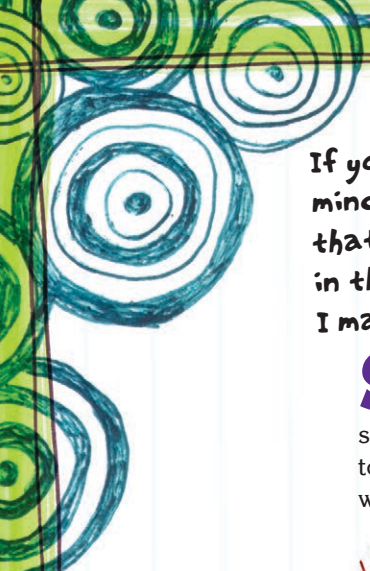


the **rock**

HOW *to* **Live**
with
YOUR PARENTS

without
LOSING
your
MIND!




If you are between the ages of 11 and 18, your mind is probably already made up. You believe that when your parents' feet touch the floor in the morning, their first thought is "How can I make them suffer today?"

Some of our first conscious experiences make it seem as though Mom and Dad's main responsibility is to keep us from having fun. One of my first memories was of having my hand quickly moved for trying to stick a fingernail file into an electrical outlet. At the time, it seemed like they were simply trying to destroy my fun. I had never enjoyed the thrill of 110 volts coursing through my tiny body. Why would they deny me such an experience?

Since then, I *have* experienced the thrill of 110 volts coursing through my body. Now I know why my hand was moved. So when my own daughter discovered an electrical outlet and tried to jam a butter knife into it, I moved her hand and said, "No!"

There are times when an explanation just isn't possible. Try explaining to a two year old that if she sticks the knife into the outlet, little things called electrons will run up her arm, make her hair stand on

by Ken Davis



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end, and cause her toes to smoke. In the world of a two year old, that sounds like fun.

Sometimes parents say *no* because that's the word they have used to save your life since the day you were born. Now they are using it automatically and don't even know why.

I was there when Traci struggled to be born. I lay awake many nights after she was born listening to make sure she was breathing. When she was one year old, I watched her fall down a flight of stairs. When she was two, I rode to the hospital with her because she had poured boiling water all over her legs. It seems like just last week that only a constant vigil on my part kept her from killing herself.

Today she wanted to go over to Kim's house. Alone! In many ways I want her to still need me. I still feel like she isn't safe without me. I will always feel this way. I also realize that soon there will be a boy hanging around our door. He will want to take my daughter on some dangerous and temptation-filled adventure called a date, and he won't want me to come along. It will be very hard not to say *no*.

The point is this: even when your parents are wrong, most of the time their motives are right. That may not seem like much consolation if your parents have just kept you from attending your favorite party, but knowing that they act out of love can make a big difference in the way you respond.

Here's another fact that may surprise you. Sometimes parents say *no* just because they like to have you around. I love to have my children near me; there are times I don't want my girls to go anywhere just so they will be with me.

The role of a parent naturally lends itself to criticism. The price of raising a child in love is that you will sometimes be hated for that love. That makes sense, if you think about it. After all, parents who don't love don't set guidelines. They never say *no*.

When I was working with boys who were in trouble with the law, I saw a perfect example of this. Each week I took some boys on a rugged wilderness canoe trip. One of the most troubled boys I ever met went with us three weeks in a row. There was a lack of joy in this boy's life. There was no laughter, no pride, no self-respect. This boy hated himself and everyone around him. His name was Billy.

When Billy asked to go with us a fourth week, I began to wonder about the parent permission slips he brought each week.

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Continued on page 6.

GOD'S

GETTING ALONG

The Starting Point

Love is the number one ingredient in any strong relationship. Take our relationship with God. It all started with God's love for us. And because of His love for us, we can love Him back.

But love doesn't stop there. The more we realize how loved we are, the more loving we become. God's love frees us to love others.

Pick one group from the list below. What would that group be like if the people in it really loved each other?

- a. family**
- b. church**
- c. close friends**
- d. school class**
- e. sports team**

Our First Friends

The family is the first group we belong to. That's where we learn to relate to others. No wonder God thinks the family is important!

Read God's command in Exodus 20:12. What does it mean to honor our parents? How does honor show love?

Read Mark 7:9-13. What did Jesus point out that the Pharisees were doing? What *should* they have been doing?

How is our love for our parents like our love for God? How is it different?



SWAY

Bible Study

And All Others

The love God gives us isn't limited to family and close friends. His love frees us to love other people as well—even the people who don't like us and give us a bad time.

Read Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:21-22, 44.

Then tell what NOT to do and TO do about people we don't get along with.

To sum up, God's way of building good relationships is to love first—without waiting for other people to be friendly to us. Then other people can respond to our love. That's just what God did: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

Exodus 20:12-13

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

Mark 7:9-13

⁹And he continued, "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! ¹⁰For Moses said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.' ¹¹But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)— ¹²then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. ¹³Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

Matthew 5:21-22

²¹"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' ²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE



Continued from page 3.

I checked with his mother and found out he had forged the permission slips. I also found the root of his problem. Billy had no father, and his mother had not even known where he was for those three weeks. Even worse, she didn't really care. She told me that, during his absence, she had thought he might be at his grandmother's house. But in three weeks she had never bothered to check. When I apologized for not checking more carefully, she said, "It doesn't matter. I would've signed the permission slips just to get him out of the house." All of this was said with Billy standing right there.

When I had Billy alone, I asked, "If your mom would have let you go anyway, why did you forge the permission slips?"

It was the only time I saw him soften. Looking at the ground, he said, "I wanted you to think I had someone who cared." Billy would've loved to have someone care enough to say *no*. If your parents make decisions that go against your desires and occasionally say *no*, take heart. It's a sign that they care. Even when they are wrong, most of the time their motives are right. Walk in their shoes this week. Feel some of the pressures they feel. Then ask God for the courage and strength to touch your parents with love.

Adapted from *How to Live with Your Parents without Losing Your Mind*. © 1988 by Ken Davis. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.

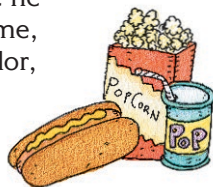
How to Treat Dad Better

GROU

Boring! Someone once pointed loads of attention, Father's Day is no excitement as Groundhog Day. Make this Father's Day different that special guy—your father, gr

Sports Day

If he's a sports fan, treat him to a baseball game. If seeing a live game isn't an option in your area, set up box seats (a chair in a large cardboard box) in front of the TV. While he watches the game, you be the vendor, supplying him with hot dogs, popcorn, and pop.



Awards!

Recognize his accomplishments with a special awards night. Make up awards such as these:

- Best Short Subject (something funny he did as a kid)
- Best Dad in a Supporting Role (something he did to help you out)
- Worst Attempt to Fix

Hand Lettering: Scot McDonald



Beat Your Dad

BEAT YOUR DAD ON GROUNDHOG DAY



out that while Mother's Day gets
tends to spark about as much

nt by choosing one of these ideas for
andfather, stepfather, or uncle.



Tony Griego

Something (a household project in which he made lots of mistakes)

- Best Athletic Achievement (something sensational he did in sports)
- Best Picture (display a funny photo of him)



The Big Event

Plan an activity he really likes: bowling, hiking, swimming, biking, camping, fishing, working out, playing catch, golfing, going to a play or movie, having a water fight or pillow fight, gardening, making banana splits, and you get the idea.

Special Delivery

Send notes all day long sometime this week telling him different

things you like about him. Hide a note in his lunch bag, his shoe, or his wallet. Tape one to the mirror or his dinner plate. Put one on the windshield of his car or on his desk at work.

Your Treat

Treat him to lunch or dinner. Take him to a restaurant or try your hand at cooking his favorite meal. Then switch roles: *You* ask the questions. Ask him all about his work, his childhood, his faith in God, and his future goals.



LIVE

LONG

AND PROSPER



Want to know the secret of living a long time? It has something to do with how well you get along at home.

MONDAY Read Ephesians 6:1-2. What's the promise? Read verse 3 and find out for yourself. Why is obeying your parents so important that God would make a promise like this?

TUESDAY How well do you obey your parents? Give yourself a grade, then write them a note asking them to grade you. Compare notes and ask God to help you be more obedient.

WEDNESDAY Read Colossians 3:20. Why is it so important to obey your parents? List some good reasons why you should.

THURSDAY What if you don't live at home? Does that mean you're off the hook? Ask God to help you honor and obey those who are in authority over you.

FRIDAY What do you think it means to obey your parents "in the Lord"? Is it ever okay not to obey them? When and why?

SATURDAY Do you honor your parents? Try complimenting them publicly for all that they have done for you. Brainstorm other ways you might honor them.

"Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise. –Ephesians 6:2

