

To Obey or Not to Obey?

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 8****Focus:**

Obeying your parents in the Lord.

Lesson 8**Bible Basis:**

Proverbs 4:10-11; 29:17;
Luke 2:51-52;
Colossians 3:20;
Ephesians 6:1-3

Lesson 8**Memory Verse:**

Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.
—Proverbs 1:8

Students will contemplate why it is wise to obey their parents or guardians.

Materials:

Internet access

As students join your classroom, have them form groups of three or four. Have students prepare skits related to obeying their parents or guardians. Assign one group to perform a skit where students obey and things work out and have the other groups perform skits that include disobedience that ends poorly for the young person involved. (If your class is meeting online, you can use the breakout room feature of your video chat software. Rather than performing, each group can instead share the story or scenario they discussed).

➤ **Why is it important to obey our parents or guardians?** (Answers may include: They keep us safe; they've lived longer than us and have more life experiences to share; they love us; they are responsible for us, etc.)

➤ **Why is it so difficult to obey our parents or guardians?** (Answers may include: They don't know what things are like today for people our age; they lecture too much; they don't want us to do anything; they want what is easier and sometimes say "no" without reason, etc.)

We're going to play a game of, "To Obey or Not Obey?" I will read several scenarios out loud. If you would obey, raise your right hand. If you wouldn't obey, raise your left hand. After you read each of the following scenarios below, ask "Obey or not obey?" Allow students several seconds to choose their answer before explaining why something should or should not be obeyed.

- **Your grandfather tells you to lie to your parents about something he said to you. You know your parents will be upset about what he said.** (Don't obey. God's people are called to be truthful, even when it's hard.)
- **Your mom asks you to do the dishes after dinner—but it's your brother's chore!** (Obey. Even though this seems unfair, doing the dishes is a way to obey and honor parents.)
- **Your stepmom is running late one morning, making you late for school. She tells you to lie to your teacher and say you had car trouble so your tardiness will be excused.**

- (Don't obey. God's people are called to be truthful, even when it's hard.)
- **Your dad told you to come home straight after school, but your friend approaches you after class. She just found out she failed a class, and she wants to talk with you.** (Obey. Offer a different time to your friend when you will be available to talk or text.)
 - **Your grandmother picks you up from soccer practice and tells you that your stepdad asked you to mow the lawn before you do your homework that night. You are feeling really tired from practice.** (Obey. God calls us to obey our parents even when we are tired.)

As time allows, you can create and share your own scenarios for students to guess.

Unless something is harmful or unbiblical—as we saw in some of these examples—we're called to obey our parents. It isn't always easy. We may think we know what is best for us or we may think it wouldn't be a big deal to lie or sneak. As this story shows us—and stories of disobedience that end much worse—rules are often set for our protection. Let's look at what the Bible has to say about obeying our parents and why it is important!

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

middle school



Lesson 8 / July 21, 2024

To Obey or Not to Obey?

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 8

Focus:

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Lesson 8

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Lesson 8

Memory Verse:

Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.
—Proverbs 1:8

Materials:

- Index cards
- Pens/pencils

If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies with them to class.

Today we talked about obeying your parents in the Lord. A mother was once overheard telling her son, "Say hello to Jesus when you see Him soon." When the boy looked puzzled, the mom replied, "You haven't been obeying us (your parents) at all lately. The Bible only promises that the years of your life will be many if you obey (Proverbs 4:10)."

➤ **Do you think it is wise or cruel to remind children of this truth? Why?** (Invite students to share their answers.)

While it is good to be reminded of the truth that obedience is important, it doesn't need to be done in such a way that scares us. Instead, we can learn to obey God from a place of joy and trust rather than a place of fear.

➤ **According to the passages we studied today, what is promised to those who obey their parents?** (Answers may include: The years of your life will be plenty, peace, delights, wisdom, straight paths, pleasing the Lord, a promise of a long life.) If possible, direct students to their Bibles or to the lesson Scripture on pages 4-5 in *The Rock* so they can look up the Scripture passages themselves.

Obeying our parents in the Lord has tremendous benefits for our lives, doesn't it?

It isn't easy to obey. The preteen and teen years are a time of pushing boundaries to see what is permissible and trying to become one's own person. That can still happen in obedience. Pray about decisions you want to make that your parents or guardians may not approve of. Approach your parents or guardians in loving ways. Be open to what they have to say. Listen to their wisdom. Hopefully, your relationship with them is one where mutual listening and understanding can take place.

Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). Encourage students to take time this week to pray about their relationship with their parents or guardians. That is the first step to a better relationship. Next, have students list on their index cards areas of struggle they have within their home with their parents or guardians. Have students get into pairs to discuss ways they can help each other with these problems listed and pray together. (If students don't want to share specific problems they can pray generally for the child/parent/guardian relationship.)

Obeying your parents in the Lord should be a normal part of everyday life, not an occasional thing. It's important that your parents and guardians can trust you; that's one way to receive more freedoms...something every young person wants. Encourage students to take time this week to listen to their parents and guardians and intentionally obey what they say.

Follow up with students next week to see if they were able to better communicate with and obey their parents and guardians and if they saw any tangible results or improvements in their home lives as a result.

Close in prayer.

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