**Topic: Obey Parents**

**Bible Passage: Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20**

**Activity: Family Portrait**

Every kindergartner has been asked to draw a picture of their family—stick people and all. This activity allows preteens to recreate those pictures. Give each preteen a large sheet of drawing paper and markers. Ask them to draw a picture of their home and their family. After they’ve completed their drawings, allow them to show their pictures and introduce each family member.

*This activity is designed to be humorous and fun for the preteens. Don’t force them to be serious, but encourage them to think like a kindergartner for the activity. This means that they should include every member of their family, and even the pets!*

**After the activity, say**: Everyone’s family looks different, but there is one thing in common with each family. Can you guess what that is? (Pause for responses) The one thing that every family has is someone who is in charge. Whether it is mom and dad, grandparents, or someone else, there is someone that makes the rules and is charge of the family.

Are any of you that person who is in charge? Probably not, so that means you have to “submit” to the person in charge. That isn’t always easy because sometimes we don’t agree or like the rules that they make.

Have your parents ever made a rule or a decision that you just didn’t understand, but then later you found out that it really was good for you?

The Bible teaches that those in charge are to be obeyed because God has placed them there.

**1 Peter 2:13-14** says, “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.” Our parents have been put in charge so that they can help us to understand right and wrong and to help us make wise choices. By obeying our parents, we are protected from making mistakes that could really cost us.

Let’s look at three passages from the Bible that will give us three reasons for obeying our parents:

**Have a student read Exodus 20:12**

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

What is the reason this verse gives? It says to obey your parents so that “your days may be long…” God wants us to obey so that we will be able to live a full life with the blessings that he has given. Parents have the wisdom to protect us and guide us in the right direction, away from those costly mistakes.

**Have a student read Ephesians 6:1**

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”*

What is the reason this verse gives? It says to obey your parents because “it is right.” This is God’s will. Learning to obey our parents teaches us how to obey God. If we can submit to their authority, then we will be better able to submit to the authority of God.

**Have a student read Colossians 3:20**

*“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.”*

What is the reason this verse gives? Obeying our parents is “pleasing to the Lord.” God has a design for everything. The family is designed to have loving parents who encourage and discipline their children. The family is also designed for children to submit and obey their parents. When God sees a family that is operating according to His design, it pleases Him. He is delighted to see what He created working as He planned.

God has commanded children to obey their parents. The passages that we read taught us that we should obey because: 1) it helps us to live an abundant life by avoiding costly mistakes, 2) it is God’s commandment, and 3) it is pleasing to God. It is not always easy to obey our parents, especially if we don’t understand or just don’t like what they ask us to do. Even we don’t agree with our parents, the Bible is clear that we should submit to their authority and obey because God has placed them over us to help and protect us. As hard as it may be sometimes, we need to trust God and His commandments.

**Break into small groups and answer the following questions:**

* Have your parents every made a decision or a rule that upset you? What about the rule upset you?
* How did you respond?
* Exodus 20:12 says to “Honor your father and mother…” What does it mean to honor someone?
* How does making wise choices honor our parents? Hint: Proverbs 10:1
* What are the three reasons we talked about for obeying our parents?
* How is the way we honor our parents similar to the way we honor God?
* If a parent does not have a relationship with Jesus, how should their child respond to this commandment? (*Be sensitive to preteens answers on this question. It is a difficult one to answer. Encourage them to see all possibilities.)*