

Turned Tables

As a teenager, I looked forward to the day when I'd leave my parent's house and find my place in the world. Like many, I left my Mom and Dad's home and got married, starting a family of my own. But it wasn't until recently that I realized how my role in my parents' lives was about to change. And God's great "first commandment with a promise" was about to become even more real.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you." (Exodus 20:12).

The word "honor," in Hebrew and Greek, means to emphasize someone's weight or importance and take action based on that respect. And our honor for our parents doesn't end when we leave the house. So let's look at the Bible's guidance for when the tables turn and a child begins to care for their parents.

The Big Idea: Godly children and grandchildren show honor by taking care of their aging parents.

Prioritize Their Wellbeing

- Jesus cared about his mother, even as he hung on the cross. He ensured she was cared for after his death (John 19:26-27).
- The job of caring for our loved ones is so important that Paul considered anyone who wouldn't step in to help as *"worse than an unbeliever"* (1 Tim. 5:8). It's serious business, even today!
- To properly honor our parents as they age, we need to put their needs at the top of our list of priorities, just as they did when we were young.

Plan to Help

- We don't work to ONLY take care of ourselves, but also to care for each other (Eph. 4:28). So that means that we're going to need to budget and save to have enough to share.
- Maybe we started as a struggling college students. But if our situation changes where we have an abundance, don't forget to reach out and help (2 Cor. 8:11-15).
- Sit down and have the tough "what if" conversation with your spouse ahead of time. Make plans for the possibility of needing to become a caregiver or source of financial support.

Provide for Their Needs

- It's easy to talk a good game and make plans, but honor is about taking action! We show godliness when we repay our parents with the care they gave us (1 Tim. 5:4, 16).
- We could make excuses, but our righteousness would be no better than the Pharisees who deflected their obligations to help their parents (Matt. 15:5-6).
- Providing for our parents will look different for all of us. But if you are a parent, one thing you can do is let us provide for you! As challenging as it may seem to rely on someone else — especially your children — it's our privilege to take care of you.

Conclusion

God's design for the home is truly amazing. Let's honor our parents by planning to help them and stepping in when the time comes.