

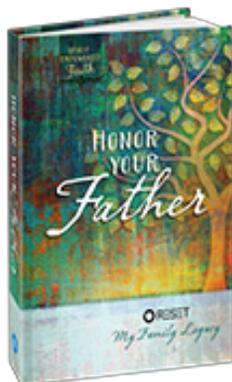


Resetting Legacy Honoring Fathers

I. HONOR YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER

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Honoring the real God is the first step toward honoring our earthly fathers. Honoring God is easy when we are freed from any vision of a harsh, “finger-pointing” God and begin to see a gentle, loving Father. Our hearts become enamored by His unconditional love the more our knowledge of who He is increases. The more we come to know the true character of our heavenly Father; the more freedom we have as we consider our imperfect earthly fathers.

As we begin to ponder our need to honor God as our Father, it is hard not to think of our individual perspectives of fatherhood. Our experiences with our earthly father most certainly inform our perspective of our heavenly Father.

A. Impressions of Fatherhood

We each have personal images intricately tied to the tender yet powerful word, father. For some, the visualization of a father is of an always-smiling, ready-to-embrace-you, tender man, who instantly promotes feelings of joy, and acceptance. Others remember the massive, outstretched hand that seemed to pull a never-ending supply of candy from his pockets. When some people hear the word father, it evokes images of a scowling, rumped brow and disappointed frown that seemed to cut the heart of a child, desperately longing for expressions of his approval. Finally, others who may simply draw a blank when they try to visualize a father. Their memories are as blank as a fresh pack of computer paper—no matter how many pages they turn there is nothing—no calls, no visits, no talks with dad.



How do we honor our father when one out of every three American children will live in a home where their biological father is not present?



W-3 Yielding to the scripture's protective cautions and transforming power to bring life change in me.

Colossians 3:16 Moment:

"Let the Word of Christ dwell deeply in you."

Pastor/Teacher:

"Honor your father"
(Deuteronomy 5:16)

Take a moment to finish this statement and share it with the congregation:

My own journey in communicating honor to my father taught me _____.



Order the Honor Your Father Kit!

No matter what impression the word father has left upon our heart, we are reminded of its significant presence in the pages of Scripture. We are lovingly exhorted to honor our Father in heaven and fathers on this earth (Deuteronomy 5:16). Yet how do we honor our father? This question is inevitable when one out of every three American children will live in a home where their biological father is not present.

Experience Scripture

"Honor your father and mother, as the Lord your God commanded you . . ."
(Deuteronomy 5:16).

Honoring your father includes fathers of all kinds—the attentive and neglectful, the kind and the abusive, followers of Jesus and those who do not. The command is not conditional. Honoring your father requires faith to walk through the process of honoring. To become an honoring person, you must have faith and confidence in your heavenly Father's loving nature, regardless of your earthly father's character. Additionally, honoring your father presupposes intimacy with Father God. Fulfilling the command to honor your father will be impossible in your own strength. Only as you yield to the Holy Spirit, will you find the prompting and power to truly honor.

Pause to pray a prayer of humility. First, tell God about your willingness to obey His command to honor your father. Next, tell God about any hesitancy you have about showing honor to your earthly father. Lastly, declare your reliance on the Holy Spirit.

"God, I am committed to obeying Your Word—every part of it. You've commanded me to honor my father and mother, so I want You to know that I _____."

"I yield to Your command, and at the same time, I am going to need Your help because _____."

"I am going to need Your Spirit to help me by _____."

"Jesus, remind me often of the love You have for me as my heavenly Father. Let my gratitude for how You love me empower me to strengthen and restore my relationship with my earthly father."

