TOPIC PRINTABLE

Family

Parents and children, the family Jesus grew up in, caring for relatives, and God's care for those whose families have let them down.

EXODUS 20:12

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

The commandment to honor father and mother. It was given to adults as well as children, and Jesus later applies it to supporting parents in their need (Mark 7:10-12).

EPHESIANS 6:1–4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise: "that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth." You fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath, but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Paul speaks to children directly, as members of the church who would hear the letter read, and then limits fathers too: "don't provoke your children to wrath."

COLOSSIANS 3:20–21

Children, obey your parents in all things, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, don't provoke your children, so that they won't be discouraged.

The same pairing in a shorter form, with a reason that every parent can recognize: fathers should not provoke their children, "so that they won't be discouraged."

DEUTERONOMY 6:6–7

These words, which I command you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Faith handed on in ordinary moments: at home, on the road, at bedtime and in the morning.

PROVERBS 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

A much-loved verse for parents. Like every proverb it describes how life usually goes, not a guarantee; it is not a verdict on parents whose grown children have chosen another path.

LUKE 2:51–52

And He went down with them and came to Nazareth. He was subject to them, and His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

The Son of God grew up in an ordinary household, "subject to them," and grew in wisdom and stature. Mary keeps what she does not yet understand in her heart.

RUTH 1:16–17

Ruth said, "Don't urge me to leave you, and to return from following you, for where you go, I will go; and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me."

A widowed daughter-in-law refuses to leave her widowed mother-in-law: family made by loyalty and choice, not only by birth.

SIRACH 3:12–14

My son, help your father in his old age, and don't grieve him as long as he lives. If he fails in understanding, have patience with him. Don't dishonor him in your full strength. For the kindness to your father will not be forgotten. Instead of sins it will be added to build you up.

Practical counsel for adult children: help your father in old age, and if his understanding fails, be patient with him.

1 TIMOTHY 5:8

But if anyone doesn't provide for his own, and especially his own household, he has denied

the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Providing for one's own household is treated as part of the faith itself, not an optional extra.

PSALM 68:5–6

A father of the fatherless, and a defender of the widows, is God in His holy habitation. God sets the lonely in families. He brings out the prisoners with singing, but the rebellious dwell in a sun-scorched land.

God is "a father of the fatherless" who "sets the lonely in families": Scripture's word to anyone whose own family is absent or broken.