

# Honoring parents and the elderly in Islam: A sacred obligation

How are the elderly treated in Islam? Do they have a special status? Do they receive the care that suits their health needs? Of course, as individuals continue to age, the regular challenges of daily life can become more and more daunting. Increased weakness, decreased motor capacity, and possibly other confounding health issues can make the elderly even more vulnerable. Unfortunately, it is found that sometimes individuals may become hesitant to support those in old age. This can often lead to feelings of isolation and depression and may result in many negative impacts on their mental and physical health.

As I said earlier, Islam is not just a religion; it is a way of life, a roadmap that contains the basic principles that one has to take into account when planning his life to guarantee success in this worldly life and then in the hereafter. This is why Islam has left nothing that has to do with human life without giving the proper instructions on doing it right.

All life begins with weakness in childhood and ends with weakness in old age. Our elderly have raised us when we were young and took care

of all our needs while making sacrifices of their own for the next and upcoming generation of families. Islam did not only make this obligatory for the elderly, who are immediate family members, but for the elderly in general.

In Islam, the responsibility of children to care for their parents and treat them kindly is compulsory. If elderly people do not have children, nor do they have immediate family members, the responsibility to care for them is transferred to society as a whole.

The Quran, as one of the main two sources of teaching Islamic manners, unequivocally commands believers to be kind and respectful to their parents, especially as they age. The Quran says in chapter 17: “Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and that you be kind to your parents. If one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them “Of!” (a word of disrespect) or scold them, but say a generous word to them (be kind to them). And act humbly to them in mercy, and say, ‘My Lord, have mercy on them since they cared for me when I was a child.” [Qur’an, 17:23-24]

In this verse, it is im-



perative to note (and observe) that the main message (theme) of the Islamic faith is “monotheism.” The Oneness of God. Prophet Mohammad’s message was to guide people to worship Allah, the One and the Only to be worshiped. So from within the framework of Islam, to accompany the main message of Islam with the importance of taking care of one’s parents is a heavyweight message and clear evidence on the importance of this command (being nice and kind to one’s parents).

The scripture instructs believers not to utter even a word of disrespect towards their parents, emphasizing the profound debt of gratitude owed to them for their sacrifices and nurturing throughout life. This duty of care extends beyond immediate family members to encompass the elderly in general, reflecting Islam’s emphasis on communal responsibility. The word

“Of!” (which is a sign of disrespect) is the shortest word with the meaning of disrespect in Arabic. A great scholar said: If there were a shorter word, Allah (may He be praised) would have used it to show how important the rights of parents (and the elderly) are in Islam.

The Quran also says, “We have commanded people to honor their parents. Their mothers bore them in hardship and delivered them in hardship. Their (period of) bearing and weaning is 30 months. In time, when the child reaches their prime at the age of 40, they pray, “My Lord! Inspire me to (always) be thankful for Your favors, which You blessed me and my parents with, and to do good deeds that please You. And instill righteousness in my offspring. I truly repent to You, and I truly submit (to Your will).” [Quran 46:15]

In another chapter, chapter 13, the Quran says: “And We have commanded people to (honor) their parents. Their mothers bore them through hardship upon hardship, and their weaning takes two years. So be grateful to Me and your parents. To Me is the final return. [Quran 31:14] It then continues:

“But if they pressure you to associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them. Still keep their company in this world courteously and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in devotion). Then to Me you will (all) return, and then I will inform you of what you used to do.” [Quran 31:15]

These three verses, which apply to both sons and daughters equally, clearly define the rights of parents over their offspring. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the final verse, especially in light of Islamic beliefs. Specifically, the idea of the Oneness of God, or Monotheism. This final verse especially talks about circumstances in which parents try to steer their kids away from monotheism by encouraging them to worship deities other than God, the Almighty. In these situations, Islam does not support rudeness or conflict; instead, it counsels kids to not follow their parents’ foolish instructions. This order, however, is not intended to break family bonds or to disrespect the support and companionship of parents. Rather, it promotes preserving relationships that are courteous and kind with

parents, even in disagreement over matters of faith.

Prophet Mohammad further reinforced the importance of treating the elderly with kindness and compassion. Among the teachings of Prophet Mohammad is that he said, “Good (or blessings) accompany your elderly.” In another Hadith (Hadiths are the sayings and teachings of the prophet Mohammad), Prophet Mohammad also said: “This who does not respect our elderly and has no mercy on our youngsters is not from among us.” That is, an individual who treats the elderly disrespectfully is not considered a true Muslim. To conclude:

In Islam, the treatment of the elderly is not merely a social courtesy but a religious obligation deeply rooted in compassion, respect, and communal responsibility. By upholding the Quranic instructions and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, we can cultivate a society that values and supports its elderly members, ensuring they live with dignity and honor.

*The author could be reached at: [hatim@gmx.us](mailto:hatim@gmx.us)*

*For more information, please visit: [www.icstillwater.org/islam/](http://www.icstillwater.org/islam/)*

## Too pretty? Easter poster depicting a handsome, fresh-faced Jesus prompts criticism

By Ciaran Giles  
Associated Press

MADRID – A poster in the southern Spanish city of Seville that depicts a young, handsome Jesus wearing only a loincloth has unleashed a storm on social media, with some calling it an affront to the figure of Christ and others posting lewd remarks and memes poking fun at the image.

The poster by internationally recognized Seville artist Salustiano García Cruz shows a fresh-faced Jesus without a crown of thorns, no suffering face and minuscule wounds on the hands and ribcage. It was

commissioned and approved by the General Council of Brotherhoods, which organizes the renowned and immensely popular Holy Week processions ahead of Easter in Seville.

As soon as it was unveiled last week criticism of it went viral on social media and a debate erupted over how a resurrected Christ should be depicted. Many called it a disgrace, inappropriate, too pretty, modernist and out of line with Seville’s Easter tradition.

Spain is predominantly Catholic and church traditions such as marriage, baptisms and religious parades are immensely popular both among believers and nonbelievers. A campaign

on Change.org to have the poster of Jesus withdrawn was signed by some 14,000 people from around the country.

The artist, García, defended the work and dismissed the poster’s critics as old fashioned.

“There is nothing revolutionary in the painting,” García told Atlas news agency. “There is contemporaneity, but all the elements that I have used are elements that have been used in the last seven centuries in sacred art.

“I don’t see at what point, at what element, people who don’t like it don’t like it,” he said.

In another interview published by El Mundo daily, García

responded to criticism from conservative groups that the depiction of Jesus was “effeminate” or “homoeerotic.”

“A gay Christ because he looks sweet and is handsome, come on! We are in the 21st century,” García said.

The artist said he used his son, Horacio, as the model for the poster.

“It caught us a little more by surprise because everything was done with respect,” Horacio García told Atlas.

“A lot of controversy comes from the fact that the model is too good, the Christ too handsome, too attractive,” he said. But it hasn’t been all bad:

Horacio García said he also has received many compliments and good wishes from people.

The General Council of Brotherhoods has so far ignored calls to replace the poster before Holy Week at the end of March. In past years, some posters for different Catholic celebrations were withdrawn following criticism.

Seville Mayor José Luis Sanz labeled the controversy “artificial.”

“I like the poster,” he said, adding that not all Holy Week posters can be the same each year. “Some posters are riskier, some more classical, some are more daring.”

— AP

# Worship at the church of your choice this week

To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.

### Titus 1:15

### Stillwater Bible

Proclaiming Christ, Training Believers  
JB Bond, Senior Pastor

Sundays	
Worship Service	8:30 a.m.
G.R.O.W. Groups	9:45 a.m.
Worship Service	11:00 a.m.
Kids' Church	11:20 a.m.
Tuesdays	
Cornerstone @ The Union (RM 297)	7:30 p.m.
Wednesdays	
Stillwater Bible Institute	6:30 p.m.
Impact Youth	6:30 p.m.
Bible Kids	6:30 p.m.

7617 W. 6th Ave.  
Stillwaterbible.org (405) 564-5794

### Crosspointe CHURCH

Sunday School - 9:30  
Sunday AM Worship - 10:30  
Sunday PM Family Service - 6:00  
Wed PM Bible Study - 7:00

**1807 N. Jardot**  
**[gocrosspointe.com](http://gocrosspointe.com)**

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

701 S. DUNCAN • 405-372-5212

**SUNDAY**  
Bible Study • 9:30am  
Worship Service • 11:00am

**WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES**  
Begin at 6:00pm

Watch our worship service on Facebook  
[www.fbcstillwater.org](http://www.fbcstillwater.org)

### FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

[www.fumcstw.org](http://www.fumcstw.org)  
400 W. 7th • 372-5854

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

Worship.....8:30am & 11:10am  
Sunday School.....10:00am  
Closer Walk..... 10 am Family Life Center

### UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

4th & Knoblock • 372-2744

**Sunday School**  
9 am

**Worship Service**  
8 am & 10:30 am

### GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Independent Baptist  
Expository Preaching

**CHURCH SERVICES**

Sunday ..... 10:30am  
Thursday ..... 7:30pm

**723 E. 17th**

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

524 S. Duncan • 405-372-5580  
[www.stillwaterfpc.org](http://www.stillwaterfpc.org)

**Sunday Worship**

9:45 a.m. - Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. - in person, online  
On KSPI radio AM 780 & FM 94.3  
and the Stillwater FPC Facebook page

### Sunnybrook Christian Church

421 E. Richmond Rd • 377.0923  
[www.sunnybrookccc.org](http://www.sunnybrookccc.org)

SUNDAY SERVICE	SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:45 am	8:30 am
11:15 am	9:45 am

**KIDS CHURCH 9:45 & 11:15 am**

**GO • GATHER • GROW**

### Stillwater Church of Christ

[stillwatercoc.org](http://stillwatercoc.org)

Your place for "Faith, Family and Friends"

**SUNDAY**  
Meeting Times

Bible Study.....9:30 AM  
Worship.....10:30 AM

Bible Study.....5:00 PM

**WEDNESDAY**  
Bible study.....7:00 PM

821 N. DUCK • 372-7439

### Southside Baptist Church of Stillwater

1223 S. Perkins Rd.  
Perfectly • Purposely • Placed

**SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM**  
**SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 AM + 6 PM**  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**YOUTH & ADULT BIBLE STUDY 6:30**

Paul Hutton - Pastor  
Address - 1223 S. Perkins Rd.  
Phone: 405-372-2411  
Email: [southsidesillwater@gmail.com](mailto:southsidesillwater@gmail.com)

### Zion Lutheran Church - LCMS

Sunday - 8:00, 10:30 AM

[www.zionlutheranstw.org](http://www.zionlutheranstw.org)

**John E. Wackler, Pastor**  
**504 S. Knoblock • 372-3703**

### St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

711 N. Country Club Rd.

<b>Sunday Mass</b> 8:30   11:15 a.m. en Español   1 p.m. <b>Tuesday Mass</b> 12:10   5:30 p.m. <b>Wednesday Mass</b> 12:10 p.m. en Español 6 p.m. <b>Thursday Mass</b> 12:10   5:30 p.m.	<b>Friday Mass</b> 12:10 p.m. <b>Saturday Mass</b> 9 a.m. <b>Saturday Vigil Mass</b> 5 p.m. Confessions before every 12:10 Mass at 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays at 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:45-11 a.m.
---	---

**372-6886**  
[www.sfxstillwater.org](http://www.sfxstillwater.org)