

# The Importance of Honor in the Christian Life

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Memorial Day is upon us again. It's the holiday that kicks off summer; we fire up the grill, plant the garden, and pack up the sweaters. But what many people don't realize is that, in reality, Memorial Day is all about honor. It's the day where we Americans join in unity to remember and mourn those who have given their lives to serve and protect our country. Instead of feasting and fun, the intent of Memorial Day from the beginning was somber reflection on the cost of freedom for our nation, gratitude toward God, and honor toward the fallen.

Just as other cultural norms have shifted in our country, honor seems to have become a forgotten virtue. It has devolved so much that simply honoring others with words like "sir," "ma'am" and "thank you," can make people a bit suspicious of your motives. In fact, dishonor prevails in our entertainment, social media arguments, political discourse, children and parents, even husband and wives.

However, if we are to become all that God has destined for us to become, we need to bring honor back as a lifestyle.



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**A God of Honor**

God is all about honor—uncensored, abundant, extravagant honor!

- [Exodus 20:12](#) says *honor* your father and mother
- [1 Samuel 2:30](#) says those who *honor* Me, I will *honor*
- [Psalms 8:5](#) says God has crowned man with glory and *honor*
- [Proverbs 3:9](#) says we should *honor* the Lord with our wealth
- [Hebrews 13:4](#) says let marriage be held in *honor*

Honor causes everything around us to elevate and attracts the blessing of God. But if that's going to happen we need to be people who intentionally practice honor. But you may ask - who should we honor? I would say everyone! Just pick someone and start honoring them and watch how your life is elevated and begins to attract God's blessing.

I think one of the greatest examples of this spiritual principle is found in the story of King David and Mephibosheth, the sole surviving family member of the house of King Saul. In [2 Samuel 4:4](#), it says:

“Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became disabled. His name was Mephibosheth.”

After years of dishonor, persecution and pursuit of David, King Saul and his son Jonathan were killed in battle. When David became the new king, the nurse feared for the life of Saul's grandson and ran. During the escape, however, Mephibosheth became permanently crippled. But she scoops him up and takes him to hide in a land called LoDebar, which means *a place of no pasture*; a land that was barren and busted.

In a minute Mephibosheth goes from royalty to renegade, and from riches to rags. And David goes from rags to riches and ascends to the throne of Israel. Honor elevates you, and dishonor brings you down!



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## A Man of Honor

After years of being dishonored by Saul, you would think that David would want to be honored, receive accolades for his efforts, props for his success. *I am a giant killer, the man of the hour, too sweet to be sour, the tower of Hebrew power! Honor me!* You would think that, after all, he was the man! But the first thing David does is ask the question:

“Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?’ So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel” ([2 Samuel 9:1](#), 5).

David was taking the reins from Saul’s administration that was all about dishonor, jealousy, backbiting, hatred, and betrayal. He steps up and says, “is there *anyone* that I can honor?” He demonstrated a lifestyle of honor along his way from shepherd boy to King of Israel.

Honor should be a part of our DNA, no matter what position in life we hold. When you’re on the bottom of the ladder of success, you ought to honor up, and when you’re on the top of the ladder of success, you ought to honor down. God is all about honor, because it elevates and blesses us!

## Who Should We Honor?

### Honor All People

“Honor all people. [Love](#) the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” ([1 Peter 2:17](#)).

Honor *all* people... Not just good people, deserving people, powerful people, important people, influential people or people who can help you in some way, but *all* people. In other words, even those that are broke and busted and can never do anything for you in return. *Honor all people.*

Wasn’t that the core of Jesus’ teaching on the Golden Rule? “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you” ([Matthew 7:12](#)). And Paul? “Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves” ([Romans 12:10](#)).

Imagine a world where people showed honor like that; imagine your job like that, your government like that, your church like that. What a world it would be – sign me up! *Honor all people.*



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## Honor Authority

Now, I can just hear you saying, “Honor all authority, Pastor... even the *bad ones*?” Yup. Listen to what the [Scripture](#) says about the matter:

“Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished” ([Romans 13:1-2](#)).

I realize that in today’s world, submitting to authority is a touchy subject, especially for those who have suffered wrongs. But remember our example of David. He continually honored King Saul and his house, and it only elevated and blessed him as God turned it around for His glory. So honor authority, *all authority*, and not only governmental authorities.

What do I mean by that? Unless you are self-employed, your boss, manager, or team leader is an authority you should honor; if a student, your professors, teachers and administrators are your authorities. Whatever we do, wherever we are in life, we should honor those in positions of authority over us.

“Servants, do what you’re told by your earthly masters. And don’t just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best. Work from the heart for your real Master, for God, confident that you’ll get paid in full when you come into your inheritance. Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you’re serving is Christ” ([Col. 3:22-25](#), MSG).

You see, in the workplace, even if you don’t like your boss, God expects you to be a top-tier worker. And if you honor your boss and work hard, God may even promote you to be the boss one day! If you honor your teachers and professors, you may be blessed with scholarships and open doors that others miss.

There is also family authority to consider. Children are encouraged to honor their parents because of the blessing it provokes: “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth” ([Ephesians 6:2-3](#)). Husbands are directed to honor their wives, so their prayers will not be hindered ([1 Peter 3:7](#)) Wives should honor their husbands, even “if any of them do not believe the word,” for in this way their husbands might be saved ([1 Peter 3:1](#)).

Imagine what our homes would look like if we were trying to outdo one another with honor. Trust me on this: honor will change the tone in your home! It will get rid of the tension, and cause your children to be blessed in life. It creates a spirit of cooperation, drives success, and ignites romance again. It will also carry you through to your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, instead of divorce court.

And don't forget, God expects us to honor our spiritual authorities, including pastors, elders, deacons – whoever is an authority in your local church body. ([1 Timothy 5:17](#)) When people honor their elders in unity, God blesses the church body with [love](#) and peace ([Psalm 133:1](#); [1 Corinthians 13:11](#)). Even if you really don't like a person or respect them, you can still honor them in prayer and intercede for them before God ([1 Timothy 2:1-4](#)).

It's amazing, but when you begin to pray for people, you start liking them a little more, rooting for them a little more, forgiving them more, and being more compassionate. Truly, prayer changes things. Yes, it can change them, but more importantly, it will change us. So pray for authority, *all authority*, and you will be able to honor authority.



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## Honor God

“Respect everyone, [love](#) other believers, honor God, and respect the Emperor” ([1 Peter 2:17](#)).

We routinely honor God with our tithes and offerings. But I'd like to suggest an additional way for you to honor God: by honoring your purpose! Purpose is the original intent in the

mind of God that motivated Him to create you, right here, right now. In other words, there is a “why” behind the “who” and “what” of your life.

We get all caught up in defining our personal identities, including our titles, positions, and roles. I’m a parent, a husband, a business owner, a musician, a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher, a butcher, a baker, and a candlestick maker! The truth is, there’s also a “why” behind the who, what, when and where of your life. You are “who” you are because of “why” you are. Jesus Himself understood His why and said:

“For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” ([John 18:37](#)).

Like Jesus, you and I were born with a why! We are not accidents or by-products of random chance; we are purposeful people, made by the Creator of the universe for a specific purpose.

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

Notice that God prepared stuff for you to do *in advance* of creating you! In other words, He decided your why and then built you with the ability that you need to fulfill that why. That means you’ve got what it takes to accomplish your purpose. He’s given you the talent and ability, the intellect, the look, the voice, the creativity – you’ve got what it takes. But, in order to honor God with your purpose, you’ve got to take what He’s given you and use it for His glory, that is, in *God-honoring* ways.

## All the Difference

I remember once, years ago, I dated someone that my mother had reservations about. She said to me, *Frank, you’re too old for me to tell you what to do or how to live your life... or who to date. But I will tell you, that this girl is no longer welcome in my house.* Although it was difficult, I honored my mother and her advice to me. I can tell you that it made all the difference in my life. God elevated and blessed me later with a God-honoring wife, a beautiful family and a destiny together in Christ I am still discovering!

When we bring the virtue of honor back into our daily lives, and not just on Memorial Day, God can work through us to elevate and bless those around us. And it can make all the difference in our own lives as well!

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[What Kind of Authority Does Jesus Show in Matthew's Gospel?](#)

["Honor Your Father and Mother": A Biblical Command We Never Outgrow](#)