

God's Home Store: Gifts for Parents
May 14, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3 NIV)

Obedience to God proves our love for Him (1 John 5:2-3), much like our children's obedience is a wonderful testimony of their love for us and is indeed a gift to be cherished. Likewise, just as God is pleased when we honor Him, we too enjoy receiving the respect and admiration of the next generation. With Mother's Day here and Father's Day soon approaching, it can be a real challenge to find that ideal gift to give our parents. Luckily for us, there is a place we can go where we will find the perfect presents to give our parents. And in God's home store, you can leave your wallet at the door!

Digging Deeper

Gifts for Parents...

Obedience

- Obedience to our parents is vital. Unless we learn to obey at home, we'll never be disciplined enough to exist peacefully with others. Whether it is to God, our parents, or some other authority, to obey means that we must die to our own wants, desires, and interests. Talk about examples of how our obedience demonstrates our faithfulness.
- What are some of the worldly influences that might contribute to one's tendencies toward disobedience and how can we combat them?
- An obedient lifestyle frees us from living with fear of wrongdoing and consequently, reprimand. In most cases, if we are acting in accordance with God's Word (and our parent's directives), it is reasonable to assume we are living a peaceful, happy life. So why do you think we struggle so much with doing as we are told?

Honor

- The Fifth Commandment states, "Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you." (Exodus 20:12). We exist in a completely alternate reality today than that of the folks living in Old Testament times. Our families look and act differently, and our technology driven, fast-paced world would most likely blow their minds. However, with all of our advancements, it seems many traditionally held beliefs and customs are no longer being taught or emphasized. Discuss how modern day societal factors (i.e. divorce rates, technology, etc.) have played a part in undermining the goal of honoring parents.
- Finding the discipline within to show respect to our parents shapes our ability to respect every other kind of authority. When we honor our parents, we are honoring God. Matthew 5:16 (NLT) reminds us to shine in all we do so others will praise Him as a result. We can bring Him honor in big or small ways. While it's true that keeping that last word to yourself might produce deep,

tooth shaped marks on your tongue, your silence is a small price to pay for respecting your mother and father and thus giving God the glory He deserves! Discuss simple ways we can bring honor to our parents in the Lord through the things we say or do (or don't say or do!).

Conclusion

On Mother's Day (and every day), we count ourselves blessed when we receive our children's obedience and honor. As we receive this, we must also remember to extend those same blessings (in the Lord) to the people whom God placed in authority over our lives. Discipline yourself to submit to His authority, and He will bless you in ways you can't even begin to imagine!

May your father and mother rejoice; may she who gave you birth be joyful! (Proverbs 23:25 NIV)