

Teens-2-Pray: Difficult parents and frustrated teens

We honestly believe that obeying God is a good thing. He is the highest authority, is He not? It is just wise to consider and do what He wants. That is called submitting to the authority of God. The difficult truth though, is that God really wants us to submit to all authorities. **Romans 13:1-2** explains that anyone who is in authority is only there because God allows them to have these positions. God can use good and bad people to carry out what He wants to do. He is in complete control and when we obey and submit to what He asks, we will be in His perfect will.

Walk the talk

Now for the difficult part. So fasten your seatbelts. Why do we feel our parents are difficult? Is it because they want us to do the wrong things? Or could it be that what they ask us is the right thing to do, but we really do not feel like doing what they want right at that moment, or at all, ever, for that matter? It is possible that God wants us to take a fresh look at the way we treat our parents. It is not by mistake that you and I are specifically their children. He chose each person before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love (**Eph.1:4**). He also predestined who would be your parents, in what country you would be born, where you would live, every detail, and that even before the beginning of the world! How about that! This also means that these facts are not really going to change in this life, whether in your opinion, you have good or bad parents. It is always easy to criticize what others do. Let us face 'ourselves' for a moment. Do you know that it is possible to obey your parents by your behaviour, by what is seen on the outside, but not really have your heart submitted to them on the inside? This also goes for behaviour towards teachers and other people that are over us in positions of authority.

Let's say your mother asks you to go and do your homework right away, but in your mind you are thinking: "No way. Why now? Why can't I do it after my favourite television programme?" Disrespectful thoughts are the sign of a rebellious heart. Now, what to do with this frustration?

1. **Face it.** It's not always your parents, sometimes it's you. Be brave and admit that you are also wrong at times.
2. **Try to go somewhere to be alone.** Don't take it out on your parent, teacher or any other figure in authority. As soon as you become aware of these emotions in your heart, try to be alone with Jesus as soon as possible, so you can sort it out.
3. **Confess it.** Just be honest with God about your attitude. It may feel awkward at first, but the relief from tension and anger when these emotions are released will really be worth your while – just to be the real you with God.
4. **Ask for forgiveness.** Just do it. It's the right thing to do. Jesus died for you and He will forgive you.
5. **Pray for breakthrough.** Ask the Father, in the Name of Jesus, that through the working of His Holy Spirit, He will help you to be more respectful next time.
6. **Make a list.** Not finished yet! Take a little more time and ask the Lord to help you think of anyone else in a position of **authority** that you had a similar reaction to.
7. **Finish it off, once and for all.** Pray about each situation He brings to your mind. Ask for His forgiveness and also ask Him to help you honour His Name by living a holy life.
8. **What to pray?** Here's a sample prayer to help: *Father, forgive me for my sin of rebellion toward (name of person). I pray for (him/her), that You will bless (him/her) and I thank You for (him/her), because this pleases You (1 Tim.2:1-4). Help me to honour and submit to this person according to Your Word. In the Name of Jesus. Amen.*

9. **One last thing.** If possible, consider speaking to some of the people on your list. Ask them to forgive you. Tell them that you have asked God to help you to **submit** to their **authority** and respect them.
10. **Give thanks.** Give thanks to the Lord for every time that He helps you to respect or honour someone in a position of authority. Also consider telling your parents (or someone you regard as a parent figure in your life) that you appreciate them and the way they care for you. If they are open to it, ask if you can say a prayer for them, right there and then, thanking God for their lives.
11. **Do something to pray for the leaders of the nation.** In America, every year, young people gather for a few days, a few weeks, some for over a year – to stand in silent prayer in front of the Supreme Court in their country. What are they praying for? Mainly that Americans would give their hearts to Jesus Christ and in turn, that more righteous leaders would arise. One young lady said, "We have already seen two righteous judges put into the Court and that's the first time it's happened in 11 years! So prayer, even in its 'weakest form', silently in front of the Supreme Court, does work." (Website: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/308964.aspx>). Won't you consider sparing the time next month, and together with a couple of friends, also pray for the government of our country as the Holy Spirit leads you? You can read the following Scripture from different Bibles, meditate on it and then start praying for people in government by name.
12. **Applying Word power: 1 Tim.2:1-6:** *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.*