

THE BLESSING OF HONOR PRT 1

Let me start by saying God's heart is to do His children good, it is for them to live a glorious life that brings praise to Him. What is important for you to realize is that there are certain blessings that are triggered by your activities of faith:

- when you are a giver, much will be given back to you,
- when you serve faithfully, the Lord will promote you
- when you are friendly, you will gain more friends

In other words, some blessings are there for all but can only be accessed by certain behavior.

This brings me to the title of our brand-new series – God willing, for the coming 7 to 8 weeks, I am going to teach you a series titled **THE BLESSING OF HONOR**.

- Honor has vanished out of our vocabulary and way of life – it has become extinct and rarely practiced and yet the concept still holds the power to give us access to a special type of blessing.
- The truth is that when we see honor in action, we all marvel at it but where is honor in our everyday lives?
- I dream of a day when this virtue is restored in the house of God and in the lives of people.
- The enemy of our souls has aggressively attacked honor among us such that we become uncomfortable when it is asked of us or taught about it.
- Honor carries with it great rewards; rewards God desires you to have. Honor has the power to greatly enhance your life.
- Honor is very close to the heart of God such that there are blessings that can only accrue to you if you operate in line with God's heart.
- Scriptures show us that the moment we ignore what is close to God's heart, we are bound to miss out on everything that He had planned for us.
- The first commandment with a promise for a blessed life is this:

Ephesians 6:1-4 ESV 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."

- The simplest way to walk in God's blessings is to develop patterns of consistently honoring God's counsel.
- Each and every day we are presented with opportunities to make choices.
- God loves to bless us beyond our wildest dreams – just consider how He introduced Himself to Abraham:
- *Genesis 15:1 After these things the Word of Jehovah came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am your shield and your exceeding great reward.*

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- This is an amazing way of introducing Himself, He wanted Abram not to be confused about God's heart for him – it was to bless him here on earth.

Psalm 138:8 The LORD will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

- God enjoys to bless His children and as a father of 2, I have had the privilege of seeing my kids' eyes popping up with delight after being blessed with something. I find pleasure in doing them good, in lavishing it on them.
- There are general blessings but there are specific blessings. Specific blessings are triggered by us doing something in response to God's word and counsel.

Psalm 19:9-11 echoes this: "The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether... in keeping them there is great reward"

- Maturity in the Lord requires you to understand the difference between God's love and God's pleasure.
- God loves each of us deeply, and His love is perfect. However, that doesn't necessarily mean there won't be times when He's not altogether pleased with our actions or choices.
- God is pleased by those pay attention to His advice found in His word.

Psalm 25:14 The LORD confides in those who fear Him, and reveals His covenant to them.

The principle of honor

- There is no better Bible story to give us a great insight into the matter of honor than the moment the Messiah arrived at the scene in Nazareth.
- The citizens of Nazareth knew the time was upon them for the Messiah to appear but when He was revealed, their response was nothing short of a disappointment.

Mark 6:5 And He could do no work of power there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick ones, He healed them.

- The Almighty Jesus was all powerful but, in this instance, His ability to work out miracles was greatly restrained.
- We owe it to ourselves to explore the reason why Jesus couldn't do any mighty works in Nazareth? What restrained Him?
- This was the same Jesus who performed great miracles in other cities; the blind saw, deaf ears were opened, the crippled were suddenly walking, the dead raised.
- The answer is found in the words of the Nazarene people from the preceding verses:

Mark 6:1 And He went out from there and came into His native-place. And His disciples followed Him. 2 And when the sabbath day had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him, were astonished, saying, Where does this one get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to him, that even such mighty works are done by his

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hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him. 4 But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor, except in his native-place, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

- Something worth noting is happening here – like all of us; when we are doing well in life, we want to celebrate our success with our people. That is what Jesus did; he decided TO showcase the power of God to His own people.
- Jesus introduced Himself using a very strange term, He claimed to be the Messiah – in saying that, He was claiming to be the son of God.
- After He read from Isaiah 61, which spoke of the coming of the Messiah, the one who would heal the sick, heal broken hearts etc. He concluded by this:

Luke 4: 21 "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing"

- I am trying to imagine how that sounded in the ears of His fellow people – I can hear one father saying “this can’t be, this boy was playing soccer in the streets with my boy” another mother said “I changed his nappies one day when his mother went to fetch some water”.
- This community was waiting for the Messiah but the Messiah did not come looking like the Messiah, He did not come with the great pomp but came as one of them and that tripped them.
- God cannot be controlled; He will send us what we need in a package we don't want.
- The things of the spirit cannot be comprehended by the natural mind - Scripture cannot be interpreted from our limited human mental understanding.
- The response of Nazareth teaches us why so many do not receive their full inheritance from God.
- Jesus explains the reaction of Nazareth – *Mark 6: "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house"*
- The important word there is honor – Nazareth didn't honor Him.
- The Greek word for honor is time (pronounced "tee-mee").
- In simple terms, the definition of time (honor) is "a valuing."
- When you speak of the word time to a Greek man, he thinks of something valuable, precious, weighty, such as gold.
- Other definitions of honor are appreciation, esteem, favorable regard, respect.
- In the same light, the opposite of honor is not to show respect or value; to treat as common, ordinary, or menial.
- All true honor originates from the heart.
- True honor is an out- flow from a heart that reverently fears God.

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Isaiah 29:13 And Jehovah said, Because this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the command of men.

- Going back to the people of Nazareth, Jesus said these:
 - people of Nazareth withheld honor from Him.
 - These hometown folks didn't treat Him as valuable and precious.
 - They didn't recognize Him as One divinely sent to them to fulfill God's will.
- Rather, they saw an ordinary man, a common local boy, standing before them.
- What was the outcome of their dishonoring treatment of Jesus - they only received a partial blessing?
- Their dishonor of Jesus restrained Jesus from doing any mighty works.
- It was God's will for all to be healed in that city, but because they restricted Him by withholding honor.
- A situation occurred whereby Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper that a woman came with an alabaster box and started to anoint the feet of Jesus.

Matthew 26:6 And when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7 a woman came to Him, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He reclined. 8 But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 For this ointment might have been sold for very much and given to the poor. 10 When Jesus understood it, He said to them, Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work on Me. 11 For you have the poor with you always, but you do not always have Me. 12 For in putting ointment on My body, she did it for My burial. 13 Truly I say to you, Wherever this gospel shall be proclaimed in the whole world, that which this woman has done shall be spoken of also, for a memorial of her.

- This woman honored the gift of Jesus, she placed weight on the Lord by applying very precious perfume on His head.
- The unfortunate thing was that His own disciples treated their Lord with great disdain – they thought poor people were of more value than the Lord.
- This was their Lord, who had taught them life, the one who had provided for their needs and yet they didn't value in Him.
- Out of the honor that this woman showed to Jesus, she received a blessing that other disciples did not receive – *“Wherever this gospel shall be proclaimed in the whole world, that which this woman has done shall be spoken of also, for a memorial of her”*