

THE BLESSING OF HONOR PRT 6

For the past 4 weeks, we have been talking about God honor and the reason why I took that long to talk about God honor is because it is the foundation and basis upon which all other honor is derived from.

As we continue on our journey exploring **THE BLESSING OF HONOR**, this morning I want to start on another dimension of honor. The subject of honor is one that surfaces everywhere you look and in the coming weeks, we are going to explore honor as it applies to our daily lives.

In our daily lives, you will realise that by and large, honor happens in the context of authority and this issue has tripped many believers. Because we don't understand the relationship between honor and authority, many people are walking wounded and sometimes without God's full blessing because of that lack of understanding.

Before we deal with honor as it applies to our lives, this morning I will be talking about **HONOR IN THE FACE OF AUTHORITY**.

In order for you to rightly give honor where honor is due, it is important that you understand the biblical view of authority. When we spoke about God honor, it was predominately with reference to submitting to God's authority over our lives.

The same is true when it comes to giving honor in our day to day lives – the recipient of honor is usually a person in authority.

We defined honor as to revere, respect; to treat with deference and submission.

With that definition in mind, you can only honor authority if you are obedient and submitted to it. Lets establish a biblical truth about authority.

All authority comes from God and is therefore delegated authority.

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but of God; the authorities that exist are ordained by God. 2 So that the one resisting the authority resists the ordinance of God; and the ones who resist will receive judgment to themselves.

- It is an expectation that all human beings should submit themselves to civil or governmental authorities. This is not a suggestion, or an opinion but rather a command of the Lord, which applies to every soul.
- The New Testament alludes to four dimensions of delegated authority: civil, church, family and social (employers, teachers, coaches etc).

1. Example of civil authorities

Romans 13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes. For they are God's servants, always giving attention to this very thing. 7 Therefore give to all their dues; to the one due tax, the

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tax; tribute to whom tribute is due, fear to whom fear is due, and honor to whom honor is due.

- This is in reference to elected government officials; the bible calls them God's servants. For many believers this is a real test because its not every government official we like and its not all of them who govern well – we shall deal with that in a moment.

2. Example of social authorities

1Timothy 6:1 Let as many slaves as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name and doctrine of God may not be blasphemed.

- In our contemporary environment, this would read something like "...count their own employers, teachers, coaches worthy of all honor.

3. Example of family authority

Ephesians 6:2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3 so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. 4 And fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

- Again, the blessing of a long life is attached to the honor you give to your parents.

4. Example of church authority

1Thessalonians 5:12 And, brothers, we beseech you to know those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and who admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

- There are a lot more scriptures that relate to each of these areas but what is the point; the point is that God commands us to honor all those different dimensions of authority.
- In other words, when you honor anyone in any of these areas of authority, you are honoring God and the opposite is true if you dishonor any of them.
- Let's talk about the nature of a kingdom and we are in God's kingdom – it operates using authority and delegated authority.
- God's kingdom is not a democracy but rather a theocracy and when you relate with God with a democratic mindset, it will cause you to clash with kingdom principles.
- Unfortunately, many people have failed this test because by nature man does not want to be under any authority. It is as if we were born with a rebellious bone in us, which needs to be dealt with.
- People want to be independent of any authority and this has led to a lot of church splits, divorces and hostile company take overs.
- Jesus established His church and created a governance structure through which He works.

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- He set up leaders in the church to provide guidance, protection, and provision. Yes, the church is not perfect, it has never been perfect, but it does not make the idea of church to be imperfect.
- There is proliferation of home churches that are mainly made up of people that got disillusioned with church and now want to have church without the accountability that comes with it.
- All legitimate authority is from God and is for our wellbeing. Any truly born-again Christian will acknowledge and esteem authority.

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but of God; the authorities that exist are ordained by God.

- Take note, it says all authority that exists is ordained, appointed by God and not elected by man.
- The implication is that when you resist delegated authority, you are refusing the one who has delegated the authority. In that regard, when you dishonor God's delegated authority, you dishonor God Himself.
- The end result of reverencing authority is a life of peace and quietness.

1Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

- Lets address the elephant in the room: Should we submit to and honor ungodly authorities?
- Very good question because many leaders are abusive and corrupt – what does the bible say?

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority but of God; the authorities that exist are ordained by God.

- It says all authority is of God and not all authority is godly and the Bible is full of evil authorities who were appointed by God – Pharaoh was appointed by God (“I have raised you up” – Exodus 9:16, Nebuchadnezzar was an evil king and yet God called him His servant in Jeremiah 43:10).
- King Saul was not the greatest of kings, he had a murderous spirit which caused David to be homeless and to run for dear life for 14yrs and yet God said, “*I have set up Saul as king*”.
- David had many opportunities to kill Saul but because Saul had been appointed and anointed by God, David chose to honor authority by laying hands on king Saul.

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- On one occasion, David found Saul in a compromising position in a cave and by all counts this was an opportunity to avenge all the evil that Saul had done to him. Instead, he cut off a portion of his robe.

1 Samuel 24: 5 Afterward, David's conscience was stricken because he had cut off the corner of Saul's robe. 6So he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed. May I never lift my hand against him, since he is the LORD's anointed."

- David saw beyond the cruelty of Saul and saw the authority upon him.
- Sometimes the Lord will test your honor of authority by placing you under ungodly authority.
- Do not allow someone else's dishonor to cause you to dishonor God.
- Honor of authority has little to do with the leader but everything to do with the position and the giver of authority.
- David honored the king, even when the king dishonored David.
- Because David honored the authority of his leader, in return God greatly honored him; God called him His servant, He promised to strengthen him, He promised to beat down David's enemies, He promised to be with David forever etc.
- Through out humanity, God has appointed every leader, whether they were godly or not for a specific reason.
- Talking about Saul, he ultimately faced God's judgement and he died a gruesome death in battle next to his son Jonathan.
- Every delegated authority will give account to the one who delegated the authority.

Hebrews 13: 17Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who must give an account. To this end, allow them to lead with joy and not with grief, for that would be of no advantage to you.

- It is for you to submit to authority, and it is for God to judge those in authority.
- Lastly, it is important to note that the Bible teaches unconditional submission to authority but not unconditional obedience.
- Obedience deals with our actions and submission deals with our attitude toward authority.
- In other words, you cannot obey any ungodly instructions that violate God's ways and by remaining submitted, you refuse with the right attitude.
- The apostles were told not to preach Jesus but chose to continue preaching Jesus.

Acts 4: 18Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is

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right in God's sight to listen to you rather than God. 20For we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."