

Why This Pastor's Kid Loves Her Parents

I would say I was your average teenager who made dumb decisions and didn't listen to my parents when I should have, but that didn't stop my parents from skillfully navigating me through my teen years and into adulthood! As a young adult living at home, I've developed a deep love, honor, and respect for my parents that was never demanded but rather earned. I've never had to contrive or fake the honor or respect because it flows from a sincere and overflowing heart of gratitude towards my parents. *I know this is a lengthy post, but if you are a parent, a child, a grandparent ... etc. I encourage you to read!* Here are the top five reasons that I love and honor my parents:

1) They made God our lifestyle, not our priority.

In our house it wasn't God first and then the rest of life, it was God only! Family, friends, work, etc. were to be filled with and based upon God and His Word. Family nights weren't movies and popcorn, they were church services spent worshipping together and fellowshiping with the body of Christ!

We didn't need to go mini golfing or take vacations to make family a priority, for we were the most strong when we were found serving God and the body of Christ side by side. God wasn't first, He was only. Of course we went on vacations and watched movies, but we didn't make them a priority over our service to God.

To my sister and me, church was FUN and serving God together was more satisfying than anything else. Families become weak when they rely on the tactics of the world to strengthen them. Families become strong when they serve God side by side,

giving up the world for the Spirit of God!

2) They were my parents, not my friends.

My parents never tried to be my buddy or make me like them. They didn't agree with everything I said or laugh at all of my jokes, and that was OK. They were the authority figure, the law of the land and the ones I was looking up to, not across to.

Our relationship was not that of friends on the same level! We laughed together and had fun times, but those things weren't what made our relationship healthy. The healthy part of the relationship was that they expected my submission and obedience and they weren't going to beg me for it.

I was not in charge nor was I the boss because that was the role of the parent and it was perfectly clear and in hindsight, a huge blessing! They didn't give me everything I wanted or let me do whatever I felt like. Instead, my character and obedience were put to the test until the test was passed. My parents were training, disciplining and preparing me for maturity and sometimes that meant they weren't the most popular with me and guess what? I SURVIVED!

3) They provided a childhood

Sleepover on a school night? Why not? Oh, this wasn't a regular occurrence, but it was something we got to do sometimes and it was AWESOME. Letting us go on a weekend trip to Edmonton with a young married couple was also the GREATEST thing ever.

They trusted us and let us grow older while at the same time giving us slack when we needed to just be kids. My sister and I were allowed to play and have fun together and even argue and work things out on our own but also expected to have maturity and do our part in the house. Sometimes we would get to do the dishes and clean up, and often it wasn't with a

smile, but other times Mom and Dad would let us go play with our friends while they cleaned up and took care of it. I was allowed to be a kid and I have fond memories of my younger years, playing, even arguing, and yet still enjoying life with my sister.

4) They empowered my maturity

My parents set a standard in our house. While they gave me a childhood and provided opportunity for me to enjoy life as a kid, they also began to expect maturity from me. They realized this wasn't an overnight process and the level of maturity expected increased as the years went on.

Failing wasn't a doom and gloom experience; instead it was the perfect opportunity to teach and empower me to do better and mature. Not only was I expected to mature in responsibility and attitude, but also spiritually! Hearing from God on my own and developing a personal relationship with God apart from my parents' relationship was something I cherish.

I was blessed to grow up in a safe and spiritually strong atmosphere, but they didn't let me "ride on their coattails" forever. Emphasis wasn't just placed on outward maturity, but also on that inward and spiritual maturity.

5) They loved.

This fact is the fuel that continually increases my love and honor for my parents. Not only did they love me, which was clear to see, but their love for others was boundless! They counseled, imparted, nurtured, and went above and beyond their calling as pastors to see their friends, congregation and even those who were dishonorable feel the presence of God in the here and now.

There were no bitter words and no complaining even after hours spent after their long day pouring out for others. Graciously

feeding unexpected guests, regardless of whether or not we could afford it, was just one way my parents demonstrated how to truly “love.” It’s not a feeling, an ideal, or a state of mind. Love is a nitty gritty decision that we make to live outside of ourselves, putting our flesh to death, and opening up our heart, our life and even our pantry for others to experience the reality of our great God!

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