

Sermon Series: Cultivating (Godly) Relationships
Sermon Topic: "Honour the Old and Aged" by Rev Norman Wong
Sermon Text: Honor father and mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you – Exodus 20:12
Other relevant texts

1 As a child – how do you honour your parents?

- Loving your neighbor (your parents) is synonymous to loving God; part of fulfilling the greatest commandment. (Matt 22:34-40)
- Fill yourself with God's love, be like Mary than Martha. Sit and receive Jesus' love that you may love. Busyness prevents us from loving well (1 John 4:19 – We love because He first loved us.)
- Do not make your service to God as an excuse for not caring for your parents. (Mark 7:9-13)
- If you are out stationed overseas extendedly (as a missionary, for work etc), entrust your parents to trusted someone, someone in your care team. (Like how Jesus entrusted Mary to John)
- Those who do not provide for his own household is worse than a believer. (1 Tim 5:8)

Practical Advice:

- Encourage your parents to keep fit.
- Bring your parents out often for exercise, to do something they like.
- If your parents have hearing difficulty, use handphone (hearing aid apps) to communicate clearly.
- As far as possible, respect their wishes, but you need to know your own limits. Do not commit on wishes you cannot fulfill.
- Take care of yourself and care team. Do not bear the responsibility alone. Do not burn out, else you cannot take care of your parents.
- In some circumstances, the best thing for your parents may be to be cared for in a nursing home, do not overly burden yourself with guilt.
- For parents with dementia, having a structured life helps. Example, where the keys are always placed, when to do what etc.
- Make time to listen to the aged, even if you have heard the stories before
- Always treat them with dignity and respect (do things with them, for them, let them do things for themselves as much as possible)
- Start building a care team.

2 As an aging parent – how do you help your children honor you?

- Keep yourself fit and healthy: physically, mentally, socially, spiritually
- **Spiritually Fit:** (1 Tim 4:8)
 - Ask God to show you what He would like you to do with all the gifts and resources that He has given you.
 - Make time everyday to sit quietly with God.
 - Find your team. 3-2-1. 3 people, meeting for 2 hours every 1 month to give accounts to each other.

- **Mentally Fit:**
 - Remain employed as much as possible
 - Read books, encouraged to read aloud
 - Learn and memorise songs
 - Memorise Scriptures
 - Learn a new language
 - Sing
 - Dance
 - Ride a bicycle
 - Give tuition
- **Socially Fit**
 - Get out of the house everyday and talk to someone
 - Join interest group (in church or community centre)
 - Learn to play an instrument
- **Physically Fit**
 - Sleep well
 - Eat well (for “good” food, eat in moderation)
 - Exercise well everyday (heart, strength, stretching) – 10 min everyday
- **Make preparation now for a good death** – with dignity and least pain
 - Make a will
 - AMD – Advanced Medical Directive
 - ACP – Advance Care Planning
 - Accept that death is a normal and natural part of life. If you are not able to communicate meaningfully or engage in normal activities like feeding, consider not keep yourself alive through machine and running up financial burden to your family.
- If your children seem too busy with their own lives, what do you do?
 - Be like Jesus, take the role of a servant
 - Offer assistance where appropriate, do not be over bearing
 - From time to time, take the initiative to visit them
- **Guard your heart against resentment** – “ah, these ungrateful children, when they were young...” – Do not destroy your soul.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you see your parents as blessings or burdens? Explain.
2. Why is Exodus 20:12 the only commandment out of the Ten Commandments with a promise?
3. What can you do if you find yourself in a situation where obeying the 1st commandment conflicts with the 5th commandment? (cf Luke 2:49)
4. When your classmate or colleague complains to you about his/her parent, what can you do to help?