**Can I Parent *and* Honor My Parents?**

**(Post is 393 words)**

Due to Mom’s worsening dementia, she could not stay alone while my father was hospitalized. Each day we drove to the hospital to spend the bulk of the day with Dad and then I took her home for the night.

During the drive one morning, I saw Mom rummaging in her purse in my peripheral vision. At a stoplight I glanced over in time to see her touch a mascara wand to her lips.

“What ‘cha doin’ Mom?” I asked casually.

“I need a little color on my lips,” was her reply.

Seriously, what do you do with this? I could let her walk into the hospital with black lips, setting her up for possible embarrassment. I could stop her with a quick rebuke. Or I could ask God to help me do the right thing, the right way. I quickly asked God for wisdom and words.

“Mom, I’ve got some lipstick in my purse that would look great on you. Want to try it?”

Mom dropped the mascara in her purse and used my lipstick. Her feelings were spared and she was satisfied. I’d like to tell you every encounter is similar, but sadly it’s not. Too often I react from my own resources instead of God’s.

As our parents age, as illness takes it toll, they require increasingly more help. As the parent becomes more like a child, the child must take on the parenting role.

God’s Word teaches that honoring and caring for our parents is our God-given responsibility and pleases Him (1 Timothy 5:40). But is it possible to both care for and honor our parents?

We can do what’s best for our parents with kindness and respect. But we must first make sure my heart is right with God.

More than once I’ve caught myself trying to do the right thing in the wrong way. My impatience and selfishness fostered harsh words. I’ve learned that the end result isn’t all that matters. The words and actions we use to get there should comfort, encourage, and strengthen our parents.

Honoring our parents while caring for them is not child’s play. But God stands by to supply everything we need to do the right thing, the right way.

*Think about some of your recent interactions with your parent. In what ways, if any, could you have improved on the outcome?*

*Kathy Howard calls herself a “confused southerner.” Raised in Louisiana, she moved with her engineer husband around the U.S. and Canada. She says “pop” instead of “Coke” and “you guys” as often as “y’all.” But she’s still a southern girl at heart! Kathy encourages women to live an unshakeable faith by standing firm on our rock-solid God no matter life’s circumstances. Kathy, the author of eight books, including the new daily devotional* [*“30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents,*](http://www.kathyhoward.org/books/30-days-of-hope-when-caring-for-aging-parents/)*” has a Master’s in Christian Education. She is passionate about Bible study and discipleship and loves sharing at women’s events and retreats. Kathy is also a regular contributor to Crosswalk.com, Hello Mornings, Arise Daily, and more. Kathy and her “mostly retired” husband live in the Dallas/Ft Worth area near family. They have three married children, four grandsons, and three dogs – one of them on purpose. She provides free discipleship resources and blogs regularly at* [*www.KathyHoward.org*](http://www.KathyHoward.org)*. Kathy also connects with women at* [*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/KathyHowardUnshakeableFaith/)*,* [*Pinterest*](https://www.pinterest.com/kathyhhoward/)*, and* [*Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/mkathoward/)*.*

***30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents***

Struggling to navigate the parent/child role reversal? Kathy Howard’s new book, *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents*,explores God’s Word to find hope and encouragement for the wide range of physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual challenges the adult child caregiver may experience. Each of the 30 devotions – which can also serve as a guide for a daily quiet time – includes a Scripture passage, a real-life illustration, biblical commentary/application, and questions for reflection.

**(Alternate bio)**

*A former “cultural Christian,” Bible teacher Kathy Howard now lives an unshakeable faith for life and encourages other women to embrace real, authentic faith. Kathy is the author of 8 books, including* [*“30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents”*](http://www.kathyhoward.org/books/30-days-of-hope-when-caring-for-aging-parents/)*. Find spiritual encouragement and free discipleship helps on* [*her website*](http://www.kathyhoward.org/)*.*