

DAY 23: RESPECT

While dating a girl in my high school days, I was invited to dinner in her home with her parents. The only thing that remains in my memory from that meal was the way the girl treated her mother; she was amazingly disrespectful in how she spoke to her. It made such a powerful impression on me that I never dated the girl again.

Our relationships with our parents can be quite difficult for many reasons. Painful pasts, abuse, disagreements, etc., can create a strained relationship. Lack of forgiveness on both sides, dishonesty, impatience, and lack of vulnerability, can lead to heartache. Even in homes where we have good relationships with our parents, there is still room for growth.

Respect for our parents comes primarily from what we say and what we do. How we speak and how we act toward our parents says a great deal about who we are. Deep resentments and pride often get in the way of doing or saying the right thing. We're talking tough stuff here for many of us. However, one of the best places to practice becoming a servant leader is in the home, in the place where we see each other for who we truly are. Here we can perhaps risk a bit more than in other places. For the most part, no matter what we do, home is the place we can always go to and be received.

Here are some questions: Do you clean your room without being asked? Wash the dishes? Clean the bathroom? Or do you have to be asked repeatedly to do such things? It shows disrespect if your parents have to ask more than once. It shows disrespect to speak to your parents in a sharp tone, to talk back, to use sarcasm, to roll your eyes at something they say. However, giving them eye contact, speaking respectfully, following through on promises, being obedient, and going the extra mile for them, showing appreciation, are all forms of respect that, when given freely, tend to come back to you from them.

Remember that people, including parents, don't necessarily have to earn respect. Simply give it to them. See what happens.

WE DARE YOU TO...

Examine your relationship with your parent or parents. Honestly evaluate where you could improve that relationship in terms of respect. Begin to practice by saying and/or doing things that show respect to your mom, your dad, or both. It could be anything from simply doing the dishes without being told to granting or asking for forgiveness in a particular area. Or it might be in a change in the tone of your voice. These changes might be hard to do, but they pay off big time.

"A child who is allowed to be disrespectful to his parents will not have true respect for anyone."

- Billy Graham

"Respect for one's parents is the highest duty of civil life."

- Proverb



EXAMINE

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENT OR PARENTS



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