

HONORING YOUR PARENTS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

PARENTS EXAMPLE HONOR COMMAND OBEDIENCE DECREE

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Exodus 20:12; 1 Samuel 17:12-20 and 22:1-4

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students be inspired by David's example of obedience to his parents, to be willing to honor their parents, treating them as God commanded.

MEMORY VERSE

"Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and decrees that I give you today" (Deuteronomy 27:10, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Their relationship with their parents is the first opportunity a child has to learn to obey authority, and this relationship helps them formulate their own understanding of God and how to relate to him. Elementary-aged children move around in different areas outside their home and family: school, sports, church and social activities, etc. In all those situations, they come into contact with people who, for better or for worse, influence their attitudes and behaviors. It is common for children to hear comments from their peers that ridicule their fathers and mothers alike. That's why this lesson is of vital importance. It will help children understand that God expects them to respect and honor their parents. Also, this is the way he wants us to treat him as our Heavenly Father.

This lesson will help the children discover the aspects that the word "honor" involves (their parents, in this case), such as: valuing, respecting, listening, being interested in, and obeying. You as a teacher can show the children the meaning of honor and respect by setting an example from your own life. Tell them about the training you received from your parents, and explain how you honor them. Thus your students will learn not only from your words but also through your model. Sadly, there are children whose parents do not seem to deserve to be honored. Be alert, therefore, to the possibility that some of your students have seen some kind of neglect or abuse by their parents, or that somehow they feel bad towards their parents. Pray for those children, and if you suspect they are experiencing abuse, talk to your ministry supervisor or pastor.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read Exodus 20:12. Everyone deals with their relationship with their neighbor. It should be noted that the first of these six commandments, “honor your father and your mother,” refers to the first relationship we have in life: the relationship with our parents. The Hebrew word for “honor” is “kabad”, and it means “to be heavy,” “to add weight,” and this entails the idea of treating our parents with due seriousness. In this command, God took into account the needs of the children of the growing Israelite community, and also those of the parents.

Children need instruction and teaching, but they do not always perceive the wisdom that comes from the directives and acts of their parents. By telling them to honor their parents, God was telling them how to behave, regardless of their feelings. If they honored them, they would become a responsible “new generation” capable of living wisely and ruling their land. In addition, the Israelites were forming a community based on their faith in a unique God. In order for this nation to have stability and continuity, parents would need to convey the stories that described the nature of God, his deeds, as well as the traditions that came from living as God’s people. For this to happen, it was necessary for the children to listen to and obey their parents.

Finally, this commandment protected parents from the conflicts that could arise with their stubborn and disobedient children, and also kept them from being mistreated or abandoned when they reached an advanced age and could no longer work and care for themselves.

Read 1 Samuel 17: 12-20. This passage presents one of the most well-known and beloved stories of the Bible: that of David and Goliath. But it also gives us the opportunity to get to know a characteristic of David that we often overlook: the way he honored his parents. In those days, soldiers had two main sources of income: the things they got when they defeated their enemies, and the support of their own families. Since the Israelite and Philistine armies had been inactive for 40 days, they had not gotten anything from defeating an enemy. Concerned about his sons, Jesse sent David to take supplies to them and quickly return with news, as he had done on other occasions.

Notice that David complied with his father’s request quickly, since he went out “in the morning” (v. 20). He also showed responsibility for the property of his father, when he left “the sheep in the care of a guard” (v 20). And finally, he fulfilled his father’s wish, as “Jesse had commanded him” (v. 20).

Read 1 Samuel 22:1-4. At this time, David was fleeing from Saul and was exiled in enemy territory. However, the honor that he showed as a young man in his relationship with his parents accompanied him into his adult life when he continued to show respect, attention and affection for them. David’s hiding place in the caves near Adulam may have been near Bethlehem. Maybe his family joined him to give him support or for fear of the danger that Saul represented. But apparently, David did not believe that those caves were a safe hiding place for his parents, and since they were older, they were not able to be part of a group of warriors on the move, so David went in search of a safe haven for them in Moab, outside Saul’s territory.

Respect for our parents is fundamental. By respecting them, we honor God who created them, and we show to an unbelieving world how the people of God live. Learning to trust, respect and obey our parents is of paramount importance in our relationship with God.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Honor your parents

Before the session, tape a large piece of poster board to the wall with a piece of tape or hang it on the wall. Write the following italicized parts of the following sentences in large letters, leaving spaces where the bold words should go. On separate cards, write the words that are highlighted in black (use large letters that are shaped so that the children can color or fill them with seeds or paint, if desired). Cut out the words so that the little ones can work on them.

When you start the game, the children will have the opportunity to paste the appropriate word that goes with that phrase. For example: Listen ... to what your parents tell you.

Listen ... to what your parents tell you.

Learn ... from your parents.

Help ... your parents with joy.

Be nice ... to your parents.

Pray ... for your parents.

Tell ... your parents that you love them.

Hug ... your parents every day.

Talk ... with your parents every day.

Smile ... at your parents every morning.

Wash ... the dishes a few times a week.

Help ... take out the trash.

In the group, direct the students' attention to the fifth commandment, explaining that today's lesson refers to the commandment "honor your father and mother." Then ask them: "What do you think it means to "honor" our parents?"

Show them the poster on the wall, indicating that the sentences teach us some ways to honor our parents, but they all lack the first word. When they finish coloring or decorating their words, the children can then, with your help, find the sentence that is completed by the word they have in their hands. To finish, read the complete sentences.

TEACH THE LESSON

"I wonder how my sons are doing in the army," said Jesse, David's father. "Are they safe? Do they have something to eat? I wonder what is happening in the war." Jesse's three oldest sons, David's brothers, were soldiers in King Saul's army, and they were fighting the Philistine army. The Philistines were strong and bad enemies, and things were not going well for Saul's army. The enemy had a soldier that was a giant named Goliath, whom no one dared to challenge. So for 40 days, the two armies remained stayed where they were and did not fight.

Remember that in those days there was no radio, television, or internet for people to find out what was happening in the war. The only way to know if the soldiers were okay was to go to where the army was and see them. In addition, the army leaders did not always have enough food to give to the soldiers, so their families had to bring them food. David, who was Jesse's youngest son, was a shepherd for his father's flock of sheep near Bethlehem. Jesse sent for him to come to him. When David arrived, his father told him, "Go and take your brothers this roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread. Take them to the camp right away. Also, take these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See if your brothers are well and bring back word from them." "Yes, father," David answered. "I'll go early in the morning."

The next day, David obeyed everything his father had told him to do. He looked for someone to take his place to watch the flock while he was gone. Then he took the food and went to Saul's army camp. When David found his brothers, he gave them the food and asked them how things were going.

Well, we all know what happened after that ... there was a very exciting battle in which David killed Goliath, the giant Philistine. Afterwards, he returned home with Good News for his father.

Many years passed by and David grew up. During all that time, he obeyed God and his parents. God was pleased with him, but King Saul was jealous of him. King Saul wanted to kill David because he knew that one day David would take his place and be the king of Israel. That's why David had to escape to save his life! Finally, David found a cave that was a very good place to hide. His father, his mother and his brothers knew where he was, and they went there to be with him. David was glad to see his family, but he cared about his parents. "My father and mother are old," he thought. "I do not think it is a good idea for them to hide with me in this dangerous place. King Saul could find them and hurt them. But they cannot go with me when I have to leave the cave to fight the enemy ... What will I do to keep them safe?"

Then, God helped David devise a plan. David went to see the king of Moab, a country that Ruth, his great great-grandmother, had come from a long time ago. The king of Moab did not like Saul, so maybe he could help him. David bowed to the king of Moab and said, "Please help me." "What do you want me to do?" the king asked him. "Please, let my mother and father stay in your land until God shows me what he will do with me. They will be more secure here than with me as I try to escape from King Saul." "They can stay," the king agreed. David then left his parents in Moab and returned to his hiding place. Someday, he would be king of Israel and he could bring them back home. But for now, as long as he had to run, hide and fight, he was glad that they were safe.

CONNECT THE LESSON

You write the story

God commands us to honor our parents. One or two weeks before the session, ask the children, or the children's parents, for

pictures of their parents. Then in the group, say something like: "David honored and obeyed his parents. In what other ways can children honor their parents?" Let them express their ideas. Direct the children's attention to the activity "You write the story" on Student Activity Sheet #228-A and #228-B. Explain how to do it. When they finish their stories, ask for volunteers to read theirs out loud. Ask them also for their answers to the question at the end.

Ask the children to color and make their own picture frames to place the picture of their parents. If there are children who do not have pictures, they can draw them.

David's snack

Place some dry foods in the center of the table (mini bread or cookies, pieces of cake, pieces of fruit, etc.) along with napkins. Each child will take a piece of food and put it inside the napkin, so he will have prepared his "snack to go." Then take the children to a special place, a free space inside or outside, and sit down together to enjoy the snack. Meanwhile you can review the story of David that you read before. Ask them to say how they believe people (children or adults) can honor their parents. They can give examples of how they honor their parents now, or ways that they would like to put into practice.

Close the activity with a prayer of thanks for the snack they had, asking God to help them honor their parents.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Necessary material: a sufficiently large cube of any material on which a word can be written on each side. You can make it from cardboard. Also, you will need glue, scissors, tape, markers. Divide the memory verse in four pieces and choose a key word from each section:

1. Obey the Lord your God (key word: "obey").2. and follow ("follow").3. His commands and decrees ("commands").4. that I give you today ("you").5. blank6. blank

Write the key words on four sides of the cube. These will serve as clues for the children to remember part of the verse. Do not write anything on the two remaining sides. Have the children form a circle around the table or on the floor. A volunteer will roll the cube in the manner of dice. Depending on how it falls, the same child will read the keyword and with it form the phrase. When a blank side of the cube is rolled, you and the group can agree on some action: say the whole verse, or choose a phrase from memory, etc.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Gather the children together to pray. Direct them in a prayer, and then tell them: "It is not always easy to honor and obey our parents, but God can always help us. If you find it hard to do so, tell God and ask him for help." Sadly, there are children whose parents do not seem to deserve to be honored. Be alert, therefore, to the possibility that some of your students have seen some kind of neglect or abuse by their parents, or that somehow they feel bad towards their parents. Commit yourself to pray for those children.

Encourage

Tell the children: "If you have decided to honor your parents more, ask the Lord to help you fulfill your promise. It is beautiful to honor our parents! God says we will be blessed."

Invite

Before the students depart, say something interesting about the next session to encourage them to attend. Remind them that visitors are also welcome.