

Chico Alliance Church

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“The Power of Honor”

Review

Peter proposed and prescribed the details for living a godly example in an ungodly environment. Or, live differently because you are different.

- I. Realize your new heritage as specially chosen children of God 1:3-12
- II. Live out your heritage as God’s specially chosen children 1:13-5:11

What does “doing good” look like? Peter gets more specific with four brief commands.

Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

The practice of honoring is a powerful practice that demonstrates the supernatural nature of a changed heart.

We live in severely self-focused culture. It’s all about ME!

From birth to death our greatest concern seems to be ME!

How do I look?

What do people think of ME?

What’s in it for ME?

MY feelings were hurt?

I feel rejected.

I will protect MYSELF from being rejected.

I must be better than anyone else.

Jesus came to serve others.

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:21-24

Jesus Himself revealed the focus of His life.

But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:43-45

God instructs us to **HONOR ALL** men. This command leaves little wiggle room.

If we are to obey this command we should learn a bit more about what it means to honor. The term itself has to do with valuing. This term means to “assign value, revere, prize, esteem valuable”. It was used in the sense of something of great worth. It indicated the considerable cost of something. Precious jewels, precious blood of Christ, valuable gift, precious fruit, precious promises.

We all understand what it means to value. We either acknowledge value or assign value to people and things every day. We determine our actions on the basis of the value system we have established. Certain things are more important than other things. Certain activities are more important than others. Certain people are valued more than others. Do I save my children or your children first?

We assign value for any number of reasons.

Rarity, age, uniqueness, usefulness, personal relationship

Some things have **inherent** value. Other things have **assigned** value.

A 400 troy ounce pure gold bar is valued at \$451,597.32

A 400 troy ounce platinum bar is valued at \$394,400

A one carat flawless diamond \$23,000

The true value of the British crown jewels is a secret but estimated at near 8 billion

Although the value of these things changes from time to time, they have intrinsic value.

This Leonardo Da Vinci painting sold May 2013 for \$129 million.

It really has no inherent value. Canvas, paint, frame. It is only valuable because people have deemed it valuable.

Another item with no intrinsic value consisting only of cardboard and ink. Eddie Plank was a left handed pitcher who pitched from 1901 to 1917 famous for all-time career shutouts by a left handed pitcher (66). The assigned value of his baseball card? -- \$2.8 million.

The intrinsic value of the physical human body has been calculated at \$160.00

Some say the chemicals found in the human body maybe would fetch a dollar.

We all know that a person is more valuable than their physical assets. Some celebrities insure particular physical assets for outrageous amounts.

The US Environmental Protection Agency has calculated the value of a human life at \$9.1 million, up from \$6.8 million during the Bush era. The Food and Drug Administration's current estimate is \$7.9 million, up from \$2.9 million since 2008. Meanwhile, the transportation Department is sticking with its \$6 million figure.

Is there something to value in ALL men? According to Scripture, all men are image bearers of God, marred as that may be. God has incalculable intrinsic value and is worthy of all honor by creation. God also assigns value to humanity.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the God and crowned him with glory and honor. Psalm 8:3-5

On that basis, all people have worth or value. Evolutionary theory has devalued mankind by giving us no more value than any other living thing. In fact it is certainly true that some animals are valued more highly than people. That applies especially to unborn babies. Survival of the fittest theory sees not value in the weaker elements of society. Do we wonder why human life means so little in the world today? Someone is willing to take a human life for a pair of tennis shoes.

A 14 year old was shot three times in the head in 2012 just for his shoe collection.

God's admonition to value all men stands in sharp contrast to a culture that values self over service to humanity.

God honors us directly.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. John 12:26

so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:7

There are multiple passages that teach how much God values us that don't necessarily actually use the term. We are His beloved (dearly loved) children. We are the object of His grace and affection. Jesus taught about

God's tender care of His creation how much more His children. The whole aspect of future rewards for faithful service indicates a public honoring.

Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. Luke 12:37

Beyond the admonition to honor or value all men, the Bible also focuses on some individual groups of categories. What other specifics can we glean from other passages?

HONOR GOD

Of course at the top of the list is to honor God. As we read earlier, all the heavenly beings fall down and honor God by a verbal acknowledgment of His worth. Revelation also foreshadows a time when all creatures will declare His worth.

And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. Revelation 5:11-14

The whole concept of praise is to acknowledge and proclaim God's worth.

Proverbs also call us to demonstrate honor through giving.

Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. Proverbs 3:9-10

HONOR YOUR PARENTS

This actually requires extended treatment but I will give you the short version. First there is the direct command in both the old and new testaments. It is included in the Big Ten.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Eph 6:1-3

Jesus addressed an attempt by the Pharisees to skirt this divinely mandated responsibility and indicated a core component of what it means to honor your parents.

Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat."

The Pharisees were notorious for focusing on the minutia and ignoring the main.

Jesus accused them of worrying about swallowing gnats while actually swallowing camels.

He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" Mat 15:1-9

In this case Jesus indicates that part of honoring parents has to do with helping them in their time of need. That was God's expectation. The selfish Jews tried to get around it by declaring their resources as dedicated to God and therefore unavailable to help the parents. Notice the callousness expressed their declaration.

"What you would have gained from me is given to God."

Now this dedication of resourced to God was not necessarily during their life time.

The thought was, the resources were unavailable now because they were dedicated to God for a later time – presumably after the parent's death.

Honoring parents involves a verbal valuing but also a caretaking activity if needed.

He warns against reviling or speaking evil of your parents.

HONOR WIDOWS

This caretaking aspect of honoring is also expressed in relations to widows.

Honor widows who are truly widows. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. 1 Timothy 5:3-6

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:27

HONOR TEACHING ELDERS

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. 1 Timothy 5:17

Paul was grateful for those who honored him with traveling resources.

They also honored us with many honors, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed. Acts 28:10

HONOR YOUR BODY

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

HONOR YOUR MASTERS

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. 1 Timothy 6:1

HUSBANDS HONOR YOUR WIVES

Likewise, (As Jesus sacrificially serves us) husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:7

How is your prayer life? You might consider your married life. Wives are not slaves but “fellow heirs” of God’s empowering grace and favor.

We are to value marriage in general.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4

It is so easy to make fun of marriage. It is so easy to resent marriage. It is so easy to discount marriage. God instructs us to focus on the value of marriage. We are to honor marriage with our words and actions.

HONOR EVERYONE

Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. 1 Peter 2:17

Paul takes this even further.

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:9-10

Basically God asks us yea commands us to work on valuing others more than they value you. The whole 12th chapter of Romans really fleshes that out.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:12-21

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4

APPLICATION

Hopefully some of the applications and implications of acknowledging and assigning value to others is clear. Practically we will not treat everyone the same but there should never be a devaluing or dishonoring of anyone. Our culture is full of such behavior. History reeks of aristocratic arrogance and class divisions among all peoples. The devaluing of people on the basis of race, beliefs, intellect, looks, abilities or lack of, class, status, education, possessions, employment, behavior and even religion occurs every moment of the day around the world.

God calls for a valuing of all people. That should dictate our attitudes and actions toward people. Because God both assigns and recognizes value, so should we. That may include how we feel about them, talk to them and help them.

Jesus actually used our actions toward the less fortunate as a spiritual barometer.

These are the words of Jesus, not mine.

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." Matthew 25:31-46

When we reach out to (honor) those in need, we honor Jesus. When we fail to serve others we fail to serve Jesus. To dishonor people is to dishonor Jesus who gave His life for them. We take great delight and pride in the fact that we are bring Jesus to those in need. The reality is we are going to meet Jesus.

The only way to practically serve Jesus is to serve others.

The only way to practically honor Jesus is to honor others.

Honor everyone. 1 Peter 2:17

Outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:9-10

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count (value) others more significant than yourselves.

What kind of adjustments does God need to make to your attitude toward people?

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. 1 John 3:16-20