

Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother – Even When It Hurts

Ephesians 6:1-9

Introduction: "God Doesn't Skip This One"

"This generation will fight over every law except the ones they hate to obey. And honoring parents? That's one of the most despised, yet most repeated laws in all of Scripture."

Let me say that again. Honoring parents is one of the most hated laws of God. Yet, God repeats this law in the Bible over and over again. Honor thy Father and thy Mother. That's your father and that's your mother.

We're not talking about Old Testament dust like it doesn't apply and it doesn't matter any more. This matters even when you might not understand why.

This is a law **God repeats, reinforces, and takes so seriously** that violating it brought the **death penalty**.

And I am not preaching this because I am a Father and I want to be honored by everyone. I am preaching this for you. This is to help you. I've seen a lot of kids around here on Sundays not honoring authority. "Hey, don't go out there." And the kids go out there anyway. "Hey, don't do that." And the kids do it anyway.

This is about honoring authority. If you can't honor the authority that God gave to your parents, you aren't going to honor much of anything else out there. That's the truth.

I. The Commandment: God's Direct Order

Look at this commandment. This is God's direct order to all of us.

""Exodus 20:12

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

What is Honor?

That's one of the ten commandments. This is a very serious commandment. Always notice the exact words. Don't skip over them. "HONOR" thy father and thy mother. What does that mean? Honor means to treat someone with great respect because they are important. It means listening to them, speaking kindly to them, and showing by your actions that you value them.

To honor your parents means you obey them, talk to them with respect, and treat them like they matter a lot – because God says they do.

Here's an example. Let's call it the trash can test. Let's say your mom asks you to take out the trash before dinner. You don't feel like it. You want to keep playing your game.

You have two choices:

- **Disobey** and say, "Ugh! I'll do it later!"
That's **not honoring**—you're showing with your words and actions that you don't respect her.
- Or, you **pause the game**, say, "Okay, Mom," and take it out right away.
That's **honoring your mom**—you're showing she's important and worth listening to.

Honor isn't just what you say — it's how you act when no one's watching. Talking good about your Dad and Mom in front of them and then talking bad about them when they aren't around is not honoring them.

""**Leviticus 19:3**

Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.""

The honor you have from your parents is not just showing an outward obedience. This is inward too. It's about **fear, respect, and reverence**. "**Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father.**"

Don't take these commandments lightly.

""**Ephesians 6:1-3**

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.""

Obey your parents in the Lord. **THIS IS RIGHT**. The first commandment in the entire Bible that comes with a promise is to honour thy father and mother. If you do, thy days will be long. That's God's promise to you. And his promises are good.

""**Colossians 3:20-21**

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. 21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.""

Obey your parents in all things. Don't go behind their back and do things you shouldn't be doing. Talking nice to their face and then attacking them behind their back is not good. Parents are not perfect, and you aren't either. But, no matter what, honor your parents. Even if they don't deserve it, God says to honor thy father and thy mother.

Following his commandments lead to good things. Remember that. No matter what, follow the commandments of God. Don't sin, though. If your parents are telling you to sin, don't do it. Fathers are not to provoke their children to wrath. We are to do good to our children. Encouraging our children to do good is why we are here right now.

Notice again what that says: "For this is well pleasing to the Lord." Obeying your parents pleases God. And trust me, you want to please God.

""Leviticus 19:32

Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.""

Hoary head means white or gray with age. Honor the face of the old man. You need to understand that older people have been through more than you have. Honor them. Fear God by honoring them. This is an extension of honoring your father and mother. Even the aged man is to be honored.

II. God's Serious Warning

So, those are commandments from God Almighty. Now, let's see the warnings, from God, about not following these commandments.

""Exodus 21:15

And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.""

""Exodus 21:17

And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.""

A lot of us would be dead. Teenagers do this often. This world teaches you to curse your father and mother. Honoring your father and mother is not the in thing to do. So, all the shows, all the social media, all the internet, all the schools will teach you to curse your father and mother like it's the right thing to do.

Kids will make fun of other kids because they honor their father and mother.

Smite or hit your dad or mom and you shall be put to death according to God's words. It's evil and wicked to do those things. Don't do that. Ever. Cursing your father or mother and you shall be put to death. This is God's law.

The world mocks this law. "Oh, you think a kid should be put to death if they curse their dad." Hey, if kids would honor their parents, this world would be a great place to live. God is showing how serious is about you honoring your parents.

That's **capital punishment** — God said dishonor is a death-worthy crime. I didn't make that up. You can see it yourself right there.

""**Proverbs 20:20**

Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.""

God says your light will be extinguished. That's **judgment**, not poetry. Again, this is God's perfect and righteous judgment. Your lamp shall be put out. Hey, sometimes you make mistakes. It's okay. Say your sorry. Be sorry. And move on. God forgives. Parents forgive.

""**Proverbs 30:17**

The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.""

Graphic imagery — **disrespect invites destruction.**

Do not mock your father and despise to obey your mother. The warning from God is there. He's serious about this commandment. Honor thy father and thy mother even when it hurts.

""**Malachi 1:6**

A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?""

God is our Father. We are to honor and obey God. God uses the lack of **parental honor** as an example of **spiritual rebellion**.

Listen, you aren't going to be a disciple of Jesus Christ if you can't give honor to your parents. You might say, "Oh yeah, I can follow Jesus and not honor my parents." But you would be wrong. Understand that.

III. The Pattern Of Honor: Biblical Examples

We've seen the commandments. And now we've seen the warnings. Don't be rebellious. Your flesh will want you to rebel against your parents. But you are actually rebelling against God himself. You will lose every time. Now let's look at some examples from the Bible where people honored their parents.

Solomon Honors His Mother Bathsheba (1 Kings 2:19)

""**1 Kings 2:19**

Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.""

He placed a **throne for his mother at his right hand**. That's public, powerful honor.

Elisha Honors Elijah (2 Kings 2:12)

""2 Kings 2:12

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.""

Elisha, even though Elijah wasn't his biological father, cried out in respect and in honor as Elijah was taken up. Elisha loved Elijah. We need to have this same respect, honor, and love for our parents and others who have looked after us and have helped us.

Elijah was his mentor as a father and **wept in honor**.

Jesus Honors Mary (John 19:26–27)

""John 19:26-27

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.""

Many people will think that Jesus was dishonoring Mary when he would call her woman. He wasn't. People just take it that way. Remember, women are not lower than men. Don't even think that. It's a foolish thought. Honor women.

Jesus honored his mother Mary. You can see this. He loved her. As Jesus is dying, he tells the Apostle John to take care of his mother. "Behold, thy mother!" John took Mary in as his own mother. We are to care for our parents. When they need us, we are to be there for them.

Even in pain, **Jesus honored her position as his mother**.

IV. The Reality Of Dishonor: Biblical Warnings

If we choose not to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we are going to ruin our lives. Choosing to honor, and it is your choice – no one makes you do this, your parents is the right thing to do. But, if you choose to dishonor your parents, be warned today. And always remember this.

""Proverbs 1:8-9

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 9 For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.""

Fools throw away wisdom — and dishonoring your parents is often **step one** toward a ruined life. Don't throw away wisdom you could be gaining. **HEAR** the instruction. **FORSAKE NOT** the law of your parents.

""**Proverbs 15:5**

A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.""

Fools don't just ignore — they **despise**. If you hate instruction, you're going to have a rough life. If you think you know it all, you're going to find out something very different. You need to listen and hear instruction. You need to be taught. No one knows everything. I need to be taught. We all need instruction.

I was taught when I studied for this sermon. My heart was changed when I saw the word of God. I'm not perfect. But these words that we are studying and learning are perfect. We allow his words to change us.

""**Proverbs 23:22-25**

Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. 23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. 24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. 25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.""

God's Word ties **wisdom and joy** to honoring your parents. Those are great things: wisdom and joy. Honor brings **generational joy**. Teach these same things by example to your children. I want to show my children that I honor my father and my mother. And I do. I love them greatly.

""**Proverbs 28:24**

Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.""

That includes financial abuse, verbal abuse, and neglect. It's a horrible thing to do this to your parents especially. It's horrible doing that to anyone but especially wicked to do that to your own parents.

""**Proverbs 30:11**

There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.""

Sound familiar? That's **our generation**. We need to fix this. Churches need to be teaching this. Parents need to be loving their children by teaching these things. Instruction from the word of God is needed.

V. When Jesus Clashed With Culture

Jesus himself clashed with culture. He didn't go by the current rules in society. The Word of God goes with the Scriptures no matter what everyone else thinks of says.

""**Matthew 15:4-6**

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is

a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; 6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.""

God commanded, saying, honor thy father and mother. But ye say different! Pharisees made excuses and tried to get around honoring their parents financially. Jesus rebukes them sharply. They tried to invalidate God's law with their own tradition. It doesn't work that way.

""Luke 18:20

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.""

Jesus repeats this in the New Testament. We are living in the New Testament. The law to honor thy father and thy mother hasn't changed and will never change. I look forward to honoring my father and mother throughout eternity. They are now soul winners who go out and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And they are good at it. And I am so happy they are my parents.

Honor your parents. This is the first commandment with promise. I love and honor the other parents that come here. We are to have honor and respect to each of them. Show each other this honor and respect.

VI. Application: What Do We Do With This?

So, we now know that this command isn't optional. Honor thy father and thy mother. There is no way around this. We must do this. How do we do this? What do we need to do?

A. Honor even if they're wrong

Respect the **position**, not always the performance. We aren't perfect. I've messed up hundreds of times with my own children. They might tell you thousands of times. I estimate in the hundreds.

I do have children that honor my wife and I. Sometimes they mess up. Sometimes they're wrong. Sometimes I mess up. Sometimes I am wrong. We say sorry to each other because we love each other. We forgive each other.

But please hear and listen. The children are to always respect the position we have as parents. Honor us even when we are wrong. Sometimes you might think we are wrong, but it turns out we weren't. Give us a chance. Honor us. Obey us.

""Romans 12:17

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.""

Even if your parents failed, **don't repay evil with rebellion**. The rebellion of children against their own parents makes me very sad. It's a horrible thing to see. This will never bring joy, peace, or happiness to your life. It brings sadness and brokenness. Not good.

B. Teach your kids to honor

This law protects **your own future**. This is your future on the line. I want you to have a long life filled with the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Teach honor. If your kids see you dishonoring *your* parents, they'll follow suit. You don't want that.

C. Show honor publicly and privately

Speak respectfully. Care for them. Forgive offenses. Don't mock them behind their back.

Honor is shown in tone, timing, attitude, and action. Here's an example of what not to do:

Your mom tells you that you're not allowed to go to a friend's house because there's no adult supervision. Later, when you're texting your friend or talking with someone at school, you say:

"My mom's so lame. She doesn't trust me to do *anything*. She treats me like I'm five. She's crazy." Or maybe you start mocking her voice or copying the way she talks in a mean or silly way just to make people laugh. God doesn't think it's funny.

That's dishonor and sin. No, show honor publicly and privately at all times. Remember this.

VII. Call To Action:

Let's conclude right here and right now with a call to action. Every sermon you hear should lead you to take action and make changes in your life. Same for me. Same for you. Please hear this:

"If God gave you parents, then God gave you a law. It doesn't expire. It doesn't depend on their righteousness. It reflects *your obedience to God*."

Here's what you should do:

- **Repent** if you've been casual about this law. It's not a casual law – not to be taken lightly. If God was showing up to meet you tonight, you wouldn't dress casual. You would find the best you've got and wear it. Repent of the sin of not following this law. Take it more serious because it's one of the most serious laws in all the Bible.

- **Reach out** to parents you've wronged, if possible. Tell them you're sorry for not honoring them and respecting them. If you're accustomed to telling God you're sorry for what you've done wrong, it shouldn't be that hard to tell someone you are sorry.
- **Teach and model honor** so the next generation sees that **God means what He says**. If you haven't been showing honor to others, it's time to start. When an adult here tells you not to do something, don't do it. If they tell you to get off the piano, get off the piano. Don't try to damage things on purpose. That's evil. Have honor and respect.

Examples of Dishonor and Disrespect

Here's an example. And maybe it's because people haven't been taught to honor and respect anyone or anything. But, last Sunday, someone put out their cigarette on the brick of the church right by the front door. That kind of thing makes me angry. That's no honor and no respect. It's time to fix these things.

I left my car here at the church Sunday night, right by the front door, in the light. And someone came over and tried to break into my car. They tried to pry open the doors and put deep scratches into my car on both sides. Dents too. Hey, that's disrespectful. That means you have no respect and no honor for anyone else. They do this at the front of God's church.

I wanted to put my car back out there and sit there and wait for them. I'm not a runner. I'm a fighter. I want to find them. But that's my flesh speaking.

"Forgive Them Lord"

My spirit says, "Forgive them Lord for they know not what they do." Let's have some respect and honor for each other. The person who disrespected this church guaranteed doesn't honor their parents. It's all related.

That's why this commandment is so important. Honor thy Father and thy Mother.

"You cannot call yourself obedient to God if you're dishonoring your father or your mother. You can't walk in the Spirit and mock the ones who gave you life."

Let's pray.