

You Can't Trust Anyone Over Thirty – Surviving Parents

Surviving as a Teen, Part 6

Open

- Most teens never figure out how to deal with their parents. Most parents still don't know how to deal with their own parents.
- How many of you have had a fight with your parents this month? This week? Today? Anybody have a fight with your parents on your way to the meeting today?
- When people are younger, their parents are their best friends. Somehow, as people get older, though, parents go from being best friends to being sworn enemies.
- This isn't the way it's supposed to be, and today we'll talk about how you can survive clashes with your parents and have the best relationship you've ever had.

Luke 2:41-52

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Even Jesus had to learn to deal with His parents as He began to grow up into His calling. Here, in His pre-teen years, He snuck off to learn from the teachers in the Temple. This was a good thing, and God clearly wanted Him there, but he never got permission from his parents and caused them a lot of extra worry. Jesus never sinned toward His parents, but He still had to learn to deal with them.

In your teen years, you'll have clashes with your parents, as both of you learn how to grow and change. Sometimes you'll need to repent, sometimes they will, and sometimes you'll both just need to grow.

You can do your part by adjusting things in your own life and starting to live spiritually like the adult you're fast becoming physically.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO...

1. Survival Skill #1: Learn From Your Parents

“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.” – Proverbs 1:8

- As you grow up and become an adult, things are changing quickly. You need to be ready to keep learning, especially from your parents.
- If you want to succeed as a teen and beyond, you need to learn, be teachable, and accept guidance (see *Proverbs 24:6* and *Proverbs 11:14*). If you’re unwilling to learn, you will fail, time and again.
- What sorts of things could you learn from your parents?
- *James 1:19* (which we talked about last lesson) says that we should be quick to listen and slow to speak. This means that you need to be teachable.
- When you’re teachable, God can do great things through both you and your family. Abraham, who trained his family as soldiers, was able to rescue his nephew Lot (*Genesis 14:14*).
- Good parents want to see you become all God has in store for you. Learn from them and you’ll be surprised at how quickly your relationship improves. They’ll love to see you willing to learn (*Proverbs 10:1*).

2. Survival Skill #2: Obey Your Parents

“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.” – Colossians 3:20

- You’ve got to be willing to learn from your parents, but you’ve also got to obey them, if you want to survive with a good family relationship.
- It pleases God when you obey your parents.
- It pleases your parents when you obey (*Hebrews 13:17* and *Philippians 2:22*).
- It’ll please you, too, when you obey (*Ephesians 6:1-2*).
- What do you do if your parents tell you to disobey God?
- There may be times you need to disobey your parents, but remain submissive in your disobedience. If your parents tell you to disobey God, you need to submissively disobey them. See how Peter and John responded to the priests in *Acts 4:1-20*, or Paul’s attitude in *Acts 23:1-5*. Even if your parents are wrong, God expects you to treat them with respect.

3. Survival Skill #3: Honor Your Parents

“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

- God expects us to honor our parents, even if we don’t always agree with them.
- If you honor your parents, God promises that you’ll have a long life and things will go well for you.
- What does it mean to honor your parents?
- *Romans 12:10* says that we are to honor each other above ourselves. This especially includes our parents.

- God expects us to honor our leaders (*1 Timothy 5:17* and *1 Peter 2:17*).

4. Survival Skill #4: Serve Your Parents

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” – Mark 10:45

- Jesus was God and could have come to be Master and Ruler, but He came to be a Servant and give His life for us. See *Luke 22:27* for more. We need to serve everybody, but especially our parents.
- Our parents deserve our service more than anybody else. Think of everything they’ve sacrificed for you.
- As you serve your parents, it’ll change your whole relationship with them. You’ll start to love each other and enjoy each other like never before.
- *Galatians 5:13* says we need to “*serve one another in love.*”
- Serve your parents wholeheartedly and God will reward you (*Ephesians 6:7-8*).

WHAT YOU NEED TO BE...

1. Survival Skill #5: Be Humble

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” – James 4:10

- To survive with your parents, you need to be humble. Even if you think you know more than them, you’re definitely small compared to God.
- Our world says that to be great, you’ve got to make yourself great, but God says that to be great, you’ve got to humble yourself. See *Matthew 18:4*.
- If you’re walking in pride with your parents, you need to repent to them and start walking in humility instead.
- *Proverbs 3:34* says that God resists the proud but helps the humble.
- Paul said that we shouldn’t think more highly of ourselves than we ought to (*Romans 12:3*).

2. Survival Skill #6: Be Thankful

“Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” – Ephesians 5:4

- Not only should you be humble toward your parents, but you should also be thankful for all they’ve done for you.
- What sorts of things do you have to be thankful for from your parents?
- *Psalms 100:4* says that we enter into God’s presence by thankfulness. If we’re not being thankful, then we can’t expect to get very close to God.
- Being thankful means you appreciate what somebody has done for you. Complaining and whining would be the opposite of thankfulness.
- Paul told us to do everything without complaining (*Philippians 2:14*).

3. Survival Skill #7: Be Generous

“...That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” – 1 Timothy 6:18b

- Who do you know who is really generous with their stuff?
- God commands us to be generous with our stuff. How much more should we be generous to our parents, who are the reason we're alive and have any stuff at all!
- If we're generous, people will be generous to us in return (*2 Corinthians 9:6*).
- God will also be generous to us (*Deuteronomy 15:10, Psalm 112:5, and Proverbs 11:25*).

4. Survival Skill #8: Be Patient

“Be With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.” – Ephesians 4:2

- We're supposed to be patient with everybody, but so many times, we forget that our parents are included in that.
- Our parents are only human and will make mistakes, so be patient with them.
- Peter said that *“love will cover a multitude of sins”* (*1 Peter 4:8*). When you're patient with your parents, you can overlook their flaws out of love.
- Paul told timothy to *“pursue”* patience (*1 Timothy 6:11*).

Close

“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” – 1 Corinthians 13:11

- You're in an unusual position as teenagers, because you're transitioning from children to adults.
- Everything your parents know about you up until now revolves around treating you like a child, because you were a child. Now, you're both going to have to make some adjustments as you grow up to become adults who follow God's own call on your lives.
- No matter where you're at with your parents, your relationship can become even better. All you have to do is change the way you treat them, stop acting like children, and watch them change as a result.