

The Power of Honor

Pastor Peter Haas- October 11, 2020

What Does Honor Look Like During Conflict?

We are called to honor people, which means, “to add weight & value” to people. 1 Peter 2:17 says, “Honor your kings (political leaders).” Leviticus 19 talks about honoring the elderly. Ephesians 6 talks about how to honor parents, spouses, and bosses. But how do we honor people who aren’t honorable? How do we critique people in a way that’s honoring? Biblical honor has very little to do with the person you’re giving honor to. Rather, it’s what honor does to *you* when you give it. Honor releases miracles from heaven (Mark 6:4-5); it extends our life expectancy (Ephesians 6).

- **James 1:19-20** “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”
- **1 Timothy 5:1** “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.”
- **Philippians 2:3-4** “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.”

Dishonor: Demonizes the enemy to defeat the enemy.

Honor: Critiques with the aim of converting (or at least containing) adversaries.

Dishonor: Requires agreement from people before giving respect and dignity.

Honor: Gives dignity to people despite their behavior.

Dishonor: Goes to public forms of critique (i.e. social media, blogs) before private.

Honor: Confronts privately first, with mediators second, before critiquing the public.

Dishonor: Here’s where *they* are wrong (Us vs. Them).

Honor: Here’s where *we* all agree (creates common ground for consensus).

Dishonor: Prays for self and for friends.

Honor: Prays for everyone and gives thanks for everyone even enemies (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

Dishonor: Finds problems and points them out (critiques more than coaches).

Honor: Finds solutions that cover over. (Coaches more than critiques)

Dishonor: Only trust in themselves to bring justice or hold people accountable.

Honor: Trusts in God to bring about promotion and demotion.

Honor Exercises

When we sow honor, we reap honor. If you fail at honoring certain people, you are only robbing yourself. Who in your life do you struggle to honor? A parent, politician, pundit, boss, coworker, neighbor? Try one of these Biblical exercises:

The Gratitude Meditation

Pull out a journal, phone, or computer and take some time thinking about all the things you enjoy about this individual... no matter how small. If this is too hard, begin by thinking about their “redemptive potential” (i.e. if they were fully discipled and healthy, how could God use this person for good?) Spend 15 solid minutes listing those positive or potential values. If this is a person you happen to know well (like a spouse, child, etc) consider reading it to them or reformatting this meditation into an affirmation letter. “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone- for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior.” (1 Timothy 2:1-3) “If anything is excellent or praise-worthy, think about such things.” (Philippians 4:8)

The Humility Meditation

Pull out a journal, phone, or computer and take some time thinking about “Where do you fall short of God’s glory?” (Romans 3:23). We often judge others by their actions; but, we judge ourselves according to our intentions. (i.e. we give ourselves the benefit of the doubt). Take a moment and ask yourself, “Where could I possibly be wrong here? How could I have negatively contributed to this situation? What actions would continue to foster misunderstanding or strife? How could I give this person the benefit of the doubt? What might their good intentions be in all of this? And, what failures would God point out in me first?” “The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.” Proverbs 15:33

The Prayer Project

Take 3 to 21 days and pray for this individual. Pray the following things daily: “That God would open *our* eyes to see this frustrating person as the Father in heaven sees this person.” That God would remove the blinders from this person’s eyes (2 Corinthians 4:4, Acts 9:8-12). Pray out Ephesians 1:17-19, “May the Father... give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.” That the Holy Spirit would convict them (John 16:8); that the Father would “draw them to himself” (John 6:44); and that “wisdom would fall on them” (James 1:5). Let God speak to you about various ways you could positively inspire change in this individual. Listen for the Holy Spirit’s prophetic voice to give you new strategies and insights that could affect change in a life-giving way.

The Servanthood Strategy

What are some of the needs in this person’s life? What do you think their love language is? (Acts of service, quality time, words of affirmation, etc) How could you show them (or those near to them) the practical love of God? (Philippians 2:3-4). Make a list of various ways you can inspirationally demonstrate some of the behaviors that you want to see in them.