

Family Matters

Part 13

Teaching Children Honor

By Dale Payne

*“Pray for us that we have a clear conscience and
desire to live honorably in every way.”*

Hebrews 13:18

Honorable teenagers? Is that possible in this youth culture today? It seems like we are living in the most dishonorable, disrespectful time in American history. Even bumper stickers say to “challenge authority” or to “resist” authority. Disrespect is seen everywhere, in every classroom, every team, every movie, every song, all over the web, and where ever Hollywood celebs are seen. No one seems to respect the name of Jesus, the veteran, the old, the unborn, the teacher, the government, the president, the police, the military, the pastor, the virgin, those desiring moral purity, those pursuing righteousness, the law, the speed limit, the flag, marriage between one man and one woman, paying off debt, keeping one’s promise, fair play - you name it. Children no longer ask permission to speak and no longer fear consequences of talking back to their parents or teachers. We value or respect nothing but ourselves – and even that is questionable with what we do to our own bodies. We are a society of complete dishonor and disgrace. We respect only those who we deem are worthy of our respect which is very few. We are ultimately losing our children in this self-absorbed degenerate culture.

What does it mean to honor someone? Is this an action or heart attitude? Can you have honor without obedience? Why should we honor anyone? Who says? Who should we honor? Why don’t we honor others? What is the core issue? Why doesn’t honor depend on one’s worthiness or respectability? Are we personally honorable in all things (Heb. 13:18)? How does the way we respond to God-ordained authority reflect our true character?

To honor someone means to fix value, revere, respect, admire, exalt, make a distinction, regard as important, or to attach a high value to another. To respect someone means to give particular attention or consideration, give high or special regard, to esteem, or to consider worthy. It is not based on what someone does or whether they are worthy of it. Human value is not determined by what one does, but is ascribed by God (1 Sam. 15:30). To obey means to submit to, to follow the commands or guidance of, or to comply. Obedience involves responding to authority with appropriate action and attitude, not just outward compliance or conformity. Submission involves willingly yielding or placing oneself in a subordinate position under God-ordained authority. Everyone is under some form of authority (Matt. 8:9). As believers, we must each willingly place ourselves under certain God-ordained authority. Ultimately, we as Christians are to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:11; Acts 10:36; Col. 3:24; 1 Pet. 3:15).

Nothing provokes a parent to anger more quickly than disrespect and disobedience. Ironically, the disrespectful person selfishly longs for others to esteem them highly. They are hoping for something in someone else they themselves refuse to give.

Honoring God Above All:

All honor begins with first submitting to or yielding our rights to the Sovereign will and authority of God. Honoring God (Godly fear) is foundational to honoring any other authority, including one's parents. What we do is a by-product of how we think. We are as we think. There is simply no greater earthly blessing than raising your children in a way that honors God first and foremost.

1 Samuel 2:30 "The LORD declares, 'For those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed (dissdained)."

Malachi 1:6 "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me? Says the LORD Almighty."

Proverbs 3:9 "Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops."

John 5:23 "All should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him." (8:49)

Romans 2:23 "You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?"

- In what ways should we honor God?
- If we truly honor God, what should follow? Our obedience?
- In what ways do we dishonor God?

Isaiah 29:13 "They honor me with their lips – but their heart is far from me."

Romans 2:23,24 "You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

Romans 1:21 "Although they knew God, they didn't honor him as God or give thanks..."

Titus 2:5 "...So that no one will malign (dishonor) the Word of God."

1 Samuel 2:29 "Why do you honor your sons more than me..."

Honoring Parents:

If we truly honor God, we will also honor all God-ordained authority He has put in our lives – especially our parents. Parents are not peers. Our goal as parents is not to be seen as our child's buddy. We are the parents and the most significant God-given authority and influence in their lives. A parent is a visible representative of God to a child (Ex. 4:1; 7:1).

A father or mother cannot allow a child to be disrespectful to their spouse. Dishonor cannot be tolerated in a home. A father must train his sons to honor their mother and sisters. The son will treat their future wives the same way they honor their mothers. Daughters will treat their future husbands the same way they learned to respect their fathers. If a young man or woman looking to marriage wants to know how their significant other will treat them in marriage, just look how they honor their parents.

Exodus 20:12 “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD God is giving you.” (Deut. 5:16)

Leviticus 19:3 “Every one of you shall revere (respect) his mother and father... I am the LORD your God.” (Matt. 15:4)

Deuteronomy 27:16 “Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or his mother.” (Micah 7:2,6; Prov. 30:11,17; 20:20)

Ephesians 6:1-3 “Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother...”

Hebrews 12:9 “We have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it.”

Proverbs 23:22 “Do not despise your mother when she is old.”

Honoring One’s Parents:

“Honor, the foundation from which all other elements of Christian character arise, refers primarily to a condition of the heart and mind, an inner attitude that inevitably manifests itself in outer words, action, and demeanor. Honor expresses the genuine and deep veneration within the child’s heart towards those to whom honor is due. It recognizes our indebtedness, our obligation, to those whom we honor. It expresses the value we place upon them, since if we value them, we will pay attention to them and spend time for them. Because it expresses the sincere and true feeling of our hearts, it will inevitably cause us to act in a way that brings honor toward those for whom we have this feeling... If we begin by truly honoring those to whom honor is due, then all the other elements of Christian character will come forth in our lives.” (Building Christian Character, Blair Adams, p.13)

- In what ways do we honor or dishonor our parents?

Ways We Demonstrate Honor For Our Parents:

1. We honor parents by obedience.

Ephesians 6:1-3 says, “Children, obey your parents... for this is right... Honor your father & mother...” (Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2; Deut. 21:18-21). The Greek word for “obey” (“hupakouo”) means to hear and heed. It means to “listen intently and conform to a command”. There is always a right attitude with every right act. Honor and obedience go hand in hand. One cannot fully obey if they don’t fully honor. Obedience is an

expression of honoring our parents. This should be first time obedience (Ps. 18:44), where a child responds quickly, cheerfully, and willingly to obey a parent's request – without excuses, challenge, delay, resistance, asking why, or debate. Allowing anything other than full compliance to what a parent has asked, is training a child to be disobedient. We taught our children to look at us when we were talking to them, and respond, “Yes Mom, Yes Dad,” when we asked them to do something. This helped us know they heard us, and now accept that they are accountable to do what we asked, but it also helped them think through the process respectfully. Delayed obedience is disobedience, and therefore dishonoring. We also taught our children that obedience comes first before any other option (Prov. 15:29; Ps. 66:18), or discussion. I expect them to obey me first and then we can talk. Again, that demonstrates honor. Never allow a child to continue in disobedience in whatever form (Prov. 13:24). Disobedience (defiance), disrespect, and lying must be addressed by the parent firmly and immediately. Even when a child is not obedient and is corrected, he should still honor his parents. Hebrews 12:9,11 says, “We had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them... all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” The parent's first duty is to teach their children to honor and obey them and then transfer that same obedience and honor to God. The early years are so important to teach this principle.

Ephesians 6:1,2 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right, Honor your father and mother...”

Colossians 3:20 “Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.”

Luke 2:51 “He (Jesus) continued in subjection to them” (Joseph and Mary).

1 Peter 1:14,15 “As obedient children... be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.”

John 14:15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

Luke 6:46 “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”

Philemon 1:21 “Having confidence in your obedience... since I know that you will do even more than what I say.”

Bonnie Barnett said, “Children will better understand what God is like by first learning to honor their parents. The Greek word for ‘obey’ is ‘hupakouo’ which means ‘obedience out of duty.’ Learning to obey out of duty is essential if children are to understand what God is like. It is improbable that they will learn to obey God whom they can't see until they first learn to obey those they can see (1 Jn. 4:19-21). Being trained to obey, because it is right, will help create teachable hearts open to learning more about our great God... and as this occurs, rather than obeying the Lord merely out of duty, children should increasingly give evidence of ‘submission out of devotion’.” “During the (early) years, parents stand as God's visible representative. You must

lovingly, consistently discipline your children with the goal of bringing about outward obedience. Your children obey initially out of duty. As your children grow in their knowledge and understanding of God... in these formative years, children progress from obedience out of duty to obedience out of devotion. After you have faithfully implanted God's word in their lives, you will have the joy of seeing your children walk in the truth (Lord willing). We reap what we sow. Let us not grow weary in well-doing (Gal. 6:9). You will find your relationship with your children has grown from one of disciplinarian, to nurturer, to discipler, and now to friend" (Word Filled Families Walk In Truth, p.139-141). Child-training is the process of causing children to come under your authority honorably.

2. We honor parents with appropriate speech

Exodus 21:17 "He who curses his father and his mother shall surely be put to death."
(Matt. 15:4; Prov. 20:20; Leviticus 20:9)

Proverbs 30:11,14 "There is a kind of man who curses his father and does not bless his mother." "There is a kind of man whose teeth are like swords."

Mark 7:10 "Honor your father and your mother, he who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death."

Proverbs 4:23 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

Matthew 12:34; 15:18 "The things that come out of the mouth come from the heart."

Proverbs 10:32 "The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable."

Proverbs 15:23,28 "How good is a timely word" "The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer."

Proverbs 25:11 "A word spoken in right circumstances." (Col. 4:6)

Psalms 145:4 "One generation shall praise Your works to another."

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

A child's first struggle with himself ought to be in the direction of controlling his impulses to not give full sway to his lungs and muscles at the prompting of his nerves. Our children should be trained that what comes out of their mouths does matter and is a reflection of their heart (Matt. 12:34-37; Lk. 6:45). We must not allow any word said in a disrespectful, harsh, or angry tone of voice whether it is belittling, demeaning, treating the parents as though they were a child, being sarcastic, sassy, talking back, or scoffing. When a child uses sinful speech, a great training tool is to call it exactly what it is (name the Biblical sin), reprove them to ask forgiveness, and direct them to restate it in a way that is not disrespectful. (Example: "Your comment was very disrespectful to me as your parent. How could you say that differently so that it would not be dishonoring to me?") Instead of allowing them to demand things of you, train them to ask a question. (Example: Instead of "Give me a fork!"

Train them to ask, “Mom, will you please hand me a fork?”) By asking a question, it acknowledges a subordinate position and honors the person being asked, because it places the authority in the parent’s court to say yes or no. Responding also to a no answer in a righteous, God-honoring way demonstrates a heart of respect and obedience. Demands or commands are authoritative and a child should never be allowed to be above the parent or seen as a peer to the parent. (Example: “I’m going with my friends...good-bye,” compared to, “Mother, may I go with my friends to the park...?”)

It is not always what we say that usually gets us in trouble. It is the way we say it. Our tone of voice or our body language (non-verbal communication) may express disrespect in ways our words did not necessarily communicate. Children provoke parents to anger by speaking to parents in a dishonoring way. Proof of honor is how your kids, especially your teenagers, talk to you in public with others around, or how they talk about you with their friends when you are not around. How is your reputation viewed on social media? Do their friends respect you? Over the years, I have been shocked with how kids talk to their parents and how parents allow their children to talk disrespectfully to them without any immediate correction. Once as a youth pastor, I was visiting a student’s home and witnessed an interaction between parent and teen. I was shocked. I asked the student, ‘Do you normally talk to your parents that way?’ They answered yes. It is crucial that a child doesn’t feel comfortable speaking with dishonor. It is never acceptable in any form and it must be stopped quickly.

Another area where a child or teenager can demonstrate honor and respect, or the lack thereof, is when there is a disagreement or judgment rendered between parent and child, and the child disagrees with how it played out. He needs to know he will have an opportunity for a fair hearing and that the parent will be just and willing to rethink the decision in the event he did not have all the information or made an error in judgment. How a child comes to us to make a proper, respectful appeal to possibly reconsider our decision, is a huge sign of them being either honoring or dishonoring toward us. An appeal is a privilege, not a right. Children need to learn to make an appeal in a kind, humble way, with a teachable spirit, guarding their words and attitudes. A child needs to be trained to ask a question, rather than make a statement, with their appeal. Asking permission to appeal places the child rightly under the authority of the parent. The child also needs to learn when it is an appropriate time to make a request for reconsideration, because just not any time is acceptable. An appeal also should not be hastily made, and a child should think before they speak (Prov. 29:20; Ecc. 5:2). A child should never petition one parent if the other parent was the one who made the decision in question, thereby trying to cause parental disunity. A parent might redirect the petition by asking if the child has spoken with the other spouse about their request and what specifically was their answer. Children need to learn to obey first, and then appeal their case in a right way (Prov. 16:14). 1 Timothy 5:1 says, “Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers.” (Example: “Dad, I will do what you have

asked first, but can we set a time when we can talk more about some of the questions I have regarding your decision?”). Regardless of the final answer, a child must respect and graciously accept the parent’s decision.

The Bible is full of appeals (petitions or requests for reconsideration) that we can learn from as a family. Abraham made an appeal to God concerning God’s justice over Sodom (Gen. 18:22-33). Jacob made an appeal regarding his working conditions with Laban his father-in-law (Gen. 29-31). Abigail made an appeal concerning David’s justice and mercy (1 Sam. 25:18-35). Esther made an appeal for the protection of her people the Jews (Est. 5:1-3). Daniel made an appeal to foreign authorities he was accountable to, asking if he could change his dietary restrictions (Dan. 1:8-21). Nehemiah made an appeal to a foreign king regarding letting him return to his homeland (Neh. 2:1-8). Paul made an appeal to Caesar to save his life from the mob (Acts 25:6-12).

A child should never correct a parent. They should not be wise in their own eyes. If the parent is wrong, the child must appeal respectfully, but a child must never scold or demand that a parent ask them for forgiveness, nor should they demand a parent change certain behavior. They are the child. If a parent acknowledges their mistake, they can ask for forgiveness, but the child must respect the parent even in admitting weakness.

3. We honor parents with right behavior

Proverbs 20:11 “Even a child is known by his actions by whether his conduct is pure and right.”

Romans 12:17 “Respect what is right in the sight of men.”

Proverbs 11:29 “He who brings trouble on his family will inherit only wind.”

Proverbs 19:26 “He who robs his father and drives out his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace.”

Proverbs 28:24 “He who robs his father or his mother and says, ‘It is not a transgression,’ is the companion of a man who destroys.”

Genesis 9:20-27 Ham dishonored his father, Japheth & Shem honorable in actions.

Nothing irritates an adult more than when a child pushes themselves on to center stage when the parent is focused on someone or something else. One way a child dishonors his parents is by interrupting or being disruptive (Prov. 19:13; Phil. 2:3), when the parent is involved in a conversation or other important task. It is selfish and disrespectful for a child to take a parent’s focus off immediate needs, just to prefer the child’s wishes at that very moment. We have trained our kids to quietly and gently touch our arm or leg to help us know they have a question or need our attention, which allows us to focus on them as soon as we are able. This communicates honor to the parent, rather than the child demanding that they be the center of attention immediately. When a child gently touches a parent, the parent can acknowledge their

presence by touching their hand, which communicates to the child that the parent will get to them as soon as it is convenient. It is good to train our children to be patient. Life is full of waiting opportunities which develop our character. We are not the center of the universe. Another proof of respect is how a child behaves when his parents are not around. This is a true test whether honor is in his heart.

One way a child is honorable is with their manners. Manners training shows consideration, preference, and respect for others. Properly greeting adults, graciously answering the telephone, and a willingness to eat whatever food is placed before them, all demonstrate a heart of respect. A child's appropriate posture and non-verbal communication also can express honor. Train your children not to speak with their mouths full or not to be picky when eating at someone's home. If a child disregards table behavior or tends toward complaining, they then choose to stand through the meal. Meals were a chance to be together as a family, not an airport where people refuel and quickly take off again. Boys can offer their seats to women and the elderly to show honor. One's own hygiene and proper physical appearance also communicates respect to those around, rather than causing others to feel nauseous. Simple eye contact and a listening ear with those we converse expresses honor. We taught our children to call adults by their last names (Mr. Payne, Mrs. Hanes) rather than be on a first name basis, to express respect for adults. Expecting certain manners or behaviors of children and the attention to specific detail, depends on each family's choice, but the fact that a child responds rightly to what is expected demonstrates a willingness to submit to and honor parental authority.

- How should a child respond when asked to do something by an adult?
- What are specific manners a child can exhibit which demonstrate honor?

4. We honor parents with a right attitude and body language

Ezekiel 22:7 "They have treated father and mother lightly..."

1 Peter 3:2 "...won over without words... by their chaste and respectful behavior."

Proverbs 17:6 "Children's children are the crown of old men and the glory of children is their father."

Philippians 2:3,4 "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others more important than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."

Romans 12:10 "Giving preference to one another"

Proverbs 15:33; 18:12 "Before honor comes humility."

Children should treat their parents as greater than, not inferior to them. A child should never be allowed to get away with a dishonoring attitude. Comments like "You owe me," or "I deserve this," or "You should do this for me," or "I don't need you, I can

do it for myself,” are disrespectful attitudes. Entitlement is an unacceptable persona. A child should also never be allowed to demonstrate inappropriate body language involving haughty eyes or arrogant facial expressions or hand gestures that are demeaning. Your face and your body are a reflection of your heart. Eye contact is a point of honor. Godly influence produces mutual love and respect in a family and chosen honor extends from generation to generation.

Proverbs 27:19 “As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man.”

Proverbs 30:13,17 “Those whose eyes are ever so haughty and whose glances are so disdainful...” “The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother.” (Psalms 18:27; 101:5; Prov. 6:16,17; Gen. 4:6)

Philippians 2:14 “Do all things without complaining (grumbling) and disputing.”

Judges 16:16 “With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it.” (NIV) “his soul was annoyed to death” (NASB)

A sign of the end times is that children will be “unloving” or “without natural affection” for their parents (Mal. 4:5,6; Matt. 10:34-36; 2 Tim. 3:1-4; Lk. 1:17). The natural affection children should have for their parents is being systematically destroyed by the frontal attack on parental authority through disobedience and dishonor in our present culture.

The heart’s disposition is reflected in the child’s attitude. If a child is reluctant, angry, defiant, sluggish, resistant, sarcastic, grumbling, or disrespectful to obey his parents, his heart is not right before God. Just being compliant, but doing so with the wrong attitude, is not God-honoring nor honoring to the parent. He may be obeying you sitting down on the outside, but he is rebelliously standing up against you on the inside. Many children get disciplined more for their bad attitudes than for their bad behavior. Attitudes always proceed one’s actions. If a parent can deal with the bad attitude, it usually will also stop the bad behavior. If the attitude is right, right action will follow. A child must be trained to obey quickly with a cheerful attitude out of a willing heart of obedience.

A home where a child respects and obeys his parents will be a peaceful home. When a child grows up in that kind of loving, correcting, honoring environment, they will grow up with a sense of the importance of obedience, discipline, and respect. Those will not be foreign concepts or ideas that they resist, because they have been trained by them and come to value them. When they too have their own families, they will follow in their parents’ footsteps. We honor those we obey, and we obey those we honor.

5. We honor parents by having a grateful heart (thankful)

Romans 1:21 “Although they knew God, they neither glorified (honored) Him as God, nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.” (honor = thankfulness)

1 Thessalonians 5:18 “Give thanks in all circumstances.”

Saying please, thank you, and asking permission acknowledges a higher authority over our lives and our need to submit to that authority humbly. We should not demand our rights, but submit our needs to the graciousness of another.

6. We honor parents by having a listening ear (attentiveness)

A child cannot do this if they are always talking.

Proverbs 1:8,24,25; 4:1-5; 8:32-34; 18:13; 22:17,18

“**Listen** my son...” “Pay attention to...” “**Listen**... and do not despise...”

Proverbs 23:19 “**Listen** my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.”

Proverbs 23:22 “**Listen** to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”

How Are You Personally Honoring Others?

Honoring The Elderly

Hold them in high regard! (value their family contribution)

Leviticus 19:32 “Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God, I am the LORD.”

1 Timothy 5:1,2 “Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.”

1 Peter 5:5 “Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourself with humility toward one another...”

1 Timothy 5:4,8,16 “If a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family, and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.” “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” “If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.”

Proverbs 16:31; 20:29 “Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained by a righteous life.” “...Gray hair is the splendor of the old.”

Matthew 15:3-9 “Corban” was a tradition that excused a person from providing for his parents’ material needs by giving money to the temple. “Dedicated” money

excused one from any obligation to support one's parents because it was reserved for God. This was in direct violation of God's command to honor one's parents.

- How should we honor those older than us?
- How should we honor our grandparents, aunts and uncles?
- How should we respond to them when we don't agree with them?

Parents need to be cautious about saying negative comments about their own parents with their children present. When our parents get old and regress in their physical abilities, do we still treat them with honor in their old age or do we treat them as a child? "Once an adult, twice a child." Treat your aged parents in the same way that you want your kids to treat you when you get old. They are watching. Personally, this is my greatest challenge.

Honoring Employers

1 Timothy 6:1,2 "All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved."

1 Peter 2:18-28 "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God, a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly."

Ephesians 6:5-9 "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters... with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ, not by way of eye-service as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free."

Colossians 3:22-25; 4:1 "Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord, rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve..."

Titus 2:9,10 "Urge bond slaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect."

- How should we honor our bosses, even when they are difficult employers?
- Parents, how you model honoring God-ordained authority in your life before your children will have a significant influence on how they will honor that same authority later in life.

Honoring Government Officials, Police, & Country

Exodus 22:28 “You shall not... curse a ruler of your people.”

Acts 23:5 “You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.”

Romans 13:1-7 “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God. Therefore, whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same. For it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, and avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore, it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake. For because of this, you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them; tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.”

1 Peter 2:13-17 “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond slaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

Titus 3:1 “Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed.”

Matthew 22:21 “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” (Matthew 17:24,27)

1 Timothy 2:2 “I urge you that entreaties, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.”

- How should we honor those in authority over us? (government, president, police)
- How should we respond regarding that authority when we don’t agree with them?
- How do we honor our leaders by what we say or how we act?
- Do we pray for our state and national leaders?
- We may not agree with our governmental policy, but we must still honor them in their position – especially before our children. In *Acts 23:1-5*, Paul responded strongly to unjust actions against him, but when he was reminded who he was speaking to, he acknowledged his wrong for his disrespect and quoted, “*You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.*”
- The Heritage Foundation quoted our 40th President Ronald Reagan as saying, “When we honor our flag, we honor what we stand for as a nation – freedom, equality, justice, and hope.”

Honoring Our Spouse

1 Peter 3:7 “Husbands... be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect (honor), as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” (NIV)

Ephesians 5:33 “... and the wife must respect her husband.”

1 Peter 3:2 “...won over without words... by their (wives) chaste and respectful behavior.”

Esther 1:17,20 “All women should give honor to their husbands...”

Hebrews 13:4 “Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled, for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” (1 Tim. 3:2)

Romans 12:10 “Give preference to one another in honor.”

- “A happy wife is a happy life.” “If mamma ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy.”
- Parents, how you treat each other in your marriage will set the tone of honor and respect in your home. A child learns honor at home.
 - How should we honor our mates?
 - How shouldn’t we talk about our mate to other people?
- Love honors and protects the purity of its object. How is your wife or husband better for knowing and being married to you?
- Bonnie Barnett explained ways we dishonor our spouses in our marriage: “By expressing more admiration and praise of other individuals than we do to our own spouse, by negatively comparing our spouse against the backdrop of others, by making critical remarks about our spouse’s character or actions (where we belittle them in front of others), by constantly nagging our spouse (to the point where they feel incompetent and irresponsible – *Prov. 27:15*), by being disrespectful in our facial expressions and tone of voice where we tear them down rather than built them up, by automatically questioning or challenging their choices or decisions, by constantly interrupting or correcting our spouse in conversations (where they cannot even finish a sentence), by arguing with them in public causing them embarrassment, or by complaining about things we don’t like or appreciate about them when we are overbearing or rude. Complaining is really contagious,” and our children follow our example. (Barnett, Word Filled Families Walk In Truth, p. 129,130)

Honoring Spiritual Leadership

1 Samuel 9:6 “There is a man of God in this city, and the man is held in honor...”

1 Thessalonians 5:12,13 “Appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work.” (Lam. 4:16)

1 Timothy 5:17 “Elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.”

Hebrews 13:17 “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your

souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

1 Corinthians 16:15,16,18 “...They have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints, that you also be in subjection to such men...” “Acknowledge such men...”

- Biblically, how should we honor spiritual leadership?

Honoring Each Other

H. C. Trumbull said, “Unless a child learns to be courteous and prefer others, he is at a disadvantage the rest of his life. Courtesy is never wholly a natural quality. It is always a result of right training. Courtesy is an external manifestation of a kind and unselfish spirit toward another, which places a high regard for the rights and feelings of others. A courteous person is one who keeps self out of sight, and they win respect, admiration, and affection... When a child thinks of others, his thoughts go away from himself.” “Such a boy is (not) more ready to talk of himself (or) that which is a personal interest to him, (but rather) to find out what has an interest to others and make himself interested in that.” “His first business is to find out what (his) playmate would enjoy...” “If a child is seen to be lacking in courtesy, his parents are understood to be at fault in his training” (p.97-101).

Train your children to honor others in how they behave when they are with others. Personal manners demonstrate an honorable heart. Certain bodily functions and noises (belching) should not be seen as funny or something acceptable in public. Boys should be trained to always honor all women – especially their mothers, grandmothers, and sisters, by giving them preference, or first choice, or the best seats. Boys should learn to open doors and help their mother or sisters be seated, or help the women carry heavy items. Children should treat their coed friends as sisters and brothers. A husband can model protecting his wife by walking on the traffic side, allowing his wife safety closer to the sidewalk. When a child visits someone’s home, they shouldn’t tip their chairs back, or put their feet up or jump on the furniture out of respect for their host. A sign of humility and respect is to pick up other people’s trash, even when you are not the one who threw it on the ground. Listening to others instead of always talking about yourself (one way conversation), is another great expression of honoring others. A younger sibling should honor his older brothers and sisters, and the older siblings should honor their younger siblings above themselves. This should show up especially in how children talk to each other, which should be kind and gracious, instead of mean and sarcastic.

Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love, give preference to one another in honor.”

Philippians 2:3 “...regard one another as more important than yourselves.”

1 Peter 2:17 “Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

Ephesians 5:21 “Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

Proverbs 11:16 “A gracious woman attains honor.”

Psalms 15:4 “He honors those who fear the LORD.”

Honoring Our Teachers

Proverbs 5:13 “I hated instruction and my heart spurned reproof. I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to my instructors.”

- How do we respond to our school teachers, Sunday School teachers, youth ministry adult staff, or coaches who watch over us?

Honoring Our Word.

Psalms 15:4 “Honor your word even when it hurts.”

- Does our word mean anything? Do you keep your promises?

We need to train our children to trust our word – which presupposes that we have exhibited being trustworthy and faithful in our words.

J.C. Ryle said, “You should train them up to believe what you say. You should try to make them feel confidence in your judgment, and respect your opinions, as better than their own. You should accustom them to think that, when you say a thing is bad for them, it must be bad, and when you say it is good for them, it must be good; that your knowledge in short, is better than their own, and that they may rely implicitly on your word. Teach them to feel that what they know not now, they will probably know hereafter, and to be satisfied there is a reason and a needs-be for everything you require them to do.” “Train them to a habit of implicit faith – faith in their parents’ word, confidence that what their parents say must be right.” “You should (not) explain and give a reason for everything you desire them to do.” “If you say a thing is right, it must be enough for them – they must believe you, and be content.” (TDOP, p. 17-19)

I agree with this in that a parent, though at times they may desire to explain themselves and answer a child’s honest inquiry, should not need to explain every reason or context to every action, but a child should obey and accept by faith his parent’s word, simply because his parents said so. One example of this is that God, our heavenly Father, does not have to explain Himself, but calls us to believe simply because He said so. We must trust that He will only do what is right and good. When Job asked several times why God was allowing him to suffer, in the end, God never gave a reason or answer to Job’s question of why, but affirmed His sovereignty in all things – including Job’s temporary suffering. When a child asks, “Daddy, why do I have to do this this way?” You answer, “Because I asked you to do it that way. Please obey my request without question.” If your child asks why he needs to eat his fruits and vegetables, you are not required to give him a lecture on the woes of colon cancer and what will happen to him if he does not eat healthy. Later in life he will thank you for your wisdom which aided in his physical health. A parent is not obligated to fill in all the blanks for a child to trust and obey them. You may explain yourself, but he must learn to trust your word to be true, and that you have his best in mind. Parents, we must model being truthful and trustworthy before our kids.

Honoring God With How We Treat Our Body

What you do with your body is an indication of your heart. How or what you eat, what you wear, what you do to your body expresses who you are. Your personal presentation does matter and communicates volumes to your values or lack thereof. Our outside reflects our inside. God calls us to dress modestly and treat our body honorably.

1 Thessalonians 4:4 “that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification (set apart) and honor...” (1 Cor. 6:19,20)

Proverbs 3:35 “The wise inherit honor, but fools display dishonor...”

1 Corinthians 11:14 “Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him.”

Proverbs 23:21 “The heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty.”

Proverbs 23:2 “Put a knife to your throat if you are a man of great appetite.”

- Does moral purity matter to you?
- How does your teenager’s attire, attitude, actions express their heart’s desires?
- If our body is a Temple, how should a young person treat it?

“We cannot teach kids to respect our authority and then call our boss disrespectful names. Our children will not respect the spiritual authority of the church if we have roasted preacher for lunch on the Lord’s Day. They will not be grateful for civil authority if we have no concern for civil servants or the traffic laws.” (Instructing A Child’s Heart, Tripp, p. 89.)

Does Your Child Have A Problem With Dishonoring Authority?

- Do you have to repeat, reword, or justify your expectations/instructions before your child obeys? How many times do you have to ask before something is done?
- Do they punctuate by asking, “WHY?”
- Do they talk back to you in a disrespectful way?
- Are they sarcastic or haughty to you with their eyes or facial expressions, or pout when you ask them to do something? Do they counter what you just said?
- Do they belittle or demean you in the words they choose to say and treat you like a child?
- Do they often complain or are they ungrateful to you?
- Do they ask you what they can do or tell you what they are going to do?
- Are they demanding or do they have an entitlement mentality?
- When you talk to your child, are they attentive or are they easily distracted?
- Do they usually look at you when you are talking to them?
- Do your children interrupt your conversation with your spouse to try to say something?
- Do they choose friends who are disrespectful and disobedient to authority? (Prov. 13:20)
(Heart Of Anger, p. 136,137)

Personal Questions: (Honor is more caught than taught!)

- How are you modeling to your children the honor, care, and provision you should give to your aging parents? How should it be any different from the way you would hope

your kids would treat you in your old age? (Bring the children with you to a rest home to see your parents, grandparents, or aunts/uncles).

- How do you respond to your own parents when you disagree with them? (Be cautious as to what you say negatively about your parents in your children's presence.)
- Do you honor those in authority over you (government, president, police, boss)? How do you respond regarding that authority when you don't agree with them? How do you express your feelings about that authority in the presence of your children? Is your response to basic laws (speed limit, cell phone) honorable?
- Husbands and wives, do you honor your mates? What does your tone of voice or body language say about you? Is it respectful or disrespectful? What do your kids see day to day?
- What is your response to spiritual leadership in your life? What would your kids say?
- How do you talk about those authorities in your lives? Honorably or dishonorably?
- What does your outside say about your inside? Is it an honorable conversation?