



*Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.*

- Exodus 20:12

## **FOURTH COMMANDMENT:**

Honor your father and mother.

### **FOCUS THIS WEEK**

We are commanded to honor our parents. This is not a suggestion, but a command of God. Only this commandment comes with a promise specifically attached. We are to honor our parents “so that the days may be long in the land the Lord gives us.” So now what?



**SHARE** highs and lows to set the stage for a more open and meaningful discussion.



**READ** and highlight the theme verse, Exodus 20:12, then connect it to one or more of the following texts:

- Matthew 20:26b
- Ephesians 4:26b



**TALK** about how the Bible reading might relate to today's highs and lows. Supplement your discussion with some of the following.

**A. IMAGES IN WORDS AND ART** Take a look at the theme art and cartoons. What do you see in the art? How might the art and the theme verse apply to your group highs and lows today?

### **B. ROLE PLAY**

1. You are two hours past curfew and return home, meeting your parents at the door. What do you do?
2. You believe your parents are abusing alcohol. What do you say? How do you honor them?

## C. CATECHISM ENCOUNTER

Read Martin Luther's explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the Small Catechism. List five ways we should use God's name.

### Luther's Small Catechism Meaning of the Fourth Commandment:

We are to fear and love God, so that we neither despise nor anger our parents and others in authority, but instead honor, serve, obey, love and respect them.

## D. QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- 1. List five common ways people dishonor their parents. Imagine yourself as a parent of a teenager. Which of these "dis-honoring" ways would bother you most? Why?** *Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers. These may include lying to parents, showing open disrespect, cursing parents, refusing to help around the home when asked, or promising to do a chore but not following through. Share your own feelings on this. Ask them to honestly consider this question.*
- 2. List five common ways people honor their parents. Imagine yourself as a parent of a teenager. Which of these honoring ways would mean the most to you? Why?** *Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers. Encourage youth to do something positive to honor their parents this week and be sure to check up on this next time you meet.*
- 3. Does God expect you to honor a parent who is involved in something illegal, immoral or abusive? How can you?** *It is difficult to honor someone if that person is acting in a dishonorable way. If what parents are doing is clearly harmful to themselves and others, we may need to respectfully and clearly let them know that we can have no part in it. Our first loyalty as Christians is to God. If someone, even a parent, is breaking the laws of God, the most honorable thing to do may be to state why we know it is wrong and to offer to get that person help.*

## E. TERMS OF THE WEEK

Review these key terms and write definitions.

**Authority:** The power to enforce laws, exact obedience, determine, or judge.

**Children:** A son or daughter; an offspring.

**Honor:** To show respect and publicly esteem someone.

**Parents:** The people God has appointed to nurture, teach and raise you. This might include biological parents, adoptive parents and guardians.

**Respect:** To hold something in honor and esteem. (Literally: to look again)

## F. WRAP UP

Summarize the event with your group, assigning someone to share what you learned at closing.

- One new thing we learned today
- One thing we already knew that is worth repeating
- One thing we would like to know more about
- The highest highs and lowest lows which our group will bring to the closing prayer



## PRAY

for one another. Praise and thank God for your highs. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you in your lows. Include your friend's highs and lows in your prayers. Invite youth to think of something going on in the world that calls for prayer.



## BLESS

one another by name. Trace a cross on each hand or forehead. Look them in the eyes and give them a smile. Ask for their blessing as well!