

Honor Your Mother!

Joe Slater

“Honor your father and your mother” is the fifth of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:12). Though we do not live under the Old Testament law today, God brought nine of those commandments into the New Testament, including this one (Ephesians 6:1-3). Giving Mom a card and a box of chocolates on the second Sunday in May is fine, but God makes it clear in His word that honoring your mother goes far beyond a man-made annual holiday. How does God say we should honor our mothers?

LOVE HER! Young children seldom have to be told to do this – it comes naturally. The Scriptures call it “*natural affection*” (2 Timothy 3:3). It is the warm, tender devotion that you feel toward close family members. This very passage, however, warns of the danger of suppressing or even losing that natural affection. Cultivate love for your mother every day, not just “Mother’s Day.”

OBEY HER! “*Children, obey your parents*” (Ephesians 3:20). Even Jesus submitted to His mother and Joseph (Luke 2;51). When I hear a young child defiantly saying “No!” to Mama (or Daddy), I see red! Parents who fail to correct such impudence swiftly and effectively (including some firm swats to the posterior) are inviting disaster. That leads to the next point . . .

SPEAK RESPECTFULLY TO HER! Sassiness and back-talk are not limited to small children. Though He was older, Jesus spoke respectfully to His mother and Joseph, even when correcting them (e.g. at the Temple, Luke 2:48, 49). No matter how old we are, we ought always to speak respectfully to our parents. Under the Mosaic Law, cursing a parent was a capital offense (Exodus 21:7). While this penalty is not in effect under the New

Testament, it speaks volumes about the importance God assigns to speaking respectfully to our parents.

NEVER HIT HER! This was another capital crime under the Law of Moses (Exodus 21:15). Of course this dealt with older children, not toddlers! A small child sometimes defiantly slaps his mother if he isn’t getting his way. Worse, parents sometimes allow children to suffer no consequences for such obnoxious behavior! Little ones may not know any better at first, but they will learn quickly if parents discipline them promptly and consistently. I have also known of cases where older children beat their parents; such conduct is criminal according to the laws of both God and men.

PROVIDE FOR HER IN HER OLD AGE. Jesus rebuked the Jews of His day for evading their responsibility to provide for their aged parents (Matthew 15:4ff). Although popular culture looks to civil government to fulfill the need, Paul teaches that it is first and foremost a family obligation, and secondarily the responsibility of the church (1 Timothy 5:4).

Honor your mother! Happy Mother’s Day!

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ENJOY THEM WHILE YOU CAN

A young mother was holding her toddler and enjoying playful time with her daughter, and the daughter was loving the attention and time from her mother. I rejoice when I see parents enjoying their small children.

Certainly children can be burdensome at times, but, speaking as one whose youngest grandchild is just about through college, enjoy your children while they are small, all the way to empty-nesthood. You will not have them long!

--Cecil May, Jr. (via Preacher Talk)

You Were There For Me

Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

You may remember the story that appeared on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle back on December 14, 2005 about a female humpback whale who had become entangled in a spider web of crab traps and lines.

She was weighted down by hundreds of pounds of traps that caused her to struggle to stay afloat. She also had hundreds of yards of line rope wrapped around her body, her tail, her torso, a line tugging in her mouth. A fisherman spotted her just east of the Farallon Islands (outside the Golden Gate) and radioed for help.

Within a few hours, the rescue team arrived and determined that she was so bad off, the only way to save her was to dive in and untangle her. They worked for hours with curved knives and eventually freed her. When she was free, the divers said she swam in what seemed like joyous circles. She then gently nudged them. Some said it was the most incredibly beautiful experience of their lives. The diver who cut the rope out of her mouth said her eyes were following him the whole time, and he will never be the same.

May you, and all those you love, be so blessed and fortunate to be surrounded by people who will help you get untangled from the things that are binding you. And, may you always know the joy of giving and receiving gratitude. I pass this on to you, my friends, in the same spirit.

--Rob Redden (Arroyo Grande, CA)