

# Elder Care

**Dear Facilitator:** For several weeks we have been discussing how successful families communicate, support one another, and organize their lives. This week we are going to focus on caring for the elderly population.

In the Bible, Ephesians 6:1 says, “Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right.” Ephesians 6:2-3 says, “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

Exodus 20:12 says “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.” Honoring your father and mother is being respectful in word and action and having an inward attitude of esteem for their position. The Greek word for honor means “to revere, prize, and value.” Honor is giving respect not only for merit but also for rank. For example, some Americans may disagree with the president’s decisions, but they should still respect his position as leader of their country. Similarly, children of all ages should honor their parents, regardless of whether their parents “deserve” honor.

It might be helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson. Participants will:

1. Explain why one should care for the elderly.
2. Develop a strategy to honor the elderly.

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week’s commitment statement is: Caring for the elderly honors God.

We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God’s love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.

*Blessings*

## Welcome *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that are positively influencing your family.

Last week we talked about how to set up our families for success by maintaining routines, scheduling events, and planning projects.

 **Ask:** Did anyone try something this past week that made a positive difference in your family that you would be willing to share?

## Introduction *5 minutes*

This week we are going to focus on caring for the elderly population. Ephesians 6:1 says, “Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right.” Ephesians 6:2-3 says, “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

The Greek word for honor means “to revere, prize, and value.” Honor is giving respect not only for merit but also for rank. For example, some Americans may disagree with the president’s decisions, but they should still respect his position as leader of their country. Similarly, children of all ages should honor their parents, regardless of whether their parents “deserve” honor.

 **Say:** Fragile vase. How do I carry it? What can I do to make sure that it is cared for? What happens if I drop it? As it gets older, do I need to be careful?

Today’s teaching objectives are to:

1. Explain why one should care for the elderly.
2. Develop a strategy to honor the elderly.

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## Family & Table Talk 20 minutes



**Say:** Tonight, at your tables, let's talk about what it means to honor and respect others.

1. How do you show honor and respect to people?
2. What do you do or not do?

*After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.*

*Notes*

<i>40 minutes</i>	
<h1>Parent Training</h1>	
<i>Family Time</i>	<b>ELDER CARE</b>

Did you know that in 1900, men and women were only expected to live up to their forties? Through advanced technology and medical discoveries, the life expectancy for most people has increased immensely.

In the United States, the 2017 life expectancy for men is now 76.5 years and 81.2 years for women. This is extremely good news, but with it also comes concerns. As many get older they face new health complications and sometimes crippling illnesses that cause them to not be able to safely live on their own.

Though many seniors don't want to accept it, the older they get, they begin to need help with things in their daily living that they used to have no trouble doing when they were younger such as driving, shopping, cooking, laundry, cleaning, and paying the bills.

When this happens, it creates challenges for everyone in the family. Romans 15:1 says, "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves."

What have you experienced or observed with the elderly?

What has worked well for you and your family?

What has been the most difficult?

What are some reasons from the Bible that show we are to care for the elderly? (Feel free to make use of the suggested scripture passages noted earlier).

It is not always easy to care for the elderly. From Virginia Morris's book, *How to Care for Aging Parents*, here are some signs that parents need help:

- Parent is unsteady, has difficulties getting in and out of chairs, or has fallen.
- Hygiene is not practiced.
- Parent has either gained or lost weight.
- House and yard are not maintained.
- Personality has changed.
- Nothing to eat or food is spoiled.
- Mail unopened and bills not paid.
- Missing appointments.
- Getting lost.
- Stops doing things he/she used to enjoy.
- Driving no longer seems safe.
- Mail is full of new subscriptions, sweepstakes entries, or requests for donations (p.3).

Within the book, Morris offers advice on numerous topics such as caring for yourself, how to talk to your parent, medicine, paperwork, moving out of the home, dementia, the last goodbye, and more. A book or similar resources can give support to you as you care for your elderly parent.

Morris also provides numerous websites. The top ten are:

- Eldercare Locator: [eldercare.gov](http://eldercare.gov)
- National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center: [ltcombudsman.org](http://ltcombudsman.org)
- AARP: [aarp.org](http://aarp.org)
- Family Caregiver Alliance: [caregiver.org](http://caregiver.org)
- Benefits Check Up: [benefitscheckup.org](http://benefitscheckup.org)
- Medicaid: [Medicaid.gov](http://Medicaid.gov)
- Medicare: [Medicare.gov](http://Medicare.gov)
- Alzheimer's Association: [alz.org](http://alz.org)
- National SHIP Resource Center: [shiptalk.org](http://shiptalk.org)
- Caring Connections: [caringinfo.org](http://caringinfo.org)

## DISCUSS

What resources have you used to help in caring for the elderly?

Joy Loverde has also provided some excellent resources in her book, *The Complete Eldercare Planner*. She also provides resources at her website: [www.elderindustry.com/11315.html](http://www.elderindustry.com/11315.html).

## SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material in the lesson.

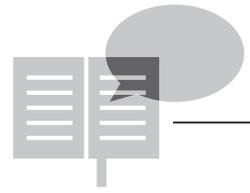
Today's teaching objectives were to:

1. Explain why one should care for the elderly.
2. Develop a strategy to honor the elderly.

This week's commitment statement is: Caring for the elderly honors God.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight tonight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as parent this week?



*Scripture*  
**SUPPORT**

**Deuteronomy 5:16**

*Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.*

**Proverbs 30:17**

*The eye that mocks a father, that scorns an aged mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures.*

**Matthew 15:4**

*For God said, "Honor your father and mother" and "Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death."*

**Romans 15:1**

*We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.*

**Matthew 25:40**

*The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

**Acts 20:35**

*In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the LORD Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

**Exodus 20:12**

*Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.*

**Leviticus 19:32**

*Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD.*

**Job 12:12**

*Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?*

**Proverbs 17:22**

*A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

# Student Training

*Family Time*

**ELDER CARE**

## Objectives

- Help children be aware of what elder care means.
- Help children understand why elder care is a challenge.
- Help children be aware of what the Bible teaches us about caring for the elderly.
- Help children be aware of ways they can help their elderly loved one.

Did you know that in 1900, men and women were only expected to live to be in their forties? Now, however, through advanced technology and breakthrough medical discoveries, the life expectancy for most people has increased immensely. In the United States, the 2017 life expectancy for men is now 76.5 years and 81.2 years for women. Yes, thanks to life-prolonging medical advancements, people are living longer than ever! This is extremely good news, but with it also comes concerns. People are living longer, and those who are fortunate enough to be given the gift of longevity want to maintain their ability to

care for themselves and live on their own if they can.

However, as many get older, they may face new health complications and sometime crippling illnesses that cause them to not be able to continue to safely live without assistance. Though many seniors don't want to accept it, the older they get, they may begin to need help with things in their daily living that they used to have no trouble doing when they were younger such as driving, shopping, cooking, laundry, cleaning, keeping track of appointments, and even paying bills.

When aging loved ones can no longer manage on their own, it creates challenges for everyone in the family. It is extremely difficult for elderly family members to give up their independence and begin to depend on others to help them. The family must figure out the best way to assist and support their elderly loved ones while helping them maintain their dignity and comfort as much as possible. Romans 15:1 says, "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves."

More families than ever are having to provide care for elderly family members. As Christians, we have been given some directions in the Bible for how we should care for our elderly family members. Just as Jesus is full of compassion, He wants us to show compassion to others. Colossians 3:12 says, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." We will need to remember that Scripture as we take care of those who need our loving care.

Acts 20:35 tells us that we "must help the weak." So, let us look at how as children you can do this. Sometimes elderly family members need so much medical attention that it is unsafe for them to remain home. In this case, they are better cared for in a medical nursing facility. Here, they will receive regular monitoring and daily scheduled medical care. If your elderly loved one is in a nursing facility, there are things you can do to help them be content and at peace in their new home.

The first thing you can do is pray for them. When you say your prayers, be sure and ask God to heal and restore them and to strengthen them and protect them. Next, younger children can visit them with parents as often as possible, and as you get older, you can visit on your own. Nothing puts a smile on the face of a grandma or grandpa like a visit from their precious grandchildren. Every now and then you can read the Bible to them, draw them a lovely picture, make them a card, or write them a sweet letter telling them you love them and how special they are to you.

## *Notes*

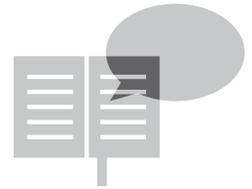
Maybe they would like for you to come and have dinner with them or join them in watching one of their favorite TV shows. Don't forget they especially love your warm hugs and sweet kisses.

When children visit a nursing facility, it blesses every person there. Even some patients who may be hard to get along with have a big smile on their faces when children come to visit. So even though you are a child, you have the power to make your elderly loved one and many others feel better! Proverbs 17:22 says, "A cheerful heart is good medicine."

Maybe your elderly loved one doesn't need to be in a nursing facility, but your parents decided that grandma or grandpa would be safer living at your home with your family. That is a special opportunity for you to be a blessing to them! As always, pray for them, and look for things you can do to make things easier for them. You can help them do many simple tasks. For instance, you can give them a massage, you can help them comb their hair, you can help them tie their shoe laces, you can bring them a glass of water or juice, or you can fix them a snack. They would also still love for you to draw them a picture, make them a card, or write them a letter, but more than anything, they treasure your sweet hugs and kisses. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." So, when you care for your elderly loved one in any way, Jesus says you are really caring for Him. And just as you bring a smile to your loved one's face, you bring a big smile to Jesus's face too!

## DISCUSS

- What challenges can longer life cause?
- As Christians, how should we care for aging family members?
- Why do some elderly family members need to live at a medical nursing facility?
- What are some ways you can support your elderly loved ones?
- How can you serve your family members living in your home?
- In Matthew 25:40, what did Jesus say about serving the least of these?



## *Scripture* SUPPORT

### **Romans 15:1**

*We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.*

### **Colossians 3:12**

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

### **Acts 20:35**

*In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the LORD Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

### **Proverbs 17:22**

*A cheerful heart is good medicine.*

### **Matthew 25:40**

*Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*



# Activities

## AGES 4-11

### Materials

Tribute forms

Paper

Crayons or markers

### After lesson discussion, have children view

#### YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/e82PvkoJxA>

(discuss briefly).

- Tell children they are going to give a tribute to an elderly loved one in their family.
- Tell them a tribute is a gift of compliments to the person, given in gratitude. As a group, have children suggest compliments to give their elderly loved ones (things you love about them, things they taught you, or how much you love them and appreciate them).
- Write their suggestions on the whiteboard. Give a few examples to get them started. Have them copy the ones from the board. Then, guide them in filling out the “Special Tribute” form, adding their own personal compliments specific to their loved one. Finally, have them sign and date the tribute.
- When they are finished, have children share who their tribute is for and some of the compliments they wrote about. (Have extra copies available in case a child wants to give more than one).
- Tell the children they are to read the tribute to their loved one and then present it to them along with a hug!

## AGES 12-16

### Materials

Tribute forms

Paper

Crayons or markers

### After lesson discussion, have children view

#### YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/e82PvkoJxA>

(discuss briefly).

- Tell children they are going to honor an elderly loved one by giving them a tribute.
- Tell them a tribute is a gift of compliments to the person, given in gratitude. It is a written proclamation of your love for them. It tells them things you love about them and things they taught you.
- Solicit thoughts from the older children to get their thoughts flowing. Guide them in filling out the “Special Tribute” form, adding their own personal compliments specific to their loved one. Then have them sign and date the tribute.
- When they are finished, have the children share who their tribute is for and some of the compliments they wrote about. (Have extra copies available in case a child wants to give more than one.)
- Tell the children they are to read the tribute to their loved one and then present it to them along with a hug!

\*Have older children read their tribute and demonstrate how the tribute is to be read and presented.

*Notes*



**CHALLENGE QUESTION**

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE A ELDERLY  
LOVED ONE FEEL LOVED?

**CHALLENGE COMMITMENT**

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING  
TO DO TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE  
QUESTION THIS WEEK?

	<b>AFFIRMATION</b> <i>Have children repeat:</i>
	<i>I honor the elderly people in my life.</i>

# Resources & Materials

- Old vase or something fragile.
- *How to Care for Aging Parents, 3rd Edition: A One-Stop Resource for All Your Medical, Financial, Housing, and Emotional Issues*  
— Virginia Morris
- *Coping With Your Difficult Older Parent: A Guide for Stressed-Out Children*  
— Grace Lebow
- *The Complete Eldercare Planner, Revised and Updated Edition: Where to Start, Which Questions to Ask, and How to Find Help*  
— Joy Loverde

