

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

FAMILY

I believe that one of the greatest needs in our country is not a financial, social, or legal need, but a moral need. Morality is taught within a family. The family unit is crucial to the health of a nation and so this week we are going to focus on the Family. Join in reading God's Word for parents and children, and find out what He expects from you.

DAY 1

DO NOT FORSAKE YOUR PARENTS

"GOD CREATED MARRIAGE. NO
GOVERNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE ENVISIONED
IT. NO SOCIAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPED
IT. MARRIAGE WAS CONCEIVED AND BORN
IN THE MIND OF GOD."

-MAX LUCADO

New International Version

Ephesians 6:1-3

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.'

DAY 1

PRAY: Oh Lord, I'm amazed how much importance You place on the relationship between our parents and ourselves. I know it's because that's the closest human relationship we have to reflect the love, guidance and care that You have for us. Would You help me to obey the parents whom You've given me and be the parent You want me to be, so that my children will want to obey and honor me? I want "that it may go well" with me, that I may enjoy long life and that my family can be an inspiration to others! Thank You Lord! Amen.

REFLECT: It's hard to build a healthy family. Has it been hard for you to embrace the concept of obeying your parents? How are you doing with that challenge? Did you come from a good or a broken family? Is your immediate family following the Lord? Do you need to pray for your children and/or your parents? Think about what you believe the Lord would want your family to be and ask Him to show you how to get to that place. Have you thought about what it takes to earn the right to be obeyed by our children?

DAY 1

ACT: Why don't you gather a small prayer group of close friends or prayer partners to pray for your family – your parents or you as parents! Be vulnerable and tell the trusted group what the physical, emotional and spiritual needs are of your family. Ask them to walk this journey with you, so that you will experience God's desire for your family from Ephesians 6:1-3. Pray for their families as well. Families are the most impactful relationships in our lives, we need help understanding how to honor our mothers and fathers, and we all need prayer!

DAY 2

LISTEN TO YOUR FATHER

"YOU DON'T CHOOSE YOUR FAMILY. THEY
ARE GOD'S GIFT TO YOU, AS YOU ARE TO
THEM."

-DESMOND TUTU

New International Version

Proverbs 20:7

The righteous man leads a blameless life;
blessed are his children after him.

Proverbs 3:11-12

My son, do not despise the Lord's
discipline, and do not resent his rebuke,
because the Lord disciplines those he
loves, as a father the son he delights in.

DAY 2

PRAY: Dear Father in Heaven, You are the true Father and we are Your children. I ask that my parent so that my children will be blessed. May I obey the discipline of my parents, and even more so, Your discipline. Let me not forsake Your law so that I can be a child that You earthly father would be a righteous man so that his children would be blessed. And please make me a righteous delight in. Thank You for being my perfect Father. I want to learn from You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever thought about how your earthly father is the reflection of your heavenly Father? Our parents are a mere reflection of God the Father. The reason why many people can't embrace God the Father is because they could never embrace their earthly father. Are you a good reflection of God your Father? What changes would you have to make as a parent to follow the Lord's instruction, to not forsake His law, to not despise His discipline, or to not detest His rebuke? Reflect on the parallels God gives between us being a parent and Him being our Father.

ACT: Re-read today's verses and the reflection questions. They include quite a few instructions on how to be a good parent, to be a good child, and to see God as our perfect Father. What is the main struggle you think of in yourself as you read these verses? Write it down and commit it to prayer. The first step to changing is to define the problem and then pray about it.

DAY 3

OBEY YOUR PARENTS

"EACH DAY OF OUR LIVES WE MAKE DEPOSITS IN THE MEMORY BANKS OF OUR CHILDREN."

-CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

New International Version

Proverbs 6:20-23

My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life.

DAY 3

PRAY: Heavenly Father, help me to listen to my father and mother. Please take their wise words and bind them around my neck and upon my heart. Let the things You've given to me, through my parents, guide me and speak to me, so that I can grow in wisdom. Let me look past the words they've said that are not from You and embrace the words that are from You, so that their commands and teaching will make me more Christ-like. I pray this in Your name. Amen.

REFLECT: How much of who you are is because of your parents? How much of what they've said to you through the years has become a part of you? Try to remember some of the teachable moments. Are you giving your children commands and teachings that they will fasten around their neck, walk with and sleep with? What words have you heard from your parents or said to your children that were possibly harmful? What words were empowering? Think about what conversations you have remembered. Have they hurt you or made you a better person? The power of words spoken in a family is life-changing.

DAY 3

ACT: Choose one incredible conversation or words of advice from your parents. Why don't you go back and thank them for those words. Let them know that their words have stayed with you and have made you a better person. Or, offer your children some life empowering words that they will hang on to for their lives. Pour into them as the Lord continues to pour into us. Either thank a family member for a godly command or teaching that they offered you, or give one to someone in your family. Your teaching will be a light.

DAY 4

CHILDREN ARE A HERITAGE

"FAMILY IS NOT AN IMPORTANT THING,
IT'S EVERYTHING."
-MICHAEL J. FOX

New International Version

Psalms 127:3-5

Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

3 John 1:4

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

DAY 4

PRAY: Lord, thank You that You cherish children, saying that they are a heritage from You, the fruit of the womb, a reward. You bless the man whose quiver is full of children. Please help me to teach children Your truths, so that they will not be put to shame. Lord, give parents the great joy of hearing that their children are walking in the truth. And will You help me to be a heritage from the Lord. I want my parents, my children and You to be proud of me. Amen.

REFLECT: Can your parents say that you are walking in the truth? Are your children walking in the truth? God says children are a heritage from the Lord. Are you part of a spiritual heritage? Evaluate the spiritual health of your family and bring peace to your children through your choices today. How can you find that incredible joy of experiencing your children walking in the truth? We should want to be godly parents, but we also must be aware of what's impacting their hearts at school, through TV, video games, their friends, and the music they listen to. How can you "contend with these enemies in the gate?"

DAY 4

ACT: PRAY for our Christian families in the entertainment industry as they contend with the cultural influences around them. It's especially hard with professional child actors, for they become role models to other young people who are watching them in their films, TV shows, or their music. Be encouraged, for there is a growing community of Christians in Hollywood who are gathering for fellowship, prayer, accountability, and support, to keep their families spiritually strong as their children work in entertainment. These families need prayer, for the Lord has no greater joy than to hear that His children are walking in the truth.

DAY 5

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

"WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROMOTE
WORLD PEACE? GO HOME AND LOVE
YOUR FAMILY."

-MOTHER THERESA

New International Version

Mark 9:42

And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck.

DAY 5

PRAY: Jesus, You love the little children and it breaks Your heart to see them hurt, abused or abandoned. I ask that Your Holy Spirit convicts the hearts of the parents who are not treating their children with love and care. Would You show me what I need to do to help any of the children in my life circle to be taken care of and nurtured? Thank You for the gift of precious children and I ask that You protect them from harm. I pray in Your name. Amen.

REFLECT: We think about the horror of child abuse and we can hardly imagine how someone could hurt an innocent child. But have you thought about the severe punishment the Lord has for the adults who hurt and abuse children? It's more serious than we realize. This scripture says that anyone who even causes a little one to stumble would be better off if they were "thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck!" What can you do to protect any children in your life who may need your help. Or what adults do you need to warn about the consequences of hurting children? It's a difficult conversation to have but it's true that evil thrives when good people do nothing.

DAY 5

ACT: Are there any adults in your life who are not good to children? If you know someone who is not treating a child with love and care, would you pray about what your part is in protecting that child and/or warning that adult? It's a difficult issue to get involved in, but the Lord wants us to protect children from harm and you don't ever want to turn away from a situation that you could help to change. And you always want to protect little ones from adults who could cause them to sin.

DAY 6

MARRIAGE SHOULD BE HONORED

"THEY SAY MARRIAGES ARE MADE IN
HEAVEN. BUT SO IS THUNDER AND
LIGHTNING."
CLINT EASTWOOD

New International Version

Hebrews 13:4-5

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

DAY 6

PRAY: Lord, I pray today for the personal relationships of our nation's entertainment and media professionals. I pray for the marriages and for families of the culture-shapers. Show them the importance of family and give them the desire and the discipline to put their families first. Lord, the high divorce rate in Hollywood breaks my heart. Would your Holy Spirit come in and melt their hearts toward their spouses, their children, and the sanctity of marriage? Oh Lord, I want marriage to be honored by all, and every marriage bed in Hollywood to be kept pure. And I ask the same for me and my family. Please keep us all holy! Amen.

REFLECT: Re-read this verse and think about the deep truths in it. Two big reasons for many divorces are adultery and money issues. Both are addressed in this verse. We pray for the marriages in Hollywood because not only are they impacting our culture, but they also reflect our nation's values. So, praying for them will impact us as well. What do you need to change in your marriage, or pray about in the marriages around you? If you could stay faithful to God and your spouse, not argue or panic over money, and be content with what you have, you can trust that God will take care of all your needs. For He has promised that He will NEVER leave you or forsake you. WOW!

DAY 6

ACT: Choose one celebrity person or couple in Hollywood whom you follow and enjoy and pray for their marriage, pray for the Lord to keep them content with their money, and pray for them to stay faithful. As you pray for that person or couple, you are going to change as well. You will become more faithful, more content, and even more Christ-like as you eternally change their lives through your prayers. Now that's a Win/Win!

DAY 7

HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

"BOTH MY STUDY OF SCRIPTURE AND MY CAREER IN ENTERTAINING CHILDREN HAVE TAUGHT ME TO CHERISH THEM. BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IN PLAYING DOWN TO CHILDREN, EITHER IN LIFE OR IN MOTION PICTURES. I DIDN'T TREAT MY OWN YOUNGSTERS LIKE FRAGILE FLOWERS, AND I THINK NO PARENT SHOULD."

-WALT DISNEY

New International Version

Deuteronomy 5:16

Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

DAY 7

PRAY: Dear God, I thank You for this reminder to honor our parents. It is so clear what we must do, and yet we need Your help to do as You command. You make it so clear that we are to honor our fathers and our mothers in order to live long lives. But I can't do this without You. Help me to be patient, kind, loving, and obedient to my parents, and please have my children be that way to me. It's so humbling to be a child or a parent and yet You promise me that it's worth it. May it go well with me in the land that You gave me. I pray in Jesus' name. Selah.

REFLECT: What does it mean to HONOR your father and mother? That doesn't mean to do every single thing they say or bow to their every wish. It means to "regard them with respect" and to treat them with "high respect or esteem." Are you honoring them as the Lord commanded? What would you need to change? Do your children honor you? If not, how do you need to change in order to earn their respect? Choose honoring your parents today, even if they are no longer alive. Your honoring attitude toward them will change you and allow you to "live long in the land!"

DAY 7

ACT: Take action: Choose now to honor one of your parents today! Say something or do one thing today that you know will show them honor. If you don't have your parents any more then choose another parent to honor. As you take that one step, you'll see how easy it is and you will hopefully choose to do it one more time, and then again, and again, until it becomes a habit.