

**TEENS ASK: Can you help me obey my parents?**

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**THE BIG IDEA:**

The parent-child relationship was instituted by God for our own good.

The very fact that this question was asked should encourage parents, knowing that their children are at least seeking to obey them. The problem is that, as one teen put it, "it's just really hard to obey!"

Let's begin by flatly stating God wants children to obey their parents. Honoring your father and mother is listed among the 10 Commandments and is also repeated throughout Scripture. To not obey parents, then, would be classified as a sin. So, to be fair, we are dealing with a sin issue here.

Children and teens need to recognize that God has a purpose for parents and children. Two of these purposes include:

(1) God is looking out for the well-being of people. Children are to obey their parents because generally parents care about their children and desire good for them. Parents have gathered much more experience and have rules in place to protect their kids from making foolish or naïve mistakes. As a teenager, this is hard to swallow. The teenage years are a time when kids are getting their own ideas and moving into greater independence, and so submitting to authority can be difficult. It was not that long ago when I was thinking that my parents didn't know anything or they were just being unfair. I realize looking back on it that my parents loved me and wanted what is good for me. Parents should communicate this to their children, and kids (teens especially) need to be humble enough to recognize this.

(2) The parent-child relationship is also instituted to reveal God to us. God, who is our heavenly Father, demonstrates a fatherly relationship with his children (Christians) and even more specifically with his own son, Jesus. Jesus obeyed the will of his Father even though he didn't always necessarily want to (Matthew 26:39). As our example, Jesus demonstrates what obedience looks like.

Teens, and all kids, should obey their parents because it pleases God, is usually in their best interest, and makes them more like Jesus. Obeying parents may be easier or harder for some kids depending on their circumstances, but it still is required. Some tips for teens to help them obey their parents would be:

- Understand that being under authority is not bad, and that for the rest of your life you will have to submit to authority (God, employers, the government, church leaders etc.).



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- Having a good relationship with your parents will help you to obey them. Try and understand why they ask certain things of you and be humble enough to assume they know what they're talking about.
- Ask your parents to pray with you and for you.
- Repent of your sinful pride. Rebelling against parents is, as stated earlier, a sin issue. All people, young and old, struggle with sin as it desires to consume them. Just like any other sin, rebelling against parents requires you to confess your sin, turn away from it, seek forgiveness, and put to death your sinful desires for rebellion. Having an active, growing relationship with Jesus will help you to overcome your sin and please God through obedience.

\*If you are in a situation where obeying your parents puts you in danger or where you are expected to engage in wrongful activity, please take time to speak to a church leader so that we can help you.

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### **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How can I recognize that my rebellion towards my parents is similar to my rebellion towards God?
2. How does a parent-child relationship parallel to my relationship with God?
3. What can I learn from the term "Father God"?