

Caregiver for a Parent

A Season of Care

Before You Begin

Caring for an aging or ill parent rarely announces itself as a season with a clear beginning or end. It can stretch on for years, layered with medical decisions, financial pressure, and family dynamics that were often complicated long before caregiving began. This homework is designed to bring some of the harder, less-spoken parts of this season into the light, so that what you're carrying can be named, supported, and shared, rather than carried silently.

Please complete this on your own. Some questions ask how often something is true of you day to day. Others ask how much you agree with a statement, or how true something feels for you right now. Each question shows a row of labeled buttons. Just tap the one that fits best. Four open questions follow the rating items. When you're finished, you can email your responses to someone you trust, if you choose to.

The Weight Beneath the Care

From the outside, caring for a parent often looks like simple devotion, a son or daughter doing what's right. From the inside, it can feel like carrying several full-time responsibilities at once: managing appointments, coordinating with siblings, covering financial gaps, and still trying to be present for a spouse, children, or a career that hasn't paused just because caregiving started. None of this reflects a lack of love. It's simply the real cost of a role that rarely comes with adequate support, and even more rarely comes with permission to admit how hard it actually is.

This weight often multiplies through relationships that were already complicated before caregiving began. A sibling who visits once a month may question decisions made by the sibling who visits every day. Old family roles and unresolved history can resurface under the stress of caring for a parent who raised you imperfectly, and financial or housing decisions can turn what should be a shared burden into a source of real conflict. Naming these pressures honestly, rather than carrying them silently, is the purpose of this homework.

Understanding the Toll

1. I feel emotionally and physically drained by my caregiving responsibilities.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
○	○	○	○	○

2. I have taken practical steps to protect my own health while caring for my parent.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
○	○	○	○	○

3. I have felt torn between caring for my parent and meeting the needs of my spouse, children, or work.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
○	○	○	○	○

Navigating Family Dynamics

4. I have experienced tension or disagreement with family members over caregiving decisions.

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

5. We have talked honestly as a family about how caregiving responsibilities are shared.

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

6. I feel supported, rather than criticized, by my siblings or other family members in this season.

- ○ Hardly at all
- ○ A little
- ○ Somewhat
- ○ Quite a bit
- ○ Completely

Facing Practical Pressures

7. Financial strain has become a significant source of stress in caring for my parent.

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

8. We have talked through housing decisions (a parent moving in, assisted living, and similar choices) as clearly as we need to.

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

9. Caregiving has interfered with my ability to meet my responsibilities at work.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

Spiritual and Emotional Grounding

10. I have felt guilt over needing rest, boundaries, or help with caregiving.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

11. I have prayed honestly with God about the weight of this season, including my frustration or exhaustion.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

12. I feel spiritually supported, not just practically supported, in caring for my parent.

Hardly at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Completely

In Your Own Words

13. What has been the hardest part of caring for your parent that you haven't said out loud to anyone?

14. How has caregiving affected your relationship with your spouse, children, siblings, or friends?

15. What is one boundary or piece of support you need but haven't asked for?

16. Is there anything about this season, practically, emotionally, or spiritually, that you'd like to talk through further?

Growing Together

A few concrete steps tend to help caregivers carry this season without carrying it alone. Consider working through these together, with family or with trusted support:

Name What You're Carrying: Say out loud, to someone you trust, the specific weight of caregiving you've been carrying quietly.

Divide the Load on Purpose: Have an honest conversation with family members about how responsibilities and decisions will be shared, rather than assuming.

Protect a Non-Negotiable Boundary: Identify one specific boundary, a day off, a call you won't take after a certain hour, and hold it, even briefly.

Bring the Practical Pressures Into the Light: Talk openly about the financial, housing, or work strain caregiving has created, rather than carrying it silently.

Find Support Built for This Season: Connect with a caregiver support group, counselor, or trusted friend who can help carry this weight alongside you.

“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you” (Exodus 20:12, NIV) is the calling underneath this whole

season, and it's worth remembering that honoring a parent well does not require destroying yourself in the process.

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2, NIV) is a direct word to the family carrying this season together. Caregiving was never meant to rest on one person's shoulders alone.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28, NIV) is an invitation, not a suggestion. Weariness in this season is not a sign of weak faith. It's exactly the condition Christ is speaking to.

“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18, NIV) is worth holding onto on the hardest days, the ones that carry grief for a parent who is still alive but already changed.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV) is a reminder that needing help in this season is not a failure of faith or character. It's the exact place grace is designed to meet you.

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to name what this season has required of you. Caregiving asks for a kind of quiet endurance that rarely gets acknowledged, and the honesty you've brought to this reflection is itself a meaningful step toward being supported well, rather than carrying this alone.

Suggested Christian Resources

For those who want to go deeper, these resources offer additional biblical and practical insight into caregiving, limits, and rest:

- Swenson, R. A. (1992). Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives. NavPress.
- Comer, J. M. (2019). The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry. WaterBrook.
- Barr, D. (2016). Grace for the Unexpected Journey: A 60-Day Devotional for Alzheimer's and Other Dementia Caregivers. Moody Publishers.

Share Your Responses

Nothing is saved or sent automatically. This opens your own email app with your responses filled in.

Your name (optional)

Your name

Send to (email)

pastor@church.org

Email My Responses

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