

*Real Life Stories*  
*A Tribute To My Father by Matt Cotton*

The fourth commandment:

**“Honour your Father and Mother”**  
*(Exodus 20:12)*

I can see for some it could be a real challenge! There is no judgement here. I have seen families and marriages fall apart. I have watched as parents made mistakes and mistreated their children based on the way they learned life was, and by the example laid before them.

I respect and honour my Mom and Dad. Always have, always will. I didn't always listen, but I always knew they were a rare couple, and deserved respect. Even before I was old enough to understand life's ups and downs I knew I was well loved. It wasn't because they were so amazing and always perfect, but because they got “it.”

It didn't matter what country we lived in or how much money we “didn't have”. They showed up in ways this world simply forgot existed. They showed us it was ok to be reliable and good, kind generous and trustworthy, regardless of the circumstance! They didn't have to tell us (although they did many times). We simply had no choice but to pick it up in the ways that they lived.

They prioritized communication and love in their home, they taught us about the character of God through the way that they lived.

Compassion for the homeless, the gang members, the outcasts, and the weak. They taught us to pray with conviction and showed us the results. They walked it, lived it, bled to it. There was always something raw and real about them. Anyone who knows them will tell you the same.

They showed the very essence of biblical love, in their marriage.

My father honoured my mother and always put her first! (Yes even when he just wanted to fish)

My mom stood by him as he lost everything more than once.

“A fool, of a man” you might think! loosing everything in business!!! But not my dad. The way that he managed it carried so much strength, dignity, and grace. How can you lose everything and still have the strength to support your family and show them the meaning of integrity and your word through all of life's battles; but he did. He worked 7 days a week for months on end to make sure every business man, vendor, and wholesaler got paid, even when it was someone else who dropped the ball.

It took me years to fully understand what he was doing, and the value of his word. He showed us. If your name is on the line you show up until you have made good on your word, no matter the costs!

Today I just want to say, Happy Father's Day Dad!!

No you aren't perfect but no matter how hard things got your character never wavered. Now that I am a dad I see what a feat that truly was, and what a huge responsibility.

Fathers sacrifice a lot and rarely see any appreciation, but you have sacrificed and it has been grasped by all your children and many people around you. You have been a steadfast force in all our lives and we can have a greater impact in our world because you taught us how to live well!!

Love you Dad