



STUDY GUIDE

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[set up]

What are some joyful memories you have about your mother? About your father?

What are some painful memories you have about your mother? About your father?

As you look back at your past, would you say that your memories about your parents are more painful or joyful?

How have your past experiences with your parents shaped you as a person and (if applicable) as a parent?

[digging deeper]

Read Proverbs 1:7–9. Note the connection between fearing the Lord, gaining wisdom, and obeying parents. Do you believe these principles are interdependent? If so, how?

Does someone in your group remember the hand signals we used during the weekend service to memorize Proverbs 1:8–9? See if you can remember the verse and quote it together as a group.

The son (or daughter) who listens to a father and does not forsake a mother's teachings will be honored with a garland for the head and a necklace of grace. This is a poetic way of saying that one's inward character will be recognized and rewarded outwardly. What kinds of benefits and rewards have you seen come to people who have had obedient hearts toward their mothers and fathers?

Look up the following 11 verses: Exodus 20:12, Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:1-4, Proverbs 23:22, 1 Timothy 5:8, Leviticus 19:32, Proverbs 17:25, Proverbs 13:1, Proverbs 15:20, Proverbs 19:26-27, and Proverbs 31:28. Take special note of the *verbs* in the verses. On a large Post-it, write down (so everyone can see) the verbs – the commands – that teach us the proper response that a son or a daughter should have toward parents. (Note: Some of these verses are warnings. You'll have to turn those verses "upside-down/inside-out" to identify a verb that presents the responsibility in the positive way.)

If you are a parent yourself, how is this study encouraging and challenging you to grow to be a better parent?

If more sons and daughters lived out these biblical truths, how would it affect 1) the culture at large, 2) neighborhoods, 3) schools, 4) churches, 5) individual families, and 6) the sons and daughters themselves?

The way that sons and daughters honor their fathers and mothers changes, grows, and matures in various life stages. On a large Post-it, brainstorm and write down (so everyone can see) how someone might honor parents 1) as a child, 2) as a teen, 3) as a twenty-something, 4) in their 30's and 40's, 5) in their 50's and 60's, and 6) in their 70's and 80's.

Discuss how it might be possible for someone whose parents were, frankly, dishonorable to still be able to honor them in some way.

Look up Genesis 2:24 and Luke 14:26. How can we apply the truths of this study along with what some might consider to be contradictory truths found in Genesis 2:24 and Luke 14:26?

[living it out]

Every passage of Scripture and every study of Scripture ought to cause us to see and seize Jesus more and more. How does this study point us to Jesus as our Pattern, our Pardon, and our Power?

Look again at your list of verbs describing the proper relationship between a son or a daughter and parents. Which verb do you think you exhibit best? Worst?

Look again at the list of ideas you have brainstormed to come up with ways to honor parents in various stages of life. Considering your current stage of life, what is one idea that you could implement ASAP in order to honor your parents?

What question do you want the group to ask you the next time we meet in order to hold you accountable?

Pastor Chad has asked us to develop three habits that demonstrate the fruit of new life: 1) Read our Bibles and pray every day. 2) Bless two people a week – one inside and one outside the church. 3) Eat with two people a week – one inside and one outside the church. If one or both of your parents is still alive, how might you bring your parent(s) into the orbit of these three habits this coming week?

Close your time by seeking Christ for pardon for those times when you were not honoring to your parents. Thank God for your parents, including the painful as well as joyful times. Ask God to give you grace to honor your parents in creative and specific ways in the days ahead. Pay particular attention to those who have had painful relationships with parents. Ask God to give them grace so that their relationships will be increasingly holy, healthy, and happy as time goes on.