

How Do I Deal With My Aging Parents?

Icebreaker: Can you remember a time when your parents did something special just for you? -or- Do you have any family traditions that make absolutely no sense?

Pastor Dave: Nothing good ever happens by accident. You must be intentional.

Exodus 20:12 *"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."*

Ephesians 6:2-3 *"Honor your father and mother"-which is the first commandment with a promise- 3"so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."*

1. To whom does the commandment "Honor your father and mother" apply? What do you think it means to honor your father and mother? (Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6:2)

2. What are some of the differences between Biblical times and today in the way in which older people are cared for?

3. How might those differences make honoring our parents more difficult or easier? How might this affect our responsibility to care for our parents?

4. How should we be different from our culture in honoring our parents?

Matthew 15:1-6 *Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!” 3 Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ 6 they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.*

5. Why were the Pharisees upset at the disciples? Were the disciples actually breaking the Law? Explain. (Matthew 15:1-6)

6. How do you think people were avoiding honoring their parents with saying something is “devoted to God”? (Matthew 15:3-6)

7. Are there ways that we might be substituting traditions or cultural norms for our need to be there for our parents?

8. How serious is God about our need to honor and care for our parents? (1 Timothy 5:3-4,8)

1 Timothy 5:3-4,8 (NIV) *3 Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. 4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. ... 8 Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

These are a couple of recommendations from Pastor for parent care:

- Agree with your spouse that taking care of your parents will come ahead of any other expenditure.
- Tell your parents of your commitment.

9. Why do you think agreement with your spouse about parent care is so important?

10. Why do you think telling your parents of your commitment is important?

11. How might our children be affected by watching their grandparents being honored?