

## *The Duties of the Priest Part 24*

### *Honoring Parents*

Almost all over the world, people celebrate Fathers Day and Mothers Day on different occasions each year with lots of highlights and activities to honor fathers particularly on Father's Day and to honor mothers particularly on Mother's Day. The Word of God says, ***"16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."*** (Deuteronomy 5:16 KJV) Why then the world celebrates a Father's Day and a Mother's Day on separate days and only once every year? This is because the principles that people in the world follow and apply in their life-style are different from the Word of God that we believe and follow as a church. **We do not celebrate Father's Day or Mother's Day as special days and keep such as idols as others in the world do. But we do honor our father and mother everyday and not just on a particular occasion.** The world around celebrates Father's day or Mother's day to honor them yet they actually do not know how to truly give honor and respect to their parents in their everyday life. **We are the royal priestly families and we know and obey the Word of God, but if we celebrate with the world it shows that we go along with the world and we do not understand the Word of God: "2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."** (Romans 12:2 KJV)

\* So we do not need to be like the world that celebrates father's and mother's day to witness for Christ. Instead we need to live according to the Word of God and let others see the difference of how we honor and respect our biological and spiritual parents. \* Let us also live daily as good examples of Godly parents, and let us teach our children how they should honor and obey us so that the promise of God for them will be fulfilled.

***"1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."*** (Ephesians 6:1-3 KJV) And why God said, ***"obey your parents in the Lord"***? It is because the parents have responsibilities from God that they need to fulfill as they raise and nurture their children:

**1. Parents provide the physical needs for their children:** It is our responsibility from God as parents to keep our family in a good, sheltered home environment. While our children are growing we are to provide them proper food, clothes, accommodation, and education. ***"8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."*** (1 Timothy 5:8 KJV)

**2. Parents instruct their children with the Word of God:** It is our responsibility from God as parents to teach our family the Word of God and raise our children in the fear of the Lord. ***"18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: 21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your***

***fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth."*** (Deuteronomy 11:18-21 KJV) \* We are responsible to instruct, bring up, and train up our children in the way of the Lord. \* The main reason that God said, ***"Honour thy father and mother"***, is because God gave the parents the responsibility to teach their children the Word of God. \* Thus, we, parents deserve honor and respect from our children when we teach them and discipline them with the Word of God. ***"4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*** (Ephesians 6:4 KJV)

**3. Parents direct their children in the ways of the Lord:** We are parents who fear the Lord and we are the pastors for our children. The way we give Biblical instructions, direction and advices to our children shall continue up to their preparation for marriage and until they have Godly families of their own. ***"18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."*** (Genesis 18:18-19 KJV) **As parents belonging to God, we should be as obedient as father Abraham.** He lived 175 years; his son Isaac was delivered to him at the age of 100. Yet Abraham saw his grandsons, Esau and Jacob who were delivered to Isaac at the age of 60 years. Abraham had long life and was greatly blessed, so was his son.

**4. Parents continue to keep the ways of the Lord:** As we read the events of Isaac's life, surely Abraham had directed him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. Isaac's life was also of faith and obedience, and he was well-blessed by God like his father Abraham who was a very good example to him in keeping the ways of the Lord.

Being the royal priests and parents we are responsible to continue to live by faith and with the fear of God. We should keep the ways of the Lord by daily doing what is right and just, because our children are seeing our example how we live our faith in God. In addition, as parents we are blessed if we see our children following our steps of faith. **However, God commanded the children not to follow the ways of their parents if parents do not follow the ways of the Lord: "18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols:"** (Ezekiel 20:18 KJV) The world celebrates Father's Day or Mother's Day to honor parents, but parents who do not follow God's Word are not worthy to be honored by their children. ***To honor means to obey, to keep, to stick to, or show mark of respect.*** Parents and elder people are always to be respected, but not all are worthy to be honored. We should not follow their ways, principles, practices and traditions if these are contrary to God's Word.

\* We teach all children to show respect to their parents and to help them with their physical needs, but not to follow their ways and honor their tradition when it contradicts the Word of God. \* If the parents are ungodly, we advise children not to take their counsel. Rather for any needed advice, they must go to their church leaders who teach and give them the Word of God. \* Moreover, if our parents are still non-believers let us continue to plead with them the Word of God. ***"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;"*** (1 Timothy 5:1 KJV)

**5. Parents to be the spiritual leaders to their children:** The parents who are a model of faith to their children are worthy of double honor. ***"17 Let the elders that rule well be counted***

*worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” (1 Timothy 5:17 KJV)* \* Parents who fear God and who follow God’s ways are the model leaders for the children to follow, and they are due to receive honor, respect and submission. \* Parents and spiritual leaders who are Godly in their lives and are well-versed with God’s instructions, they are the fit spiritual advisors for their children and children’s children.

Similarly, in our walk with God there could be people whom the Lord has used, maybe an elder brother or sister in the faith or a church leader, to become our spiritual parent or mentor. *“7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” (Hebrews 13:7 KJV)* We are admonished not to forget or neglect our spiritual parents and leaders. *“17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17 KJV)* God has appointed spiritual fathers, mothers or parents for us in the church to teach us, counsel us, and exhort us with the Word of God. If we obey the teaching that we receive from them we will do well and things will go well with us, and we will enjoy life to the full as God has promised.

In the Old Testament God said, *“16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.” (Deuteronomy 5:16 KJV)* In the New Testament, Paul quoted this promise of God and wrote it in *Ephesians 6:1-4*, to show the responsibility of the children toward the parents and the responsibilities of the parents toward their children. He spoke about it in the context of the church and family: *“1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:1-4 KJV)* Paul did not have a physical family of his own, but he was a father to many early believers.

The Apostle Paul took Timothy as his son: *“2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Timothy 1:2 KJV)* Timothy was his true son in faith. We know that the mother and the grandmother of Timothy were believers and they were to be honored by Timothy because they taught him the Word of God. But in addition, Timothy also needed to honor Paul who trained him to do the work of God, polished his ability and nurtured him until he was established as a pastor: *“19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.” (Philippians 2:19-22 KJV)*

The concept of honoring the spiritual parents who taught the Word of God is also implied in *Leviticus 19:32*, *“32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.”* God commanded us to revere Him by showing respect to the elderly, because the elderly had supposedly spent their lives teaching children the Word of God. In the Old Testament the elders were the leaders in the assembly of the people of God. They were respected and their decisions were always honored.

The church is called to respect and honor the elders of the church. In the life of the early church, Apostle Paul had struggle with the churches that he planted when he was collecting alms to send to the saints in Jerusalem. And who were those saints? They were the apostles and disciples of the Lord who laid the foundation of the early church. When the church was persecuted in Jerusalem, the believers were scattered, and the apostles suffered from famine. At that instance Paul was insisting for their rights in the churches that he planted. He was gearing them to collect for the saints in Jerusalem, urging their responsibility toward the church and toward the spiritual fathers and leaders who preached to them their faith and who cared spiritually for them and the early believers.

Today, we are also responsible to care for our spiritual leaders who are aged. We are called to aid them physically in their old age, in their weakness and sicknesses, in providing for their basic needs-food, shelter, nursing and medicine. This represents an act of gratitude toward God who sent people to care for us and lead us in the way of righteousness.

*“1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. 4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.” (1 Corinthians 16:1-4 KJV)*

*“1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: 2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. 3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: 4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. 5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.” (2 Corinthians 9:1-5 KJV)*

**My Dear and Beloved:** \* Respect is due for all parents and elders. But the parents and church leaders who teach and practice the Word of God are due for double honor. \* Let us consider their ways and the outcome of their lives. Let us imitate them and always remember their counsel. \* Let us not neglect to help them when they are old and in times that they are in need of our assistance. For without them who fed us, who clothed us, who sheltered us, who led us and taught us with the Word of God, our faith and service to the Lord would not have come this far.

Let us continue to take our stand and gird ourselves with prepared minds and bodies for action to continue to lead our families to live in holiness. Let us continue to do our responsibilities towards our church, and society. Let us continue to live for Christ and impact the people around us with uncompromising message of God’s unfailing love, holiness, justice, and righteousness.

Let us pray ...

**My Prayer:** *Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that taught me the principle of respecting and honoring those who helped me to walk with you when I was young and who had spent on me their time, effort and their resources. Lord thank you for all the corrections, the rebukes, and the admonishments that I received from you today.*

*Come now to God and confess and renounce all your sins. Confess your lack of respect, honor and submission to your Godly parents and those who trained you and taught you the Word of God and the ways of righteousness. Confess and renounce your unfaithfulness and ungratefulness, and your lack of concern to support those who trained you in times of their needs. Confess and renounce your worldliness and your love for the worldly things. Renounce celebrating the idols of Father's Day and Mother's Day. Confess and renounce your carelessness toward your family and your lack of discipline to your children. Confess and renounce your lack of reading God's Word and life of prayer. Lord I repent, forgive me the following sins \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Lord, help me to honor those who helped me and trained me to walk with you. I pray, O God, that I will take the responsibility to help them in their old age and to provide for them their daily needs as an honor, respect and reverence to you who called them to care for me during a certain span of my life.*

*Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and committed themselves to apply the teaching that they received today in this message. Lord help them to do your will and to accomplish what is needed from their side to do. Lord protect them and continue to provide their needs so they will continue to serve you. Lord, I pray that the purpose of sending your Word in this message shall prevail and shall be accomplished in the life of your church and your people. Take this message and make it reach those who are in need to receive your Word.*

*Lord bless us as your church and help us to continue to teach your people how to respect, honor, to submit and to care for their Godly parents and those who trained them with the Word of God. Lord give us wisdom and perseverance to implement this teaching, as well as discipline and holiness in the life of our members, families and disciples. Lord protect us and provide to us our needs so we will continue to serve you. Lord refills us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts so that we continue to evangelize, making new disciples, train new workers and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God'. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.*

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