

Tea Tree Gully Community Church

Honour

Joh 5:23 that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.

Psa 8:4-5 what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings (God) and crowned him with glory and honour.

1Ti 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Preamble

Read: Above texts.

Last week we looked at the issue of putting God first in our lives, in particular the aspects of time and money and the principle of first fruits.

Today, we're going to look at a topic, the heart of which is closely linked to last week. It's the aspect of honour.

Introduction

When we think of the word honour, it may conjure up a whole range of images and ideas. The word itself can be used in a number of contexts.

Examples: Honour associated with virtue and chivalry
A title addressing someone e.g. a judge 'your honour'
Honouring someone with an award
A memorial e.g. Avenue of Honour at Ballarat, or a Roll of Honour
An act of privilege e.g. an honour to, or doing the honours

These different usages of the word capture *something* of the idea of honour. Honour could best be described more fully as this:

Definition: Honour – to regard with deep respect, to confer a mark of distinction on, to esteem as worthy, to be exalted in rank, to be highly regarded.

Esteem is also defined as to admire or respect. Words such as *admire* and *respect* are 'internal' words, describing disposition and attitude.

The distinction with honour, however, is that it must be demonstrated in some external way to be expressed. The idea of honour is a social one that reflects how people relate to others (both their fellow man and God).

Question: How do we show honour both in acting honourably and in honouring others (i.e. giving honour)?

Answer: By our words, deeds, responses and behaviour as a result of a heart disposition.

Quote: We speak of virtue, honour, reason; but our thought does not translate any one of these concepts into a substance. Wilhelm Wundt

To give honour requires demonstration in some way.

While dishonour is the opposite of what would be expected to be honour, honour is also not flattery or false respect for the purpose of manipulation or personal gain.

The word used for honour in the New Testament means to value, to place worth upon, to be deemed worthy of honour and to put value or price upon. Honour is also linked to character and responsibility (connected with realms of authority).

If someone is said to be honourable it is linked with honesty, sincerity, integrity, truthfulness etc. It is also honouring to rightly recognize those in positions of responsibility and authority and at least honour the position even if the individual is lacking.

Not only do we see so little honour given, and honourable conduct displayed today, we also see so much dishonour.

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slandering, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God **2Ti 3:1-4**

We also see honour misdirected; given to celebrities and people of wealth whose lives show and demand very little honour – who themselves are poor role models of

living honourably and giving honour to others. Evaluating things from a Godly perspective is lost.

As man rejects God, honour will suffer, both in obviously honouring God, but also in recognizing that man who is made in God's image was created to have dignity and purpose and to be an image bearer of God. This should impact how we see our fellow man.

When I consider 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, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than God and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: **Psa 8:3-6**

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." **Gen 1:26**

Honour and dishonour are important concepts, both in relation to God, and in relation to man. Honour is part of the culture of the Kingdom of God and like so many things it is countercultural to the world we live in. Living honourably and giving honour where it is due is a powerful witness of contrast with the ways of the world.

Quotes: Danny Silk, Culture of Honour, Destiny Image publishers.

The clear fruit of establishing a culture of honour is that the resurrection life of God begins to flow into people's lives, homes and communities; bringing healing, restoration, blessing, joy, hope, and wholeness. pg 27

A culture of honour is created as a community of people learn to discern and receive people in their God-given identities. pg 26

What are God-given identities? Firstly and most fundamentally we are created in God's image as human being. Secondly, for those who have responded to the gospel of Christ we are trophies of his sacrifice. Thirdly, we have gifts, talents, role and responsibilities and any associated authority as invested by God in us.

Areas Requiring Honour

Just as we are made in God's image so we are to live in a way that honours God both directly and indirectly. There is honour that God gives and requires to various realms and responses. Let's look at some of these.

God

We honour God when we align ourselves with his ways (desires, principles, word, will), when we love what he loves and hate what he hates (values). Our speech, behaviour, actions toward our fellow man, our love of truth reflected in honesty and integrity and valuing what God values (and honouring those God requires to be honoured) will express this. It is summed up as expressions of honour emanating from a heart of worship for God.

**LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbour no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman, who despises a vile man but honours those who fear the LORD, who keeps his oath even when it hurts,
Psa 15:1-4**

The Psalmist asks the question essentially who may live close to God, enjoying fellowship with him? Basically the answer is, it those who love and therefore honour God by what they value and how they live.

It should also touch areas of our lives such as entertainment diet (what we watch and read, and what we listen to) and consistency growing in the fruit of the Spirit (see **Gal 5:22**)

The following are some specific ways that we can honour God.

Honouring God's name, holding it in high regard - specially the name of Jesus Christ which has been given as the only name by which people can be saved. It should not be dishonoured verbally by taking it in vain or by our actions as we identify ourselves with him as a follow of Christ.

When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honour. **Act 19:17**

Honouring God with our finances and wealth.

Honour the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops (increase); then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. **Pro 3:9-10**

(see the message titled *First Things First* 19 Oct 14)

Honouring God with our time.

"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honourable, and if you honour it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, **Isa 58:13**
(see the message titled *First Things First* 19 Oct 14)

Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me. **Joh 12:26**
(Service and time go hand in hand)

Honouring God by caring for our fellow man who is made in the image of God.
Showing God's love and compassion

He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours (worships - GNB) God. **Pro 14:31**

Honouring God with Sexual fidelity (purity)

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. **1Co 6:18-20**

Parents

"Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. **Exo 20:12**

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" - which is the first commandment with a promise - "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." **Eph 6:1-3**

"I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honour my Father and you dishonour me. **Joh 8:49**

Note: Father / Son model as basis for discipleship and spiritual parenting.

Practical ways that children can honour their parents include:

- Speaking respectfully to them

- Listening (not just hearing but heeding) to advice
- Recognizing that they have God given authority
- Obedience / behaviour / conduct (home and away)
- Not speaking disrespectfully to others about them
- Maintaining a loving and transparent relationship that promotes trust and affection i.e. emotional investment not detachment that causes the heart of the relationship to endure.

Question: Where do we get our cues from for life? Do we look to God and godly parents or the world and its values?

Marriage, husbands and wives

Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Heb 13:4

The institution of marriage should be honoured and all that goes with that both publically and privately. Privately it is dishonoured and undermined by adulterous and de-facto relationships. Publically it is to be protected and recognized as not a cultural tradition, mechanism of the state or even the observance of a religion. It predates, Christianity, Judaism and all other religions of the world. It is an institution of creation by God himself. John Anderson the former federal politician has said publically that marriage is not just a private affair but a matter of public policy that affects the whole of society.

But husbands and wives should also honour one another both at home and in public. One important area in fulfilling this is how they talk to others about their spouses. They show disloyalty when they speak in a belittling way e.g. social settings where women get together and gossip and fault-find and complain about their husbands or husbands refer to their wives as the boss or treat them unkindly in front of others etc.

One Another / Fellow Believers

This is a broad area but some scriptures that touch on this area include:

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people (our fellow man generally), especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Gal 6:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. **Rom 12:10**

...being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 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: **Php 2:1-5**

Love your neighbour as yourself (8 times in New Testament)
(Love is at the heart of honour)

A couple of specific examples include:

Welcome him (Epaphroditus), in the Lord with great joy, and honour men like him **Php 2:29**

I ask you to receive her (Phoebe) in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints (fellow Christians) and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me. **Rom 16:2**

Servants of God and Civic authority

Leadership (positions of authority and responsibility) broadly has been instituted by God into two categories. Firstly leadership in the Church (spiritual authority – ultimate authority as invested in men by God lies here) and civic authority such as kings, law enforcement, government etc.

The nature of leadership in the Kingdom of God is one of servant-hood (the opposite to the way the world works where people look to be served more the higher they are promoted). It's also interesting to note that in the civic realm the highest office in our land is given the title of Prime Minister which really means the principle/first/foremost servant.

Jesus, the Servant King who is head of the Church, gave the most, demonstrated the most sacrificed the most and served the most. He came 'not to be served but to serve' as the words of a song say.

But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. **Luk 22:26**

The greatest among you will be your servant. **Mat 23:11**

Those who are called to servant leadership, exercising their God given authority should be honoured accordingly in all parts of the body of Christ. This is really an extension of honouring fellow saints as they operate in any gifting or calling. One example Paul mentions here:

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. **1Ti 5:17**

The heart of the message in **Mat 10:41** is one of honour also:

Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. **Mat 10:41**

King Nebuchadnezzar recognized that Daniel was a man of God who operated with gifting and authority, a servant of God to be honoured.

But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honour (recognition and privilege in the land). So tell me the dream and interpret it for me. **Dan 2:6**

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honour and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. **Dan 2:46**

Civic authority, responsibility

Show proper respect to everyone (our fellow man, believer and non believer created in the image of God): Love the brotherhood of believers (honoured as a fellow trophy of the blood of Christ), fear God (the fear of the Lord, leads to honouring God), honour the king (the civic realm of authority). **1Pe 2:17**

This short verse covers four areas including civic authority (in this case the king). The King wasn't always a good man, but the position requires honour. We have a variety of spheres of civic authority in our society that should be responded to with honour, including government, law enforcement agencies (police, courts etc), teachers and other community leaders.

God Honouring Us

You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him (man) with glory and honour. **Psa 8:5**

(The foundational status God intended for man in creation)

Honour comes from God.

Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. **1Ch 29:12**

My salvation and my honour depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.
Psa 62:7

Some promises regarding honour.

Those who honour me I will honour, but those who despise me will be disdained. **1Sa 2:30**

"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation." **Psa 91:14-16**

Cases of Dishonouring God

The Lord says: "These people (Israel) come near to me with their mouth and honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. **Isa 29:13**

(False honour, lip service, no heart connection leading to obedience or desire to please God. No fear of God)

Eli's son's Hophni and Phineas disregarded what was holy by their actions and God passed judgement on them and they both died the same day. See **1Sam 2**

Belshazar desecrated, dishonoured what was set apart for God. His lack of honour and fear of God cost him his life.

Instead, you (Belshazar) have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honour (dishonoured) the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. **Dan 5:23**

Mene mene tekel parsin Dan 5:25

(tekel means 'You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting')

In the days of Malachi, Israel was bringing defiled, blemished sacrifices, treating the Lord's table as contemptible, not honouring it with the best.

"A son honours his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honour due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' **Mal 1:6**

If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honour my name," says the LORD Almighty, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honour me. **Mal 2:2**

We also fail to honour (or dishonour) God when we do not honour the above areas we have looked at.

A Practical Example of Giving Honour

Illustration: The TV show Undercover Boss

The owner or CEO of a corporation goes undercover and works in an entry-level position to experience firsthand how things are handled in their company.

They often find out things they didn't know about the dedication, skill and daily challenges and hardships of workers both in their position of work and personal life. The result is that they have a greater level of appreciation and respect for those doing the work on the ground and honour them with recognition, rewards and additional resources to encourage and further enable them in the work they are doing.

Conclusion / Exhortation

The exhortation for us is to consider our lives and ask these question:

How have I live dishonourably or shown dishonour to God and others?

What areas do I need to address? Is it tithing and how I handle finances? Is it the use of my time in serving God as first priority? Is it my speech, conduct, honesty? Is it in the area of relationships?

How can I grow in living honourably?

How can I better honour God and others and so live a life worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ?

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. **Heb 2:9**

I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **Eph 4:1**

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, **Col 1:10**