



## **Week Six: Respect – Study Guide**

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This week as we wrap up our series on Family Dynamics, we are talking about respect. It's how we, as children and as adults, honor, care for, and show a godly respect toward our parents. Statistics reveal that currently 25 million Americans are taking care of someone in their family. That is 1 out of every 4 households; this is a dynamic we could all stand to take a closer look at, as to how it impacts our lives and our generation. Maybe we will discover that honoring our parents can be as much a journey in faith as our quiet time, finances, marriages, or living a life of community.

### **Where Am I Today?**

- 1) Have you experienced taking care of parents or grandparents? Are you currently in that stage of life, or was it in the past? Do you know of others who have experienced this?
  
- 2) Would you find it reassuring to know that someone would take care of you when you needed it? How about in knowing that in God's design, someone will take care of you when you are no longer able? Would you be spiritually, emotionally, and financially capable of taking care of an elderly person? If not, do you have a plan?

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### Into the Bible

- 3) We often base our respect, or disrespect, of others on our personal view of them. With family members, we even have years of history to support our views. It can be very difficult to respect someone we do not trust or that has given us a bad impression in some way. Read **Proverbs 23:22** and **Deuteronomy 5:16**. Does God give us an option whether to honor and respect our parents? How does the level of respect you have affect how much you personally desire to help someone?
  
- 4) Often our family budget and financial priorities go through as many life cycles as we do. We can experience financial cycles like a growing family, times of financial hardship, kids going to college, or even maturing spiritually in the area of generosity. Have you ever thought to include your aging parents in your budget, along with golf outings, manicures, or daily Starbucks? Read **1 Timothy 5:8** for more insight. Why do you think the writer of 1 Timothy stated that this is like a denial of the faith?
  
- 5) Our parents come from different generations, generations much different from our own. Just in my lifetime I have seen the invention of cable TV, home computers and laptops, video games, microwave ovens, and mobile phones; I even remember when gasoline topped 75 cents a gallon. How much more have our parents witnessed through the years? Edmond Fischer states, "It is commonly said that a teacher fails if he has not been surpassed by his students." Could it be that as sons and daughters we easily surpass the knowledge of our parents in many things, and we can become prideful in this area? Read **1 Peter 5:5**. Even if we do surpass our parents, doesn't this mean they did a good job? List some ways we can resist our pride and honor our parents while we are with them.

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#### How Does This Apply?

- 6) Read **Luke 6:31**. In what ways would you like to be honored when you are old? Would you want to think that you were a burden to someone? How can this reflection help us with our parents?
  
- 7) If you still have some earning years left, how could you make small financial sacrifices in order to save for the future financial needs of your parents?
  
- 8) Time is something we are all short on. However, we can be guilty of wasting time as well. It's not for anyone to judge how you spend your time. However, could you manage your time better so that you could sit down for an hour and have a conversation or coffee with your parents? What are some of your parents' favorite activities? Movies, haircuts, shopping, or gardening?

#### Increase Your Learning on Your Own

- 9) Read **Luke 6:37-38**. We can deceive ourselves by thinking our actions toward others should be based on something other than what Christ has commanded us. Maybe a child is good to his parents because they were good parents, or maybe a child is distant from his parents because they were not. Without realizing it, we can often choose to help others, parents included, based off of our likes, dislikes, potential benefits, etc. The better way would be to love others as Christ loved us, not based on anything they did or will do, but just because we selflessly give ourselves to the Gospel. Maybe you have no desire in your heart to take care of your parents or honor them in any way. What could be some reasons for this? Can you turn these selfish desires on and off like a light switch, or might you have a deeper problem? How would verse 38 apply to trusting Christ and doing the hard thing with aging parents?