

How to Treat a Mother

I Timothy 5:1-2

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Introduction: As we continue to recognize & honor mothers today, I bring your attention to I Timothy 5:1-2, “*Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; & the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.*” The first thing to ask is what is meant by the word “*intreat*”? It is a compound word using “near or beside” + “to call.” It is variously translated as exhort, encourage, or comfort (the same word used to refer to the Holy Spirit as “*Comforter*”). This word therefore speaks of “a comforting, encouraging, & admonishing entreaty” (Kent). The idea in this passage is Paul encouraging Timothy to consider all relationships in the church as family matters. I bring you here to ask the question, “How is a mother to be treated?” We learn from Proverbs 1:8 & 6:20 that children are to heed the law of their mother. But what does that look like in the family relationship? I want us to consider 3 concepts or admonitions for us to heed in order to treat our mother properly. We are to honor her, fear her, & love her.

I. Mothers are to be treated with **honor** > Exodus 20:12, “*Honour thy father & thy mother...*”

A. Defining the term “*honour*”:

1. Academically –

- a. “To regard or treat (someone) with admiration & respect.”
- b. “To give special recognition to; to confer honor on” (Webster’s Dictionary).

2. Biblically –

- a. The Hebrew word is “*kaved*” – meaning heavy or weighty (cf. the American expression: “He carries a lot of weight”).
- b. The word is used for the glory of God, for the weightiness of His divine majesty.

Summary: “To honor is to respect, esteem, value, & prize fathers & mothers as gifts from God.”

B. Describing the task “*honour*”:

1. In the Old Testament –

- a. The word “*honour*” is used in association with parents, not priests or prophets. This speaks of the paramount importance of the parent/child relationship.
- b. “Parents are the first line of defense as God’s representatives” (Rooker). Consider the harsher punishments for those violations against parents than for other violations in general. “It draws further attention to the parents’ dignity & that obedience to parents is a holy mandate” (Rooker).

Summary: “Obedience is the starting point, but children honor father & mother by the internal inclination, the heart to desire what the father & mother desire” (Mohler).

2. In the New Testament –

- a. Note the reference by Christ in Matthew 15:4-6 (& Mark 7:10-12).
- b. See the reference by Paul in Ephesians 6:1-3 > (previous message on Eph. 6:1-3)

[“*Honour thy father & mother*” (:2) [the attitude]

Note: Paul quotes the 5th commandment – consider its placement in the Decalogue.

(1) The definition of “*honour*” (*timao*) >

- (a) From the word, “value” or “valuables”; hence, to prize, to fix a valuation.
- (b) To revere, to esteem, to value > “Honor goes beyond obedience to the attitude of heart which produces obedience” (Kent).

(2) The demonstration of "honour" >

- (a) It involves **recognition** > acceptance of the parents God has given.
- (b) It involves **reverence** > esteem, respect, & admiration -- "Reverence is respect rendered with a worshipful attitude" (Ashbrook) see John 8:49.
- (c) It involves **reward** > the parents are rewarded by their children's honor -- see Proverbs 28:7 & 29:17.

Summary: "It ("honour") means to show them respect & love, to care for them as long as they need us, to seek to bring honor to them by the way we live" (Wiersbe).]

II. Mothers are to be treated with **fear** > Leviticus 19:3, "*Ye shall fear every man his mother...*"

A. The term "*fear*" defined:

- 1. The word is variously interpreted as "to be afraid, to stand in awe, to fear."
- 2. "This is not simple fear, but reverence (Lev. 19:30), whereby an individual recognizes the power & position of the individual revered & renders him/her proper respect" (Strongs).

B. The term "*fear*" demonstrated:

- 1. By one's **speech** –
 - a. Speaking words of praise (cf. Proverbs 31:28-31).
 - b. Speaking words with "pride" (cf. again Proverbs 31:28-31).
- 2. By one's **submission** –
 - a. Obeying "*the law of thy mother*" (Proverbs 1:6 & 6:20).
 - b. Observing & emulating the life of your mother (Titus 2:1-5).

III. Mothers are to be treated with **love** > ??

[While there is no specific command to love one's mother, there is the natural response to a mother's love. Consider the saying, "That child has a face only a mother could love."]

A. An O.T. example of such love – Ruth for her mother-in-law Naomi:

- 1. Consider Ruth's devotion to Naomi in Ruth 1:16-17 & 2:11.
- 2. Compare Ruth's deference to Naomi in Ruth 3:1-18.

B. A N.T. example of such love – Jesus for His mother Mary:

- 1. Jesus sees to Mary's provision in John 19:26-27.
- 2. Jesus sees to Mary's protection also in John 19:26-27.

Conclusion: The Book of Proverbs contains several verses as to how a mother is not to be treated. Consider 15:20, "...a foolish man despiseth his mother" & 19:26, "*He that wasteth his father, & chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, & bringeth reproach*" & 30:17, "*The eye that mocketh at his father, & despiseth to obey his mother the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, & the young eagles shall eat it.*" Therefore the opposite of these verse would be true for the proper treatment of mothers. It may be true in some cases that one has (or had) an unbelieving mother. But there is still needed application of these concepts to be demonstrated. Mothers are to be treated with honor, with fear, & with love. As we continue on this day to reflect on motherhood, might we recognize & rejoice in mothers like the one addressed in the closing chapter of Proverbs, "*Her children rise up, & call her blessed; her husband also, & he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, & beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; & let her own works praise her in the gates*" (31:28-31). To all mothers: "Happy Mothers' Day!"