

Biblical Honour (Pt 3)

We are continuing the discussion on where to direct our honour.

4. We are called to honour our parents

Exodus 20:12

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

Matthew 15:4

"For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.'

Many people rationalise how they dishonour their parents. Honour is not the same as obedience. Eg How I relate to my in-laws.

1 Tim 5:3-4, 8

³ Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. ⁴ But 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. ⁸ Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Proverbs 13:1

A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Just because you are now an adult does not mean you must not consider your parent's advice. Don't despise them because of their age.

Proverbs 23:22

Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

How would you like your children to treat you one day? Treat your parents like that today.

Matthew 7:12

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

What are some practical ways of honouring your parents?

- Ask for their wisdom on matters
- Update them on important events in your life
- Communicate with them relevant matters
- Be patient with them as they age
- Bless them financially and materially
- Help them physically as they age
- Guard your mouth

5. We are called to honour children

Here are some practical ways in which we can show honour to children:

Honour the unborn child

Ps 139:13-16

¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Exodus 21:22

"If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide.

See children as a source of joy

3 John 1:3-4

³ *For I was overjoyed when the brothers came and testified about your devotion to the truth, in which you continue to walk.* ⁴ *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*

Allow your children's behaviour to affect your emotional state positively.

Make children feel included and welcome

Mark 9:37

"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Mk 10:13-14

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

How many of you grew up in families where you were told, "Children must be seen not heard." If so, how did this affect you?

Get them serving and ministering in church. Children must never develop the mindset of, "Ministry is something I will start doing when I grow up."

Don't despise them

Mt 18:10

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

There is no baby Holy Spirit. My son is asking me whether he has to wait until he is an adult before he can start a business. "Dad what is the shortest degree I need to do if I want to get into business?"

See them as a blessing

Ps 127:3-5

³ *Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.* ⁴ *Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth.* ⁵ *Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.*

They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.

Prov 17:6

Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.

Sadly we live in a society that does not appreciate the blessing of children. Children are often seen as an inconvenience or an expense.

Don't lead them astray

Mt 18:1-6

¹ *At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"* ² *He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them.* ³ *And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.* ⁴ *Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* ⁵ *And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

⁶ *“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.*

Protect them

Heb 11:23

By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.

In child development there is protection and preparation. Parents ought to know how to protect the moral innocence of their children.

Don’t provoke them to anger

Col 3:21

Fathers,^[a] do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

This speaks of provoking your children or exasperating them.

Their personality is formed in those first 10 years of their lives. We are called to imprint God and His nature on them.

Facilitate their purpose development

Prov 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go, [a]And when he is old he will not depart from it.

We are not trying to live out our dreams through them. We respect their uniqueness. We have healthy boundaries with them and allow them to express what is theirs to express. Purpose development takes place through biblical instruction and releasing them into their God-given calling. Remember, there is no baby Holy Spirit. God wants to use the next generation. Let’s honour that.

Our long-term goal is to raise self-motivated, capable, respectful and resilient humans, not ones who are easily coerced by the pressure of others. --- Amy McCreedy.

Respect their boundaries

All of these are ways of demonstrating honour to children. When we model respect to our children, they are more likely to become respectful. It’s important to have healthy boundaries with our kids and demonstrate respect. I would like to highlight 3 areas where boundaries with Kids are important and demonstrate honour.

- Let them own their bodies

By letting kids own their bodies and personal appearance, we show them the same level of respect we hope they will show others.

Instead of: Wiping food off her face

Try: “You have a little ketchup on your cheek, here’s a napkin if you’d like to wipe it off.”

Instead of: Tucking in his shirt unannounced

Try: “I really love the shirt you chose! Would you prefer to have it tucked in or left out?”

Instead of: Straightening out his collar

Try: “Hey honey, I noticed the back of your collar is sticking up. Would you like help putting it down or would you like to take care of it?”

- Do not interrogate them

Instead of:

“How was school today?”

“Was the science test hard?”

“What did you have for lunch?”

Try:

“Welcome home. I’m SO glad to see you!”

“I sure do miss you when you’re at school! My favourite part of the day is when you come home!”

(Taken from www.positiveparenting.com).

- Let them answer for themselves

When we don’t respect this boundary then:

We reinforce that their opinion isn’t valued, and/or

We rescue the less socially confident (shy) child from an uncomfortable situation which inhibits them from developing skills for the future.

Recommended Books for boundaries with kids: 1. Amy McCready, Founder of Positive Parenting Solutions and the best selling author of *The “Me, Me, Me” Epidemic - A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising Capable, Grateful Kids in an Over-Entitled World* 2. *Boundaries with Kids* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend.

6. We are called to honour our spouses

1 Peter 3:7 ESV

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honour 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.

Col 3:18

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord

Colossians 3:19 ESV

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

Ephesians 5:33

However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Ephesians 5:28 ESV

In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Malachi 1:6-8

⁶ "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?' ⁷ "You place defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible. ⁸ When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

Applying this passage to marriage, you dishonour your spouse by not giving them your best; being comfortable with impurity; not being aware of the impact of your dis-honour; being indifferent with regards to the position they hold in your life; and treating others better than your own spouse.

Make a fundamental decision today to fully honour your spouse. If you are not yet married but intend to, then make that decision now. Don't try to become this after you say "I do". **Honour is based on the position someone holds in your life, not their day to day behaviour.** I am called to honour my wife not because of what she did or didn't do for me yesterday but simply because she is my wife. Ask God to show you creative ways of communicating honour to your spouse.

Here are a few:

- Tell them what's coming up on your schedule.
- Let them be the first to know about important things in your life.
- If you are running late, communicate.
- Call them something exclusive. My wife and I call each other, "My Precious One", often shortened to "My Presh". Respond timeously to their whatsapps, emails or missed calls.
- Attend to their needs as a priority, placing greater weight on these than requests from your friends or extended family.
- Don't take them for granted by procrastinating.
- Be fully present when they are speaking to you, yes, switch off your phone.
- Take into consideration their recreational preferences.
- Allow them to be themselves. This reinforces self-acceptance.
- Avoid being domineering and controlling. Don't smother.
- Value them as a powerful human being with their own unique taste (in clothes, hairstyles, sport, food, movies, humour, etc). It's astonishing how many couples try to make the other person become a clone of them. Finally, place value on their dreams not just your own.