your Parents

It isn't difficult to look back in your life and realize that two or three major incidents or events or choices have literally changed the course of your destiny. That person you married or didn't marry. The choice to take that job or not to. That city you moved to or almost moved to. Most of all the choice to trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and turn your life over to Him. These are turning points that turn your life in totally new directions.

Likewise, it isn't difficult to look back over the course of history and realize that a few seemingly isolated incidents have shaped the entire destiny of man. There was, of course, the fall of man when Adam and Eve chose to live life in rebellion to God and the ensuing pain that fell upon all mankind. Then there was the flood and God's reign of judgment on the sins of man and His corresponding mercy that saved one man and his family. We had a whole new promise to mankind. There was the choosing of the Jews, the calling out of an unknown nation to be set apart, by whom and through whom God could manifest His power to a lost world. There was, of course, the greatest single event in history, the coming to earth of God in the form of man to once and for all pay the price for the sins of the whole world. Then triumphantly there was the next-to-final chapter of God's redemptive work which is celebrated on Easter, the death of death and the reality of resurrection. The essence of eternity was displayed when Jesus rose again.

But certainly in the context of these key events that have shaped the course of history, we would have to say that one of the five or six most dramatic and earthshaking was the event we will study today. This is the moment in history when God called His chosen servant, Moses, to the top of Mount Sinai and there, in the glory of His presence, handed down for the rest of time, the foundational truths upon which all of history could rest its weight. These ten principles of life would set in concrete the ten basic absolutes of God. Do you know what they are? They would once and for all establish the mind of God where certain

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key concepts were concerned. They would ultimately form the foundation of heart attitudes that would characterize what was to become the mind of Christ in the Christian. It is no small wonder then, that God preceded this announcement with such an awesome display of His power that both heaven and earth trembled. Then the astounded Jews retreated in awe. No wonder. God was about to change the course of history with ten dynamic statements about life. *Don't ever take them lightly.*

These ten principles were not mere messages for a day gone by; they were a dramatic message designed for us. They were specific commandments from a sovereign God which, when magnified through the projector of grace and lit with the brilliance of Jesus Christ, became the very essence and basis of life itself. They were ten words from God sent to us special delivery by the "Living Legend of Moses".

Let's look once again at the overview of these ten words of God to man. The first four were God's words to man about man's relationship to God. They formed the foundation stones on which the building of life would be constructed.

Principle 1- Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. This speaks of the *essence* of God. He is both supreme and unique. It describes God, the Father, who is the essence of the one true God. We are to have experientially no other gods for there are, in essence, no other gods but Him.

Principle 2- Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. This speaks of the *image* of God. It describes God, the Son, who is the express image of the Father, totally obeying His every command. But He is Spirit, and we must worship Him in spirit and in truth. So man must not make or use any graven image.

Principle 3- Thou shalt not take God's name in vain. This speaks of the *expression* of God. It represents God, the Holy Spirit, who is the complete expression of the Son, who in turn is the perfect image of the Father. That expression stands for all that the name or character of God represents. Hence, we are never to take that name in vain.

In practical terms, God wants to be Lord in our life. He is supreme and unique. He wants us to obey Him totally as an image obeys its source. But that is not difficult, for if He is everything to us, we *want* to obey. As we obey, His Spirit becomes the perfect expression of His likeness through us, an expression

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that perfectly reflects His image to others and accrues glory to His name. This yielded life becomes complete when it enters into the Sabbath rest of God and totally rests the weight of its being on the essence, the image and the expression of God.

Principle 4- Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. This forms the foundation which rests its total weight on the first three. It develops the strength on which the other six can stand.

Commandments one through four then can be summed up with this:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart [essence], and with all thy soul [image], and with all thy strength [rest], and with all thy mind [expression];

(Luke 10:27)

Now we will listen as God builds upon the foundation six essential elements in man's relationship with man. These elements can ultimately be summarized:

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Luke 10:27 cont.)

In this lesson, we will look at the first pillar which is foundational to man's relationships. That first pillar is:

Honour thy father and thy mother: (Exodus 20:12)

### II- The Pillar of Respect

#### A- The Meaning of Honor

- 1- The honor of God
- 2- The honor of godliness
- 3- The honor of achievement or accomplishment
- 4- The honor of an office

#### B- What the Scripture says about honoring father and mother

### THE SIX PILLARS OF THE BUILDING OF LIFE

Let's begin by looking at the six pillars that hold up the building of life. Onto the foundation of the first four commandments, which form the base, God erects three indestructible principles. These are the law of respect, commandment number 5, the law of life, commandment number 6 and the law of holiness, commandment number 7. These three expressions of God's character will hold up the first level of the superstructure.

# *The Six Pillars of the Faith*

		Honor Your Parents			
Esteem God-ordained Authority	Esteem God's Value of Life	Esteem God's Value of Holiness	Esteem God's Right of Ownership	Esteem God's Value of Integrity	Esteem God's Perfect Provision
<b>HONOR PARENTS</b>	<b>DO NOT KILL</b>	<b>DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY</b>	<b>DO NOT STEAL</b>	<b>DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS</b>	<b>DO NOT COVET</b>
Control Rebellion and Disrespect	Control Anger and Hostility	Control Lust	Control Greed	Control Compromise and Dishonesty	Control Ingratitude

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They represent our *outer expression of God's character* as it reveals itself to other people. Then, onto this foundation He erects three pillars of *inner attitudes*, commandments 8, 9 and 10, the law of rights, the law of honesty and the law of contentment. They form the second story or the higher plain of spiritual integrity which come from a *transformed heart*. Together, they merge into a perfect expression of the character of God as it reveals itself through the character of man. They become the six pillars of the Christian life.

If we were to see the commandments or the pillars as we call them and their corresponding expressions in an overview they might look something like this: On the surface what we see are six commandments. First we have *Honor your father and mother*. The second is *Thou shalt not kill*. The third is *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. The fourth is *Thou shalt not steal*. The fifth is *Thou shalt not bear false witness*. The sixth is *Thou shalt not covet*. Over each pillar we see God's higher laws and His deeper purposes behind the commandment. Sure, God wants us to honor our father and our mother, but it is an example of a higher law which is to hold in esteem all God-ordained authority. Sure, we are not to kill, but the higher law we must honor is to esteem God's value of life. We are never to commit adultery; instead we are to esteem God's higher value of holiness. We are not to steal, but we are to set apart God's right of ownership. We are not to bear false witness, but we are to set up God's concept of integrity and truth. We are not to covet, but we are to esteem God's role as the perfect provider.

These are the deeper truths and higher laws God is seeking to reveal. As we esteem authority, honoring our parents becomes second nature. If we esteem God's concept of life it goes without saying that we won't kill. If God's value of holiness is ours, adultery of the body or the mind will be disgusting to us. If we come to see God's concept of ownership, we won't steal money, time, reputation or anything. If we grasp God's concept of integrity, the last thing we will do is lie by word or deed. If we grasp God's concept of sovereignty, we will not covet for a moment what is another's because we will be too busy praising God for what is ours. These are the higher laws of attitude. These are God's ultimate goals for His people. These are the expressions of the law that Jesus brought into reality in the Sermon on the Mount.

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If you look beneath the pillars, you will see that God's ultimate goal in the fifth commandment, *thou shalt honor thy parents*, was to control rebellion and disrespect. His ultimate goal in the sixth commandment, *thou shalt not kill*, was to control anger and hostility. The ultimate goal in the seventh commandment, *thou shalt not commit adultery*, was to control lust. In the eight commandment, *thou shalt not steal*, the goal was to control greed. In the ninth commandment, *thou shalt not bear false witness*, it was to control compromise and dishonesty. In the last commandment, *thou shalt not covet*, the goal was to control ingratitude.

So the laws were to change the inner attitudes of man. There is the practical practice of it. These laws but frustrated man. He might control overt rebellion, but inside still have no respect. He might control himself enough not to murder, but still be filled with rage. He might refrain from overt immorality but still be filled with lust. He might not steal, but wish he could. He might not lie but might live a lie. He might not take what his neighbor had, but inside he might seethe with ingratitude that he couldn't. The law was his schoolmaster. It brought to him a sense of guilt, for he could look like a saint and still be a sinner. Yet he had to live with what he was.

Then Jesus came, and His indwelling Holy spirit came to take control of our souls and change us from the inside out and thus fulfill the law. Now we don't want to murder because we don't hate, but rather we can be filled with the love of God, even for our enemies. Now we not only should not commit adultery, but we need not even be consumed with lust, for we can experience the holiness of God. Now we need not grit our teeth and respect our parents; we can be so overcome with love for them that to honor them is a natural outgrowth. We not only won't break the commandments, we will desire not to break them because we do not want to break the heart of God. If we look closely, can we not see that to violate any of these commandments violates, in essence, the character of God?

Once again, let's look at the six pillars that hold up the building of life. There is one for each of the last six commandments. Don't you see that a violation of any of these commandments is an affront to the very character of God? To violate the first two is to violate the character of God, the Father. To violate the second two is to violate the character of God, the Son. To violate the

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third two is to violate the character of the God, the Holy Spirit.

Why honor your father and your mother? Is not God, the Father, our perfect Father? Is He not the author of all authority? To rebel against this law of God is to say to God, the perfect Father, “I don’t believe You knew what was best when You ordained these earthly parents.” That is an affront to the very essence of God the Father. When you violate the second of these last six commandments, *Thou shalt not kill*, do you not violate the character of the Father again who is the author of life and His perfect love?

To violate either of the second two is to violate the character of God the Son. *Thou shalt not commit adultery* was given to secure the holiness of marriage and portray a portrait of Jesus our eternal, faithful bridegroom. He will never leave us nor forsake us. Do we not slander His name when we lust or commit adultery? *Thou shalt not steal* was written to protect God’s plan of ownership. Again to violate it is to slander the name of the Son who was the creator of all things and by whom all things exist.

When you violate either of the last two commandments you violate the very character of the Holy Spirit. When you break the commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, do you not grieve the Spirit who has come to be the perfect witness to the truth? When you covet, do you not grieve the heart of the One who is both the provider and the comforter?

Our very commitment is to the integrity of the character of God and it makes these laws not only absolutes to obey, but also attitudes to convey, if we are to be to the world the essence, the image and the expression of God. Six pillars of life they are, resting on a foundation that cannot be moved. They represent the fabric of a man’s life in Christ. So we are not studying them as yardsticks to measure Israel. We are studying them as thermometers by which to measure the spiritual temperature of the one we see in the mirror. This is our objective, to see the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ in us. Let’s begin now by looking at the fifth commandment, pillar number one, Honor thy father and thy mother.

Here are God’s exact words to Moses.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

(Exodus 20:12)



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Deuteronomy 5:16 adds to the same statement,

Honor thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, *and that it may be well with thee*, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

### I- THE PILLAR OF RESPECT

Here now was the first outworking of man's relationship with God. The first thing that relationship ought to do is to affect the way a person sees authority in general and parents in particular. You may say that you love the Lord your God and you love Him with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. That is good. But you may hold your parents in low esteem and be consumed with bitterness towards them or harbor deep resentment towards them. That is bad. For how can you say that you love and honor God whom you have never seen and not be able to honor those He has placed over you as His personal representatives? Here is the first test of the validity of your faith, Do you really honor your father and your mother? They may be living; they may be dead. You may be adopted or you may not be. They may be Christians or they may not be. They may have been "good" parents or they may have been "horrible" parents. Those are not the issues. Those are Satanic smoke screens to cloud the sky, so that you cannot see that it does not matter who they are or what they have done, the question is, "Do you honor them?" If not, you cannot pretend to esteem God's value of authority, for parents are His first level of authority and as such they are the touchstone or the test point of your attitude towards all those God has ordained for you to respect and honor.

Now what does it mean to honor? The Hebrew word here, kabod (כָּבוֹד) means literally to make heavy or weighty to honor. It is used of a son honoring his father in Malachi 1 and Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. It is used of a man honoring God in Proverbs 3 and Isaiah 29 and Judges 9. It means literally to esteem a person or a thing to be of such great value or weight so that if placed on the scales of comparative importance, the sheer weight of that person or thing would tip the scales, indicating inestimable value. In the New Testament, the corresponding Greek word is timao (τιμάω) meaning to make heavy or honor. It is used of a man's relationship with his mother or father seven times in the New Testament. So the Scripture is plainly saying

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that any person's father or mother is deserving of a level of respect that tips the scales of honor in their favor, causing them to be greatly esteemed.

You may say, "My parents are not worthy of that kind of honor." Is that your assessment or God's? You say, "How does God reach a conclusion like that? Did he have no grasp of what it would be like for fallen man to parents?" Don't be ridiculous. The key is that there are at least four kinds of honor. We will look at them now. There is the honor of God, the honor of godliness, the honor of achievement or accomplishment and the honor of an office. If you come to understand the difference, you will come to understand the commandment.

1- The honor of God. This is the giving to God the rightful place due Him as creator, as sustainer, as provider and as deliverer. It is what those first three commandments are all about. He alone is worthy of honor. We are told to honor Him with our worship, with our obedience, and the first fruits of our labors. We need to also honor those He crowns with honor.

2- The second thing we honor is godliness. That is God in a man. We honor the fruits of God's control in a Christian's life. We give honor to holiness, honor to honesty, honor to a quiet spirit and honor to humility, for it comes from God and He alone is worthy to be honored.

3- We honor achievement. The world honors achievement in the physical realm such as athletics or entertainment or financial success. Paul spoke of the crowns or awards at the Olympics. He said that everyone runs the race but only one wins the crown. He encouraged us to run so that we may win. Paul wasn't talking about physical races and physical crowns. He said, "What is my joy and my crown? Are not even you at the coming of the Lord Jesus?" Paul spoke of spiritual rewards when God would honor men for godliness and fruitfulness and for letting His life reproduce in us godly people.

4- This is the kind of honor God is speaking of in Exodus 20:12. This is the honor of the office or role God has ordained. This in turn accrues respect whether it is deserved or not to the one who holds that office. Here are at least six offices that the scripture says that a man is to honor for the sake of the office itself whether or not the one who holds it is worthy. They are:

a) Man is told to honor his wife as the weaker vessel

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(I Peter 3:7). He is to set her apart with respect and dignity for the way God created her and the role God created her for. It has nothing to do with how good a wife she is. That is just icing on the cake. You honor her for the position she holds and God will be honored as well.

b) We are admonished to honor widows who are widows indeed (I Timothy 5:3). The Scripture tells what both constitutes a widow and what constitutes our responsibility to widows. I think the church as a whole today has forsaken honoring the widow perhaps more than any other scriptural command. We ought to be ashamed. It dishonors God when we do not honor widows.

c) There is honor and double honor due to pastors and elders, particularly those who minister the word (I Timothy 5:17). They are to be honored for the office they hold. To honor them is to honor God.

d) We are to honor the president and the governor and the chief of police and the judge and all who rule for the office they hold (Romans 13). They were placed there by God and ordained by God. The respect this generation has lost for the offices of those who rule over us is dishonoring to God. It is the respect we have when a judge enters the room. It is why we stand when the flag is flown. It is why we stand when someone introduces the president of the United States. Maybe you voted for him and maybe you didn't. Maybe you admire him, maybe you don't. That is incidental. You owe the *office* the respect. Who holds the office is God's business.

These are all secondary roles of honor. *Only one office was singled out to honor by God when He spoke to Moses. That is the place a father and mother hold in the lives of His children.* We are going to get specific about what that commandment involves.

What does it mean to honor your father and your mother? I believe there are three stages of honor. A child by definition is one who is under the care, custody and control of a parent or guardian. A child is to honor his parents or guardians in two ways: first by obedience and secondly by respect. We are all familiar with all of the passages in the Old Testament that deal with obedience. We are also aware of the New Testament passages such as these that we paste on the refrigerator or hang on the bathroom door.

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Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.  
(Ephesians 6:1)

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well  
pleasing unto the Lord.  
(Colossians 3:20)

The penalty in the Old Testament for not doing so is severe. Read Deuteronomy 21 and see for yourself.

But honor includes more than obedience. It includes respect. Respect has no age limits. It doesn't end when you move out of the house or go to college or get a job or get married and leave father and mother. Respect goes on. It is due the office of a parent regardless of the performance of a parent. What does it mean to respect your parents? Let's see at least seven things it means. These are taken directly from the Word.

1- Respect means first of all that you don't make fun of your parents. Ever.

The eye that mocketh his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagle shall eat it.  
(Proverbs 30:17)

That is not a very pleasant verse. Teenagers in particular need to understand the meaning of that passage. But you and I as adults also need to understand that there are ways to mock our parents as they get older. Just making fun of them for the way they become and the things they say and do is wrong because of the office they hold and the esteem which God places upon that office.

2- Respect means that you don't take advantage of them financially and think you had it coming.

A man who robs his parents or takes what is theirs and says, "What is wrong with that?" is no better than a murderer.  
(Proverbs 28:24)

The heart that assumes that what his parents has is his to take, takes from them the very essence of their integrity. He robs God.

3- Respect means TLC, tender loving care. This is the absence of presumption or condescension in your relationship with your parents.

A son who mistreats his father or mother is a public disgrace.  
(Proverbs 19:26 TLB)

No matter how successful the world may count you to be, God's measure of success is blunted by the yardstick of how we really

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treat our parents.

4- It ought to go without saying that respect means you never lay a hand on your parents or strike them. God spelled it out.

Anyone who strikes his father or mother shall surely be put to death. (Exodus 21:15 TLB)

5- Respect means that you never rail at your parents or curse them or lose your temper or scream at them.

For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood shall be upon him. (Leviticus 20:9 NKJV)

There is a generation that curses its father, And does not bless its mother. (Proverbs 30:11 NKJV)

Whosoever curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness. (Proverbs 20:20)

There is God's pronouncement of judgment on a generation that has no respect for their parents.

6- In a positive vein, respect means considering their counsel.

Listen to your father's advice and don't despise an old mother's experience. (Proverbs 23:22 TLB)

It doesn't mean that you are, as an adult, bound to their authority; but it does mean that on at least some occasions you owe them the courtesy of seeking their counsel no matter how old you are, and you have the responsibility to at least consider it. A parent would rather have you ask and not agree in love than never have you ask at all.

7- Respect includes in-laws. Scripture says that it is unacceptable to treat your in-laws as out-laws no matter how they treat you. By respecting them you pay your respect to God. When two people get married, two become one so your parents become your spouse's parents and vice versa. You haven't just found a mate, you have found a new set of parents. The two best examples in Scripture of how to respect an in-law are Moses and his father-in-law and Ruth and her mother-in-law. If you read Exodus 18 you will learn how to take advice from your father-in-law. If you read Ruth 1-3 you will learn how to be loyal to your mother-in-law. Then you use these passages as patterns of the right kind of response. God will bless you and give you understanding.

There are other practical, positive measures of respect as well.

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Ask yourself, “What is respect?” when it comes to your parents. The following are some answers you might come up with.

- 1- Respect is never saying another’s name in a condescending way.
- 2- Respect is never saying, “We *have* to go to grandma’s house.”
- 3- Respect is never referring to “their generation” as one that is out of tune or out of touch.
- 4- Respect never loses patience when they lose their memory.
- 5- Respect is recognition that the inability to be agile is no measure of usability.
- 6- Respect is teaching your children that grandpa has the kind of wisdom that can only come from maturity and age.
- 7- Respect is the recognition that the eccentricities that come with old age are normal and must not be compared with the flexibility of youth.

Therefore, children must obey, respect and honor their parents. Young adults must respect and honor their parents with all that the word respect involves. Adults must also honor and respect their parents with all that the word involves.

What about honoring your parents in their old age? It is then that the scripture teaches we add to respect, responsibility. This is the responsibility before God and before the church to take care of their needs physically, spiritually, emotionally and financially. I believe one of the most tender scenes in all of scripture is found in John 19:

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved, standing by, he said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”

Then He said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

(John 19:25-27 NKJV)

Here was the most humiliating moment in Jesus’ life. Here was the most painful moment in Jesus’ life. Here was the most

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important moment in Jesus' life, as all of the sins of the whole world were converging upon His sinless life. And what was it that surfaced at that moment as a primary focus in His life? The need to see that His mother would have someone to care for her when He was gone was of utmost importance to Him at that moment. So He looked and He found the one person who meant the most to Him, and He entrusted to him the role of being His mother's son. He engraved it on the very fabric of scriptural priority. Look at 1 Timothy 5. Paraphrased it goes like this:

The church should take loving care of women whose husbands have died, if they don't have anyone else to help them.

But, if they have children or grandchildren, these are the ones who should take the responsibility, for kindness should begin at home, supporting needy parents. This is something that pleases God very much.

But anyone who won't care for his own relatives when they need help, especially those in his immediate family, have no right to say he is a Christian. Such a person is worse than the heathen [an infidel, worse than an unbeliever].

(1 Timothy 5:3,4,8 TLB)

Jesus crowned this principle with these words in Mark 7 when he was rebuking the scribes and Pharisees for substituting tradition for reality. Jesus said,

“For instance, Moses gave you this law from God: ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ And he said that anyone who speaks against his father or mother must die.

“But you say it is perfectly all right for a man to disregard his needy parents, telling them, ‘Sorry, I can't help you! For I have given to God what I could have given to you.’

“So you break the law of God...” (Mark 7:10-12a TLB)

So the scripture speaks clearly. God desires that we esteem or hold in honor all those He has set in offices of honor, nationally or spiritually. We are to honor wives, widows, rulers, judges and pastors. But the key to our ability to do that comes from our ability to set aside the rebellion and disrespect that the world has superimposed upon this generation and return to a place where we unashamedly and enthusiastically place our parents in the place of highest esteem. We may honor them for the life they have lived. We need to honor them for what they are and the deeds they have done. Even if we are not moved to do that,

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we have been called of God to honor them for who they are, our parents. We have been called to give them the kind of quiet respect Jesus gave to His Father. He talked with Him often. He talked of Him often and always with awe and respect.

This is the fifth commandment and God's first word to us about our relationships with others. Until we have dealt with this, we have no power to go on to the others. You may wonder what practical steps you can take to do this. Suppose one or both of your parents or grandparents are dead and you feel that you didn't give them the kind of honor and respect that was due to them, what do you do? First of all, tell God about it. Ask Him to forgive you. Ask Him to enrich your memories with the blessings that have accrued in your life from theirs, even through their mistakes. The second thing you do is ask God to give you the ability to communicate a good memory of their lives to your children. This does not need to be a dishonest assessment, but one that at least honors them for the position they held, even if they deserted you. Thirdly, ask God to deal with any bitterness or guilt that you may have concerning your parents. Then watch God take it and fling it as far as the east is from the west to be remembered no more. The last thing God wants us to do is to carry guilt for what we might have done. All He wants us to do is to begin where we are.

Now what about those parents or grandparents or spiritual parents or guardians who are still alive? When was the last time for no reason at all you picked up the phone and called and just said, "I love you." Today would be a good time. Maybe there are wrongs that need to be made right while there is still time. There may be bridges to be built where there were walls. Maybe you have a mother or father who has a real need: financial, emotional, spiritual or physical. Those needs are ours. Or are we so insensitive that we don't even know the needs exist? We, like the Pharisees, can justify not giving our time or our money. We are too busy "doing for God," we surmise. "You hypocrites!" Jesus answers, "Hiding behind a cloak of godliness and ignoring primary responsibilities." We need to learn to pray for our parents with greater compassion and consistency.

Lastly, if our parents are alive, we need to re-write the priorities of our lives while there is time and make the time to write the letters, to make the calls and to be naturally at home with our parents and available to them. We need not just pay



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them token respect on Mother's Day and Father's Day, but all year long. We need to more than tolerate them; we need to include them, honor and respect them and adore them for who they are, our parents. We need to do this *that our days in the land might not be cut short through rebellion that it may go well with us in the land of life wherein we dwell*. May it be, that as we honor our parents, we bring joy to them and honor to God, the perfect Father who gave them to us and us to them. He is worthy of all praise and all glory and all honor. In closing ought not this be our prayer?

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Dear precious heavenly Father,  
My prayer today must be  
That I might come to honor  
The parents You've given me.

That I might, in a special way,  
Look back without regret,  
And point with joy to parents  
I've given great respect.

How often, Lord, I've taken  
For granted what they've done.  
How often I've not followed  
The example of Your Son.

I've either been too busy  
Or bitter over things  
That you've ordained to bring to me  
The blessing testing brings.

And so, Lord, I've not honored  
My mother or my dad  
In all the ways You've asked me to  
At every chance I've had.

Dear Lord, I seek forgiveness.  
Please fill my heart anew  
With all the love and honor  
The Scripture says is due.

And Father, yet for those alive  
May I today but start  
To show the kind of honor  
That demonstrates Your heart.

Lord, show me how to meet their needs.  
Lord, show me how to care.  
Lord, show me how to make them know  
How glad I am they're there.

Give me patient understanding,  
Cause my love to grow and swell;  
That I may please my parents' hearts  
And please Your heart as well.

## Honor Your Parents

### For Focus and Application

1- See if you can think back in time and list the five most important events that happened in Scripture. Now think about the five most important things that ever happened to you. What makes them so memorable?

2- Look at the chart on page four of your lesson. See if you can find one quality of God for each of the pillars that is violated when that commandment is broken.

3- Review the four things we are to honor on pages nine and ten. What do they all have in common? Why are we to honor the position regardless of the honor due the person who holds the position? What Scriptures can you find to substantiate your answer?

4- If you are a married man, ask yourself, "Do I honor my wife as God instructed me?" If not, why not? Ask yourself whether or not you think the body of Christ honors "widows who are widows indeed" in our day. How do you honor those who shepherd the flock?

5- The key to honoring, however, seems to be honoring father and mother. Why is that? What attribute or attributes of God must you focus on to do that?

Take the seven things the Bible says about respecting parents found on pages eleven and twelve, and review them. Grade yourself on those seven things. What is society doing to elderly parents in our day? What is the church doing? What are we to do?

6- Why were Jesus' words in John 19:25-27 so unusual? What importance do you attach to that incident?

7- Study I Timothy 5:3-8. What do you think the church should do when its members won't care for their elderly parents? What did Jesus say to those who were "too busy being spiritual" to care for their parents?

8- Ask yourself what you can do to bring honor to parents or grandparents or in-laws who are still living. Take a piece of paper and write down what you plan to do to honor them in the next two weeks. Ask someone to hold you accountable. If you are harboring bitterness over parents who have died, take a day to be alone with God and honor them by asking God to forgive you for the bitterness you are holding on to. What they did or didn't

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do is not the issue. Your response to God's placing them in your life is the issue. Stay on your knees until the matter is settled once and for all. You will be honoring them, pleasing God, and setting yourself free at last.

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