

Obey and Honour Caregivers

Quarter 9 • Lesson 7

Focus on Character Development

- 1. Connecting:** Play a game about obeying caregivers.
- 2. Teaching:** Discover why it is important to obey and honour caregivers (Exodus 20:12; Luke 2:41–52).
- 3. Responding:** Decide which children show obedience.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse Poster
- *The Action Bible*, image of Jesus in the Temple
- Student Pages
- Crayons

Teacher Devotion

*Honor your father and mother.
Then you will live a long time in the land
the LORD your God is giving you.*
Exodus 20:12

When we believe in God, we want to do what is right. God gave this commandment to His people on Mount Sinai after the people had begun to stumble and fall. They were not living the way God wanted them to. God asked them to honour their parents, just as we are called today to honour ours. God gave us to our parents so that they could guide, protect, teach, and discipline us. God knows that no one on earth is perfect, and this includes parents.

Think about the people who raised you. Spend some time thinking about your relationship with them. How did you show honour to them? How might you have honoured them in other ways? How does your relationship with those who raised you affect how you show honour to others? You are never too old to show honour to those who raised you.

Family Connection: Encourage families to talk to their children about the ways honouring caregivers can help children. Discuss how caregivers protect, guide, teach, and discipline children. How does a good attitude and obedience make life in the home better?

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play a game about obeying caregivers.

Greet the children as they come to class. Ask each child to tell you 1 fact about a person who takes care of him (a parent, grandparent, or other caregiver).

Let's start our time today with a fun game about obedience!

Use this game to teach that obedience involves listening carefully. Have children stand in front of you. Tell them they should do the actions you call out but only if you first say, "Mother says" or "Father says." If you do not say one of these phrases before an action, the children should not do what you say. Call out instructions to do things, such as:

Touch your nose

Stand on 1 foot

Turn around

Jump up and down

Pat your head

Squat down

Do 5 jumping jacks

Lay flat on the ground, then use your arms to push your body up

Be sure to say, "Mother says," or "Father says" before some of the more difficult tasks, such as pushing up with your arms.

Teacher Tip: If a majority of your students do not live with parents, you may use a word that fits better, such as "Aunty," "Uncle," or "Teacher." Throughout this lesson use the terms that apply best to your students, whether "parents," "guardians," or "caregivers."

Allow 2–3 students to answer the following questions.

- Which actions did you enjoy doing the most?
- Which actions were your least favourite?

Obedience is not always fun. Sometimes when you obey you do not do what you wanted to do. Or you may need to do something you do not enjoy.

Today we are going to talk about obeying the people who take care of you. This could be a mum, a dad, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or any other person who cares for you or provides for your daily needs.

2. Teaching: Discover why it is important to obey and honour caregivers (Exodus 20:12; Luke 2:41–52).

Teacher Tip: For children who may live in homes where there is abuse or neglect, it is important for them to understand the importance of obeying God as well as caregivers. Remind them God cares about whether they are well cared for! If there are resources to help children in these situations, try to connect your children with them. Talk to your church leadership about the resources available to help these families.

There are many reasons we obey our parents and caregivers. The most important reason is that God tells us in the Bible we should honour and obey the people who raise us.

If possible, read this verse directly from your Bible.

*Honor your father and mother.
Then you will live a long time in the land
the LORD your God is giving you.*
Exodus 20:12

Allow 1–2 students to answer each question.

- What command did God give in this verse?
- What did He say would happen if they obeyed?

In Moses' time, God had promised to deliver the Israelites to the land He had promised Abraham. Honouring what God wanted, including this commandment, would bring good things to the people.

God tells us to honour and obey our parents. He has placed them in our lives for our good. Those who care for you are placed by God to guide, protect, teach, and discipline you. Most caregivers want you to grow up to be healthy adults.

Optional: If possible, share the image from *The Action Bible*.

The Bible gives us an example of obeying our parents in the story of Jesus as a boy. Jesus, God's perfect Son, obeyed His parents. Each year His family travelled from their town to the city of Jerusalem for a special feast. This journey took them several days. Families travelled in large groups together with other families. When Jesus was 12 years old, they went to the feast as usual. Let's pretend we are taking a long walk.

Teacher Tip: The distance from Nazareth to Jerusalem was about 150 kilometers. Tell your students of a place an approximate distance from where you are and ask them to imagine walking there.

Have the children stand. Walk in place together and pretend to get tired from walking.

Only 2 more days until we get to Jerusalem! I cannot wait for the feast!

Have students sit as you continue the story.

When the feast was over, Mary and Joseph left with a very big group of people to return home. But after a day of travel, Mary and Joseph realized Jesus was not with their group! They did not know where He was! So, they turned around and went back to find Jesus.

- How do you think Jesus' earthly parents felt when they realized He was missing?
- Allow 2–3 children to respond.

Listen to what the Bible says about what happened when Mary and Joseph found Jesus.

After three days they found him in the temple courtyard. He was sitting with the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions....When his parents saw him, they were amazed. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been worried about you. We have been looking for you everywhere."

Luke 2:46, 48

Mary and Joseph were worried about Jesus because they did not know where He was for 3 days! If Jesus had been an ordinary boy, this story may sound as though He was not obeying His parents. But, remember Jesus was a perfect boy because He is God's Son. Listen to Jesus' response to His mother's concern.

*"Why were you looking for me?" he asked.
"Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"
But they did not understand what he meant by that.*

Luke 2:49-50

- Who is the Father Jesus is talking about in these verses?

He is talking about His Father, God.

As God's Son, Jesus wanted to obey and please His heavenly Father. However, just like all sons and daughters, God wanted Jesus to also obey His earthly parents. Listen to what happened when Jesus went home with His parents.

Then he went back to Nazareth with them, and he obeyed them. But his mother kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart.

Luke 2:51

Jesus understood that His heavenly Father, God, had put Mary and Joseph as His caregivers. He needed to honour and obey God, but He also needed to obey His parents.

Here are some ways you can obey your caregivers:

1. Listen with your whole self.

Show me you are listening. When you listen with your whole self, you listen and are not distracted by other things. You may nod your head or do something else to show you are listening.

2. Ask questions if you do not understand how to obey.

If you are not sure what a caregiver is asking you to do, you could ask for more information or for her to show you how to do what is asked. You could ask her for help.

Teacher Tip: If children in your community are not supposed to ask adults questions, encourage them to ask another child to help them understand. If another child is not available, encourage them to observe what is going on around them at the time of the request. Sometimes this can help a child figure out what she is being asked to do.

Let's practice asking questions to help you understand directions given to you. I will ask you to do something. Raise your hand if you have a question that might help you understand what I am asking you to do.

I am asking you to "greet him as he enters."

Call on 2–3 children to ask questions. Questions may include things like: Who is he? Why should we greet him? How should we greet him? Where is he entering?

After they have asked some questions, ask a boy to leave and reenter the teaching space and greet the children. After this activity, have the children return to their seats to continue the lesson.

When I told you to "greet him as he enters," you probably had no idea what I was asking you to do. However, when you saw the boy entering our space and greeting you, it made sense. Sometimes it is important for us to ask questions in order to understand what a caregiver asks of us.

3. Obey right away.

Do not wait to do what your parents or caregivers have asked. When you obey right away, you show you were listening and you do not risk forgetting what was said. Let's practice this together. I will tell you to stand or sit. You will do what I ask right away.

Stand

Sit

Sit

Stand

Sit

Stand

Stand

Sit

You did great listening and obeying right away.

4. Ask God for help listening and obeying.

It can be difficult for us to listen and obey sometimes. Maybe we are distracted with other things or maybe our caregivers ask us to do many things at once. You can always ask God to help you listen to and obey your caregivers. Let's pray to God now.

God, we thank You for our caregivers. We thank You for their love for us and ask that You would help us to honour and obey them. Help us to listen carefully to what they ask us to do. And help us obey them right away. We thank You for loving us and helping us.

In Jesus' name, amen.

God designed parents and caregivers to have a special position of honour. They guide, protect, teach, and discipline us. God uses them in our lives to help us learn to honour Him and others. As we honour and obey our caregivers and parents, we honour God. We also learn to respect all those in authority, including God, rulers, and other leaders.

3. Responding: Decide which children show obedience.

Teacher Tip: Be aware that it is possible for some of the children to have caregivers who treat them harshly or abuse them. Remind them that Jesus honoured His Father in heaven first, just as God commanded us to honour Him first. Explain that they can tell someone they trust if a caregiver is hurting them. If a child reports being abused, talk to your church leadership about the best ways to get him help.

Now let's hear some stories. If the child is showing honour and obedience, stand up. If he is not showing honour or obedience, stay seated.

Story 1: In the morning, Abraham's mum tells him he will need to care for the animals when he gets home from school. Abraham says, "I always have to do it! Can someone else do it instead?"

Stand up if Abraham is showing honour. Stay sitting if he is not.

Call on 1 child who is sitting to tell the class why Abraham's actions do not show honour. He is complaining about what he has been asked to do.

Story 2: Komla is playing when his Auntie tells him to come inside to help prepare for the evening meal. "Yes, Auntie," he calls. He quickly puts away his toys and goes inside to help.

Stand up if Komla is showing honour. Stay sitting if he is not.

Call on 1 child who is standing to tell the class why Komla's actions show honour. He listened and obeyed.

Story 3: When Roseline gets home from school, she sees a list of chores she is supposed to complete. Roseline does not feel like doing the chores, so she plays instead. She thinks, "I can do this later." But when her grandmother gets home, Roseline has not done the chores.

Stand up if Roseline is showing honour. Stay sitting if she is not.

Call on 1 child who is sitting to tell the class why Roseline's actions do not show honour. She did not obey.

If you would like to share your own example of a time you showed obedience to a caregiver, stand up.

Allow 2–3 children to give examples of obedience in their own lives.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children crayons. Allow about 2 minutes for them to draw themselves with their caregivers.

Parents and caregivers are some of the people in our lives who deserve honour. We honour them by speaking to them with respect, listening to what they ask, and obeying them. This is not always easy to do, but God can help you. Our memory verse reminds us we should obey leaders and others in authority, including our caregivers.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

You must obey the authorities. Then you will not be punished.

You must also obey them because you know it is right.

Romans 13:5

Repeat the verse in the same way as last time. Divide children into 2 groups. Say the first sentence of the verse together. Then have 1 group ask the question and the other group answer it.

All: **You must obey the authorities.**

Group 1: **Then you will...**

Group 2: **Not be punished.**

Group 1: **You must also obey them...**

Group 2: **Because you know it is right.**

Say the verse together 3–4 times. End class by saying this blessing, based on Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1, over the children.

Blessing: May you honour your mother, father, or caregiver today with your attitude, words and actions. May you do what is right by obeying your parents.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"Agnus Dei" by Michael W Smith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVFzxazTQNM>