

# HONORING UNSAVED PARENTS

## QUESTIONS CHRISTIANS HAVE

13 October 2023

How can a Christian honor their parents if they are living contrary to or are against the Christian life?

This question comes from a misreading of **Ephesians 6:1-2**.

**“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”** Notice, children are to obey their parents.

**“Honour thy father and mother...”** Adults are to honor their parents.

- Honor:**
1. Esteem due or paid to worth; high estimation; respect; consideration; reverence; veneration; manifestation of respect or reverence.
  2. That which rightfully attracts esteem, respect, or consideration; self-respect; dignity; courage; fidelity; especially, excellence of character; high moral worth; virtue; nobleness.
  3. That to which esteem or consideration is paid; distinguished position; high rank.
  4. Fame, reputation, credit.

In Ephesians 6:2, God is asking us to give a testimony of our esteem for our parents. He doesn't qualify what kind of parents you are to honor. We are not to withhold that honor and respect if we feel our parents are not worthy.

### TO WHOM SHOULD WE GIVE HONOR?

- Leviticus 19:32**      **Old people.** The Lord ties respect for old people to respect for God.
- Romans 12:10**      **Fellow Christians.** (notice again that it doesn't matter whether they are worthy).
- 1 Timothy 5:3**      **Widows.** The exceptions in this passage are for financial support, not honor.
- 1 Timothy 6:1-2**      **Masters, Employers.** Honor the good, the bad, the believing, the unbelieving. The reason given is **“that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.”**
- Your employer will disrespect all of Christianity if you disrespect him.
  - Your honor, which reflects humble, serving Christianity will be seen in a positive light in the eyes of unbelievers.
- 1 Peter 2:17**      **All men.** The Lord wants us to treat everyone as though they are worthy of our best treatment toward them.
- Esther 1:20-21**      The heathen men desired honor from their wives.
- 1 Peter 3:7**      God wants **husbands to honor their wives.** If they'll do that, the wife will naturally honor the husband in response. If they'll do that, God will be more inclined to hear their prayers because of their obedience.

\*\*In all of these cases, the Lord is asking us to honor people that we wouldn't naturally be inclined to honor. Honor people, not because they deserve it, but because God said to honor them.

- 1 Timothy 5:17**      **Ministers of the word of God.** They may not be worthy of honor, but God wants them honored. It causes damage to the cause of Christianity when Christians don't give honor to their ministers. Ministers get double honor because their ministering affects all these others.
- Most people will instinctively honor false religious leaders, but they'll mock and ridicule God's ministers.
- That's why it's so vital that Christians give honor to ministers to restore the balance.

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**Exodus 20:12**      **“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”**

- All the other commands were straightforward commands: “Do this, don’t do that.” This one carries a promise of lengthened days on earth.

**Deuteronomy 5:16** This is the restating of the Law after the 40-years in the wilderness. Again, we see the statement **“That thy days may be prolonged.”**

- Long life from eating right or from abstaining from certain foods is not in the bible.
- Someone with bad eating habits who honors their parents has a better chance of longer life than someone who exercises and eats healthy but curses their parents.

**Matthew 15:1-6** People attempt to get around God’s commandment to honor their parents. That only reveals a bad heart.

**Luke 18:18-20** A certain ruler asked Jesus how to inherit eternal life. Jesus said, **“Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.”**

- Jesus puts not honoring father and mother at the same level as murder, stealing, adultery, and lying about people.
  - Most people would remove honor of father and mother from the list.

**Ephesians 6:1** **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”**

**1 Timothy 3:3-5** God defines **“children”** here as those who live in their father’s house.

**Ephesians 6:2-3** **“Honour thy father and mother...”** The child living in their parent’s house obeys them until they move out and get their own house. After that, they must honor them, pray for them, speak well of them. This does not include obedience.

**“<sup>3</sup> That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”**

- That may not be a solid, guaranteed promise, but it’s worth aiming for. Honor your parents and see what happens.
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**1 Cor. 12:22-24** The feeble parts of the body of Christ get more abundant honor though they seem to be less honorable. They have more need of our support and attention.

- Your parents may not be deserving of your honor, but if you obey God and show them honor, it will turn into a blessing for you and your parents.

**Genesis 34:19** In any family there will be some who are more worthy of honor than others.

**2 Samuel 23:18-23** In a group of soldiers, some soldiers are more honorable than others.

**1 Chronicles 4:9** In one tribe one man is more honorable than others.

**Luke 14:8-9** In any gathering, there are some men more honorable than others.

**\*\*God didn’t give us the burden of deciding who is deserving of honor. He tells us to honor all men.**

**1 Peter 1:6-8** When Jesus Christ comes again, He is going to bestow honor upon Christians who suffered righteously for His namesake.

- If Jesus Christ is going to honor people who are not as good as He is, it is not unreasonable for Him to ask us to give honor to people that we don’t consider to be as good as we are.

**\*\*Jesus included honoring your parents in the same group with murder, stealing, lying about people, and committing adultery. That is because if people would honor their parents, the other 4 commandments would fall in line. It would solve a lot of problems.**