

This week we celebrate Mother's Day with Pastor Andy's message entitled "Celebrating the Life of a Parent."

We are a diverse mix of people here at Vineyard with all different kinds of backgrounds and experiences. Despite our many differences, we each have at least one thing in common: we all have or have had parents. Regardless of how much or little your parents have been a part of your life, the common denominator is that God used two people to bring you into the world. This Sunday we celebrate the gift of one half of that couple; our mothers. Hopefully you will have the chance to spend time with your mother and show your appreciation for her. As you think about how much your mother means to you, let's consider what God's word says about parents and how you should treat them.

The fifth commandment says "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you." (Ex. 20:12). Do you honor your parents? If so, how? Andy reminds us to honor them by accepting and appreciating them. Sometimes we must accept them by forgiving them of their mistakes and shortcomings. Minimize their weaknesses and focus on their positives. We appreciate them when we listen to what they have to say. Proverbs tells us to listen to our fathers and appreciate our mothers (23:22).

Next, we honor our parents by affirming and not abandoning them. In our society, it seems more common for people to blame their parents rather than honor them. We can honor our mothers and fathers by just spending time with them and caring for them.

Lastly, we can honor our parents by assimilating and not avoiding their life teaching. Parents have a lifetime of experiences and knowledge to pass on. It is important for us to learn from their lives and honor their wisdom. For children, this might mean just being obedient. Parents can teach a valuable lesson that applies to life as a Christian: disobedience brings pain while obedience brings freedom.

Bill Gates' mother had a profound affect on his life by persuading him to give back to the world from which he had gained so much wealth. The great minister John Edwards' mother was the matriarch of a long line of highly successful businessmen, politicians, and statesmen. Mothers throughout history have shaped the course of the world simply by how they raised their children. As you go through your week and think about your own mother and the affect she has had on your life, what are some ways you can honor her?