

Respecting Your Parents (an evening activity)

Objective: Teaching teens to be more respectful of their parents, an ongoing challenge with some teens.

Materials Needed:

- Small Chinese sky lanterns (you can do this activity in the daytime, but it works best in the evening)
- Permanent markers

*Alternately, you could also use helium balloons (note, please do not tie the balloons together or add string as it can harm birds)

Read Scripture

Ephesians 6:1-3 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

Colossians 3:20 - Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Proverbs 1:8 - Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching.

Group Work/Discussion

After reading the scripture, share that this is an area that many people struggle with. Share an example from your life, if you have something appropriate to share. Ask the following questions:

- Why do you think it is so difficult to always show respect?
- Why do teens and parents find themselves at odds?
- What are some ways teens disrespect their moms and dads?
- How do you think teens can be more respectful?

Point out that some behaviors, such as speaking disrespectfully or being disobedient may be habits that we need to break. Also, talk to the students about the fact that the Bible doesn't say to only honor your mother and father when they earn respect but it simply says to honor them. Give some examples of difficult situations, such as a parent who is sinning, and how students can respect that parent as a person without getting pulled into the sin.

Activity

Pass out helium balloons or Chinese lanterns and permanent markers to the students. Ask them to write on the vessel how they are disrespectful to their parents. Some examples might include:

- Breaking curfew
- Talking back
- Breaking the rules
- Not studying
- Slamming doors

Take the students outside with their lanterns and explain that now that they have written out the ways they are disrespectful, it is time to turn that over to God. Once we place our sin in God's hands, we need to rely on



prayer and strength from Him to help us overcome that sin. Tell them that as they release the lantern into the sky with their disrespect, they are also letting go of those habits and are starting new.

Explain that they will likely stumble from time to time, but to remember the lantern when they do, ask for forgiveness and move forward in prayer and God's word.

Lesson Points

- God says to honor your parents. He doesn't say only when they are deserving of respect. We must honor them always.
- You will stumble. Ask for forgiveness and try to live a more Christ-driven life. Move forward.

Close the lesson by asking students to share what they wrote on their lanterns with their parents and to ask the parents to keep them accountable for overcoming those behaviors. Invite one of the students to close the group in prayer.