The Importance of Honor

The concept of Honor is threaded throughout the entire Bible and is of utmost importance for the ascending heart. Who and what we honor largely determines our progression or lack thereof in God's Kingdom. As we endeavor to open up this subject, may the Holy Spirit breathe upon us and may our understanding be fruitful.

Allowing God to educate us concerning true honor is vital to spiritual maturity and growth as God's Kingdom is certainly built upon its foundation.

The synonyms for the word honor are: esteem, respect, pay homage to, and assigning value to. Showing honor is treating someone respectfully because we value and esteem them highly.

The Hebrew word for honor is *kâbôd, me*aning: weight, splendor, copious, abundance. Kâb*ôd come*s from the word kabed*, whic*h means: to be heavy. Putting these definitions together we see that true Honor carries weight, value, and substance. Actually, Honor is a tangible, spiritual substance that carries great force in the supernatural world. A person of honor carries great weight in the Spirit. We've all heard the phrase, "He's a man of real substance." This is a person who bears a certain spiritual and mental quality that shows dignity, worth, and value. A truly honorable man has a developed character that shows the qualities and attributes of God. This is a man of true spiritual means. He is trustworthy and has a certain level of influence due to his personal state and spiritual status. According to the Hebrew definition, Honor is also described as splendor. The word splendor means: to be brilliant, bright, and magnificent; to be decorated lavishly, or adorned. A man of Honor is an individual who is adorned by God's presence. This adorning is first inward; his heart and soul are lavishly arrayed and beautified by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Afterward, this glory is worked out into physical manifestation, so as to be seen and recognized by others. The word Honor is associated with the word honesty. To be honest means to be honorable in principles, intentions, and actions; upright and fair. A true man of honor is an honest soul. He is a man who is free from deception or fraud. He is a transparent vessel through whom God can appear. He is a pure heart who not only sees God, but also shows God's love and character to others; he is a man of substantial spiritual quality. He is steady, strong, and stable. He is a mature soul who is rooted in the love of Christ.

Wilford Reidt, the son-in-law of the late Dr. John G. Lake, once said of Mr. Lake and I quote, "He would prepare himself for each day by arising in praise. Dressing in suit and tie, no matter where he planned to go, he would stop at the door before leaving the house and adjust his tie in the mirror, then place his dress hat properly upon his head, and then speak to his soul as he looked into the mirror, commanding, 'Walk like a king!' This was so that he might walk in true humility and not in a false religious form, trying to act humble. He was made a king by inheritance and the victory of the Great King of all kings, Jesus Christ! Thus, Lake poised his soul to win every battle and to walk honorably during the day!" (End Quote)

A man of honor looks into the mirror of God's Word to allow the necessary adjustments in his life. A man of honor always permits God's Word to define Him; he is who God says he is. He is royalty. He is a king in the Kingdom. He is a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 4:17).

Understanding that honor carries weight and spiritual substance, we likewise understand that to **give** honor is to place **weight** and value upon something or someone. For example, the weight and value we place upon someone's words, purpose, or endeavors in life, shows the level of honor we place upon this individual. The weight and value we render to a person discloses the level of honor we bestow upon them. According to Biblical standard, the level of honor we place on an individual also determines our ability to receive from them. Jesus was emphatic on this point saying, *"He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophets reward"* (Matthew 10:41). Clearly, a prophet's reward is reserved for those who properly receive a

prophet. According to Jesus, to properly receive a prophet is to receive him in the name of a prophet. But what does this mean? How do we receive a prophet in the name of a prophet? This term "in the name of a prophet" suggests that one renders due honor to the office of the prophet; that one hears and receives a prophet by recognizing the value and weight of this individual, his call, and his function as God's spokesman. We always hear people on various levels according to our honor and respect for them. For example, if there's a genuine prophet in my midst and he speaks a word to me, I am inclined to hear him differently than if the mailman were speaking to me. Receiving a prophet in this manner is a bestowal of honor. This honor is a direct link to our receptivity of the prophet's words and reward. We see a clear portrait of the reward of a prophet in 2 Kings 4, where we read the story of a great woman of Shunem. This woman honored the prophet Elisha by building a chamber onto her house for him to lodge when he passed that way. Elisha was moved by her token of honor and prophesied that she would give birth to a son. This woman had never given birth. She was barren. A barren state in those days was considered a reproach in Israel. But because of her honor for God's prophet, she would now receive a prophet's reward. This reward would remove her reproach from among men. The birthing of this son would also bring great joy to her life. Of course, this story is written for our learning and admonition. In this account, we clearly see that honoring a man or woman of God frees us from spiritual barrenness and unfruitfulness. This reward likewise brings great joy into our lives.

Notice also the word **copious** in the Hebrew definition of Honor. Copious means to be large in quantity or number; abundant; plentiful. This definition discloses a powerful Kingdom principle concerning honor . . . Honor always brings increase. We inevitably attract that which we honor or give weight and value to! This principle works in both the positive and negative realms. We can attract promises or problems according to our focus. If we give weight (honor) to problems, we will inevitably experience an abundance of problems. On the other hand, if we give weight to promises, we will experience an increase of promises. It's important to understand that we give weight and value to anything we give attention to. Interestingly, the Hebrew word for curse is *qâlal,* meaning: to be or make light of. This definition shows that anything we devalue or make light of, we likewise "curse" its influence in our lives. Notice the stark contrast between honoring and cursing. To honor is to **give weight to** while to curse is to **make light of**. As believers, we must be wise to give honor (weight) where honor is due. We must also understand the importance of making light of the things that hold no Spiritual significance. I don't mean to meddle, but I've seen God's people get emotionally distraught over the score of a ballgame or by the outcome of some earthly event. I humbly declare that we as God's people would be better served to reserve our emotions for the greater matters of the Kingdom. I am not suggesting that we shouldn't enjoy sporting events or earthly entertainments; but, I am suggesting that we should not give the kind of attention to these matters so as to be manipulated or altered by this lower realm. Again, anything we honor or give weight to, we will inevitably experience an abundance of the same. The things we steadily look at or place value upon, will increase in our lives. This increase can consist of mighty Kingdom power or the cares and concerns of this world. Jesus was clear that the cares of this world will choke the Word, making it ineffective in our lives.

The Bible is precise as to who or what is due our honor. God's Word is due our highest honor. We honor God's Word by giving it our time and attention. If God's Word says we're healed, blessed, and above only, instead of struggling with these realities, we should rejoice in knowing the weight and value God's Word carries! The honor we give to God's Word empowers us to make light (curse the influence) of matters that hold no Kingdom relevance. For example, earthly problems, people's opinions, adversity, opposition, etc., hold no weight in our thinking when God's Word is active within us.

In Numbers 21:5, we read that God rained down bread from heaven for His people. The children of Israel referred to this bread as "light bread." Calling this bread "light" shows that they considered it to be of little worth. Because the children lightly esteemed the bread, they cursed its influence in their lives. Immediately, fiery serpents invaded the camp and many people died. I ask, is it possible that this bread from heaven was actually holding the fiery serpents at bay, preventing these serpents from attacking? Could it be that the

bread they called "light" was actually "freighted" with supernatural power and protection from this adversity? If only they had honored this bread, the narrative of Numbers 21 could have read much differently. Instead of serpents invading the camp, God's people could have enjoyed unstinted peace and prosperity. Even in the midst of a barren wilderness, rivers of boundless glory could have sprang forth for them. And so it is, the narrative of our lives depends largely upon our honor. Who and what we honor is vital to our success. For example, our respect and honor for Jesus (Who is the True Bread that came down from heaven), determines our ability to receive unlimited and incalculable levels of spiritual, mental, and physical wealth! The Bible is clear that in Him is Life and that Life is the Light of men (John 1:4). Jesus invites us to eat His flesh and drink His blood, so we may have His life in ourselves. In Jesus, we have victory over sin, sickness, disease, and death! As we feed upon this True Bread, we are empowered to triumph over every form of adversity! As the Apostle Paul declared,

"*Now thanks be unto God, which* ***always*** *causeth us to triumph in Christ . . .*" (2 Corinthians 2:14)

"*For our* ***light affliction****, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal* ***weight of glory****.*" (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Notice carefully, Paul "curses" the affliction and "honors" the glory. This is evident in that Paul refers to the affliction as being light and the glory as being weighty. Thus, in the mind of the apostle, God's glory outweighed the affliction. The truth is, giving weight to God's glory always causes afflictions to appear light. Opposition holds no power to the man or woman who understands the weightiness of God's presence. We see an example of this in Acts chapter 16. Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into the inner chambers of a Roman jail. With their backs bleeding and their feet in shackles, the external appearance of things seems to be grim and hopeless. But, Paul and Silas did not give weight to these afflictions. Notice, they didn't murmur, complain, or become disgruntled in any way. On the contrary, they actually made light of their circumstances. The account is clear that, at midnight, they sang praises unto God! This powerful level of honor opened the door for supernatural intervention to occur! The account states that God shook the prison to its foundation. Immediately, the chains and shackles fell from the feet of Paul and Silas and from every prisoner in the jail. This shows the enormous power that is present in an atmosphere of Honor. Honor always paves the way for God's glory to manifest! Honor is the atmosphere for the manifest presence of God. Show me a people who honor God's presence, and I'll show you a people who experience the supernatural. On the other hand, show me a people who are cold and indifferent to God's presence, and I'll show you religion and stagnation. Those who fail to honor are spiritual "light weights." These are "*children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness*." These people are pushed around and highly impacted by the things of this world. They are undecided and unsettled in the higher ways of the Kingdom. As such, they are unsure, unreliable, and ineffective in Kingdom matters. These never mature spiritually. Those who fail to honor are typically unteachable. This is mainly due to the fact that they fail to place value on the wisdom and insight of others.

These can be likened to the teenager who thinks he has grown up and has life figured out; when in actuality, he has very little personal experience upon which to draw. Instead of honoring father and mother and placing weight and value upon their words, he disdains their advice and leans to his own understanding. As a result, he is left to learn from failures, mistakes, and personal pain. The truth is, we can either learn from mentors, or we can learn from mistakes. The choice is ours. The mature man or woman of God will always seek out mentors who have wisdom, experience, and the ability to impart it into their lives.

"*Poverty and disgrace come to the one who refuses to hear criticism. But the one who is easy to correct is on the path of honor.*" (Proverbs 13:18, The Passion Translation)

A Crown For A King

"*What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast* ***crowned*** *him with* ***glory*** *and* ***honor***." (Psalms 8:4-5)

This word "glory" is the same hebrew word, *kâḇôḏ* meaning: weight. As previously seen, this word is typically translated as honor in the scripture. Notice, the psalmist refers to honor as a crown. This is very significant. Crowns are for kings; for people of royalty and nobility. Crowns are worn by those of high character, power, and position. This is descriptive of a man of honor—he occupies a realm of high status in the Kingdom! His position of Honor has postured him for rulership and dominion.The Bible is clear that Jesus' redemptive work has made us kings and priests unto our God (Revelation 1:6, 5:10). As kings, we have authority and dominion "*For where the Word of a king is there is power*!" (Ecclesiastes 8:4). Our status as kings makes us superior to sin, sickness, poverty, and death. The spirit of honor is the crown that establishes us in this regal position. While every believer is a king and priest, it's the spirit of honor that gives power and expression to this lofty call and position. As a crown is worn upon the head, even so, honor affects our state of mind. Honor is the mindset of kings! Honor establishes us in a state of dignity, respect, worth, and value. The Bible speaks of many different crowns. There is the crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4), the crown of life (James 1:12), the crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8), the crown of rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19), the crown of the wise (Proverbs 14:24), the crown of pure gold (Psalm 21:3), the crown royal (Esther 6:8), the crown of the anointing (Leviticus 21:12), the Holy crown (Leviticus 8:9), and the crown upon the mitre (Exodus 29:6).

While each of these crowns carries a particular glory that is highly advantageous, I must tell you that the **first crown** ever given to man is the CROWN OF HONOR!! Psalm chapter 8 is clear that in the day God **made man**, He crowned him with glory and honor! This shows the priority that God places on honor. The crown of honor paves the way for us to experience the glory that all the other crowns spoken of in scripture represent. Again, crowns are for kings! Kings are rulers, governors, and authorities in the earth. Kings reign! It's God's desire for all His children to reign as kings in Life by Jesus Christ! (Romans 5:17, Amplified). However, no king reigns without a crown! And the **first** crown given in the Kingdom, is a crown of honor!!

"*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were* ***many crowns****; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*" (Revelation 19:11-13)

Notice, upon the head of Jesus are "many" crowns. These various crowns disclose the fact that Jesus' reign is multifaceted. Jesus is King over demons, but He is also King over death! Jesus is King over death, but He is also King over disease. Jesus is King over disease, but He is also King over guilt, fear, doubt, and anything related to the curse. There is nothing that has not been put under the authority and rulership of Jesus (Hebrews 2:8). In all things, He has the preeminence (Colossians 1:18). By His death and resurrection, Jesus has paved the way for every believer to reign with Him in His multifaceted glory—for He is King of kings! (Revelation 19:16). Just as Jesus wears many crowns, disclosing His right to reign over all things, even so, we as believers are privileged to wear many crowns as well—that we might reign with Him over all things!

Again, the first of these many crowns is the crown of honor. The Bible is clear that all things must be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). God has a prescribed order for His Kingdom that must be respected. God does nothing apart from His predetermined plan and purpose (Ephesians 1:11). While God has destined man to rule upon this planet, He has likewise established honor as the beginning of this reign. Honor is at the top of God's priority list. No man reigns apart from honor. This is vitally important because who we honor determines our level of advancement in the Kingdom. Honor a fool, and inherit folly! Honor a king, and inherit a fortune! We cannot honor a king, until we first **become** honorable. We can never confer what we don't first possess. It's impossible to honor God or man until we ourselves are first crowned

with honor. Until our minds are impacted by honor, we are restricted in our spiritual growth and advancement. Remember, honor is our ability to place weight and value upon others. The level of honor we bestow upon others, also determines our ability to receive from them. God is faithful to place great people in our lives; people who possess the ability to advance us in Kingdom purpose. It is this "Spirit of Honor" that enables us to recognize and place value upon these people, and in so doing, receive impartation from them. Apart from honor, greatness goes largely unnoticed and opportunities for advancement are forfeited. In Revelation 19, John see's an open heaven! He is privileged to peer into the ineffable Glory of God, to witness an unveiling of Jesus Christ on an extraordinary and magnificent level. He see's Jesus coming in Kingly power and great Glory! Again, upon Jesus' head are many crowns. I ask, where did these "many crowns" come from? The scripture is clear that God the Father has crowned Jesus as the federal head of all creation! The Lord has emphatically declared, "*Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion*" (Psalm 2:6). And again, "*Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*" (Acts 2:36). While it is true that God the Father has sovereignly crowned Jesus as Lord, it's also true that we as believers have the privilege of crowning Jesus as Lord over our lives personally. Please be advised, Jesus is Lord whether we crown Him or not. Albeit, until we personally crown Jesus as King, we will not personally experience the fulness of His reign in our lives. We see a picture of this in Revelation chapter 4. John is caught up before the throne of God and declares,

". . . *Round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold*." (Revelation 4:4)

Notice, around the throne are twenty four seats upon which sit the twenty four elders. This word "seats" is the greek word *thronos,* which means: a stately seat or throne. This definition reveals what a regal position these elders held before God. They are kings in the Kingdom who occupy a high standing of authority and power. These are men of great honor and respect. The thrones upon which they are seated circle the throne of God. It's important to see that these these twenty four thrones form only one circle around the throne. This shows that each elder has front row seating in God's presence. There are no obstructions to prevent them from viewing the activity within the throne. These elders also have crowns of gold upon their heads. These crowns show that they are men of stature, dignity, and Kingdom authority. As the elders are seated facing the throne, suddenly there is illustrious and powerful activity proceeding from the throne. There are lightnings, thunderings, and voices erupting from the throne. Seven lamps of fire are burning before a sea of glass.

". . . *And round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come*." (Revelation 4:6-8)

The activity coming from and around the throne has an astounding and profound effect upon these twenty four elders. The account states that the "*Four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and* ***cast their crowns*** *before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive* ***glory and honor*** *and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*."

Here, we see a graphic picture of the elders casting their **many crowns** before the Lord in honor of His Great Name. In the casting of their crowns, the elders are acknowledging Jesus as the universal Lord and Master over all things. The point can be made that as these crowns were cast at the feet of Jesus, angels rushed in and gathered each crown placing them upon the brow of the Master. In chapter 19, John see's Jesus coming in Glory and power having **many crowns** upon His head. These "many crowns" came from the elder's who cast them at His feet here in Revelation chapter four. Connecting these two events leads us to this wonderful revelation—Honoring God (in the casting of our crowns before Him) always produces an open heaven! If we truly honor Him, He will likewise appear to us in new and fresh revelations of Himself.

The true revelation of Jesus is highly advantageous for the believer. The Bible is clear that "*When He shall appear,* ***we shall be like Him****; for we shall see Him as He is*" (1 John 3:2). The revelation or unfolding of Jesus always brings promotion and advancement into our lives. This revelation transforms us into His likeness. The apostle Peter is clear that the abundance of grace is brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ!

"*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" (1 Peter 1:13)

The question may be asked, isn't the believer already a partaker of God's grace? Certainly he is! But Peter is referring to **more grace**, an **abundance of grace**; or **grace compounded**!! Paul is emphatic that we reign in life through the **abundance of grace** and the gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17). Clearly, we must experience the increase of grace in order to reign as kings! Peter tells us that grace multiplies at the revelation (appearing) of Jesus Christ! Beloved, Jesus always appears in the atmosphere of honor.

In Mark chapter 6, we read that Jesus went to His Own country of Nazareth, where He taught in the synagogue. The people were astounded at His doctrine and the miracles that God wrought by His hands (obviously, they'd heard about His miracles in other places). They questioned among themselves saying, "*What incredible wisdom has been given to Him! Where did He receive such profound insights? And what mighty miracles flow through His hands!*" (Mark 6:2, The Passion Translation). Clearly, Jesus had captured the attention of these Nazarenes. They agreed that there was something astoundingly different about Him and His teaching. However, they began to reason in their minds saying, "*Isn't this Mary's son, the carpenter, the brother of Jacob, Joseph, Judah, and Simon? And don't his sisters all live here in Nazareth?*" (Verse 3, The Passion Translation). The people of Nazareth were contemplating the source of Jesus' great power and wisdom. They surmised among themselves as to whether His Power came from God or some other origin. In their reasoning, they concluded that He was too familiar and common to be a prophet sent from God. Verse 3 says they were offended in Him. Jesus addressed the spirit and source of their offense, saying, "*A prophet is treated with honor everywhere except in his own hometown, among his relatives, and in his own house*." The people of Nazareth made a grave error in judgment—they failed to honor the Son of God. As a result, they forfeited many powerful Kingdom benefits. The account is clear that Jesus "*was unable to do any great miracles in Nazareth, except to heal a few sick people by laying his hands upon them*." Isn't it sobering to consider that a mighty and powerful Kingdom expression was stifled because of one reason—a lack of honor. The people of Nazareth knew Jesus' family. His mother, brothers, and sisters were all familiar to them. Thus, they deemed Jesus to be common and ordinary. They concluded that Jesus was no one special. These nazarenes familiarized the Son of God. As such, they robbed themselves of unprecedented glory and Kingdom power. Only heaven knows how differently this narrative could read, had the people of Nazareth honored God's Son. Of course, these things are written for our learning and admonition.

We can certainly learn from the mistake of the people of Nazareth. God grant us the grace to never trivialize God's Son! May we never cease to cast our crowns before Him in homage and respect. May we never lose our passion for His Person. May we also honor the people God has placed in our lives to assist us along our spiritual journey. Beloved, never forget, your level of honor will ultimately determine the narrative of your life. This narrative can be one of endless miracles and Divine interventions, or one of disappointments and missed opportunities. Please understand, we can never truly honor those we make common and ordinary. The moment a relationship is absent of honor, it likewise loses its edge and effectiveness. Sadly, the human tendency is to trivialize the people God strategically places in our lives, while making heroes of strangers. We fall in love with TV Preachers, while we make common the men and women who walk along side us in the Spirit. I have learned from experience, that the most powerful people in my life, are **in my life**. These people are accessible! I can call them and they'll answer the phone. If I need prayer, counseling, or advice, they are available to assist and offer guidance. Often, the people God places in our lives are so accessible that we interact with them on a first name basis. These people have given us the greatest gift of all—the gift of access. We must always protect ourselves from allowing these people to become common and uneventful

to us. While there are certainly great men and women who preach on TV, we typically do not have access to them. Your favorite TV preacher may be a wonderful man/woman, however, if you're in a crisis and call them, chances are pretty good that they are not coming. While they may be a good person, they don't allow you (nor can they) the gift of access into their lives. As we learn to truly honor those whom God has placed in our lives, we will inevitably receive from them on higher levels.

As mentioned earlier, Jesus said, "*He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward*" (Matthew 10:41). Again, the honor and respect we give to God's messengers determines the level of reward that we receive from them. I ask, what if we receive a prophet in the name of our good buddy, or a pal, or a good friend? Obviously, we will receive the reward of a good buddy, pal, and good friend. The people of Nazareth received Jesus, not in the name of a prophet, but in the name of "we know His family, His mother, brothers, and sisters." He was common and familiar to them.This lack of respect had a direct impact on their ability to receive the bountiful blessing that Jesus came to offer them. It is an astounding and profound reality that the spirit and anointing on an individual's life is transferable! The wisdom of Moses was transferred to Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9). The spirit of Elijah was transferred to Elisha (2 Kings 2:9). The mantle of Paul was transferred to Titus, Timothy, and Onesimus (1 Timothy 1:2, Philippians 2:19-22, Titus 1:4, Philemon 1:12). The spirit of honor always postures us for impartation! This truth discloses the dire need and benefit of allowing God to develop and grow the spirit of honor within us. Honorable people recognize the value of honoring others. Those who are dishonorable, see no need or benefit in honoring mentors or spiritual leaders. In this lowly, immature state, to honor is nothing more than spiritual politics or jockeying for position. Many times, these see honor as being self-serving.

There are various levels of honor revealed in scripture. All honor is not the same. Personally, I have many people in my life that I deeply love and respect. As such, each of these individuals hold a different position of influence in my life. My honor for these people also varies according to our relationship. For example, I honor my Pastor. He is an extraordinary man who has imparted immensely into my life. I also honor my wife. She is the mother of my children, my partner in life and my very best friend. I also have respect for my mailman. He is a kind gentleman who always has a warm smile. While it's true that I love and respect my Pastor, my wife, and the mailman, my honor for these wonderful people is on different levels. I certainly don't treat the mailman with the same honor and respect I render to my wife. The Bible makes a clear distinction concerning the various levels and ranks of honor. We will deal with 3 levels in this section.

Honoring All Men (1 Peter 2:17)
Rendering Honor Where It's Due (Romans 13:7)
Rendering Double Honor To Those Who Labor In Word And In Doctrine (1 Timothy 5:17)

Honor All Men

Let's begin with rendering honor to all men. This level of honor is distinct from rendering honor where honor is due. Rendering honor to all men is giving honor to every man, woman, boy, and girl simply because they are human beings. This level of honor should be shown to every man, regardless of his state or condition. We honor the drunk on the streets, the drug addict in the ditch, and the beggar in the alley, simply because they are God's creation and loved by their creator. Our honor for these people never allows us to abuse, mistreat, or disdain them in any way. Our honor also empowers us to be an extension of God's love and helping hand to these individuals. I'm reminded of an evening that my wife and I were dining in downtown Charlotte. We were enjoying an evening out at one of our favorite restaurants. We had anticipated this for some time. This was a very upscale restaurant and very costly. I ordered a ten ounce filet mignon with a baked potato and green beans. My schedule that day had been extremely busy and I hadn't taken the time to eat lunch. Needless to say, I was ready for a good meal. But to my surprise, when the meal arrived, I could only eat a couple bites of my steak. I barely touched the potatoes and green beans.

After just a few bites, I was completely stuffed. I literally watched my wife enjoy her meal as I sat there baffled as to why I was filled so quickly. Our waiter noticed I'd barely touched my food and enquired to make sure that everything was in proper order. I assured him that all was well and the food and service were exquisite as always. He then boxed my food and placed it neatly into a "to go" bag. As my wife and I left the restaurant, I couldn't help but notice a man digging in a trash can on the sidewalk. As we passed by, he looked in our direction and for a brief moment and our eyes locked. So I asked him his name. "Jerry," he replied. I said, "Jerry, why are you digging in the trash can?" He replied, "I'm hungry man! I'm looking for food!" Immediately, I heard the whisper of the Holy Spirit, saying, "David, you have a bag full of food. You have filet mignon, a baked potato, and green beans. At once, I understood why I had become full so quickly. This was not my food! It was Jerry's dinner. I held out the bag of food and said, "Jerry, here's your dinner! There's filet mignon, a baked potato, and green beans in this bag." Jerry looked at me and said, "Man, are you for real?" "Absolutely!" I replied! "It's yours. I hope you enjoy it." I could see by the look on his face that he was open for conversation. So I asked him, "Jerry, where do you live?" He looked around the city streets and said, "This is my home. I live on these streets." He then proceeded to share his story as to how he'd come to such a meager life and existence. I felt such a draw in my heart toward Jerry that I retrieved my pen and jotted down my phone number and handed it to him. I said, "Jerry, my name is David and I'd like to be your friend. This is my telephone number. Please feel free to call me anytime. If you'd like Jerry, I'll come pick you up from time to time and take you out to dinner." Jerry then asked me about my profession. "I'm a pastor," I replied. I then told Jerry how much Jesus loved him. His eyes widened and he said, "Man, if Jesus loves me, why doesn't He come down here and help me?" I responded, "Jerry, He just did! I represent Jesus." I briefly explained the Gospel to Jerry and then shared how the Lord had filled my belly with just two bites of food. I then explained how Jesus did this so He could serve him dinner from one of the finest restaurants in the entire city. "Jerry," I said, "Jesus just fed you filet mignon, a baked potato, and green beans for dinner. He then gave you His telephone number and offered to be your friend." As I heard these words coming from my lips it dawned on me how Jesus had so lovingly honored Jerry. It was clear to see the value God had placed upon this precious soul. I didn't hear from Jerry after our initial meeting, but I never forgot the impression of God's love and honor that filled my heart that evening. I received a revelation that night and understood clearly God's honor for all people and His willingness to befriend them. I also understood that I was to honor all men.

The honor that was bestowed upon Jerry is different from the honor spoken of in Romans 13:7, where it speaks of, "*Giving honor where honor is due.*" This brings us to our second level of honor—Due Honor.

Due Honor

Due honor is a rendering of respect and recognition for those in authority. While I honored Jerry as a human being, I do not confer the same level of honor upon him, that I would render to authoritative figures in my life. The level of honor that I have for pastors, mentors, etc., is honor of a different sort. While I honor Jerry as a human being, I would not stand him before a crowd and extol him for the positive influence he's been in my life.

"*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men,* ***especially*** *unto them who are of the household of faith.*" (Galatians 6:9-10)

Here, a distinction is drawn between all men and God's chosen people. The apostle declares that we are to do good to all men. He then draws the distinction saying, **especially** unto them who are of the household of faith.

The Message Bible says, ". . . *Every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all,* ***starting*** *with the people* ***closest to us*** *in the community of faith."*

This is honor in its purest form; we start with the people closest to us! I say to husbands, honor your wives before you seek to honor your neighbor. I say to wives, honor your husbands before you seek to honor your colleagues. I say to children, honor your father and mother before you seek to honor your friends.

"*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*" (Acts 1:8)

Here, we see a clear portrait of how the witness of the Kingdom expands. It starts with Jerusalem (that which is closest) and extends to the uttermost parts of the earth. There is no real value in seeking to honor people we barely know, if we have failed to honor those who play vital roles in our lives. Again, the scriptures are clear that we are to honor those to whom honor is due. The Word also tells us to whom it is due.

Husbands should Honor their wives (Ephesians 5:28-29)
Wives should Honor their husbands (1 Peter 3:7)
Children should Honor Father and Mother (Ephesians 6:2)
We should Honor widows (1 Timothy 5:3)
We should Honor God (1 Timothy 1:17)
We should Honor the king (1 Peter 2:17)
We should Honor elders (1 Timothy 5:17)
We should Honor all men (1 Peter 2:17)

As already discovered, the Hebrew word for honor is *kâbôd* meaning: weight, splendor, copiousness. *Kabod* carries the thought of abundance showing that anything we give weight to, whether good or evil, we eventually experience an abundance of. The greek word for honor is *time',* meaning: money paid, or (concretely and collectively) valuables; by analogy, esteem (especially of the highest degree), or the dignity itself, a valuing by which the price is fixed. As already discovered, to show honor is to place value upon something or someone. God has honored every man by sending His Son to be the Savior of the world. The shed blood of Jesus shows the weight and value God the Father has placed upon the soul's of men. God loves humanity to such a degree that He'd rather die than live without us. So instead of living without man, God robed Himself in human form, went to an old rugged cross and died so that He could reclaim the hearts of mankind. What amazing honor God has bestowed upon His creation in the giving of His Son. The price He was willing to pay for our salvation is staggering.

"*For ye are bought with a **price**: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*" (1 Corinthians 6:20)

This word "price" is the greek word *time',* which is typically translated honor. We clearly see through this passage, that it was God's Honor and esteem for mankind that moved His heart to pay such a high price for our redemption. According to Paul, our awareness of this price should propel us to glorify God in our body and spirit. This enormous redemptive price discloses our personal worth and value to God and His eternal plan. This revelation gives us dignity and self-worth; it forever free's us from devaluing ourselves, our call, or our purpose.

"*Since a great price was paid for your redemption, stop having the mind-set of a slave.*" (1 Corinthians, 7:23, The Passion Translation)

We are no longer slaves! We are king and priests in God's Kingdom! We are men and women of great substance and worth.

The spelling of the greek word for honor here is interesting to me . . . it's spelled, *timē*. While this is certainly a play on words, the truth of it still remains; that for which we are willing to invest our **time**, largely determines who or what we honor. For example, the time we invest in reading the Bible shows our regard and honor (or lack thereof) for God's written Word. The time we're willing to invest in relationships exemplifies our honor and respect for those particular people. One of the greatest gifts we can give to God or man is the gift of our time. Proverbs 23:23 tells us to *"Buy the truth and sell it not*." I ask, How do we buy truth? The answer is simple. We **spend** time and **pay** attention! That's right, Beloved! Truth is purchased with time. Someone recently said to me, "I can't understand the Bible." To which I replied, "You never will, until you spend time reading it." Typically, those who fail to understand Spiritual matters have never invested time into these higher realms. Once time is rendered, we soon experience an extraordinary return on our investment as we begin to operate in the spirit of wisdom and revelation. At this point, the message of scripture becomes clear in our heart and mind. I often hear people say, "I don't have time to pray, go to church, or read my Bible." The truth is, we all have the same amount of time. We each have a twenty-four hour day. It's totally left up to us how we spend our time. Be it known, a wise investment of time always creates opportunities for increase and success. Someone once commented to a highly successful businessman telling him that he a very lucky man. He replied, "It's a funny's thing, I've noticed, the more wisely I invest my time, the luckier I get!" Ephesians 5:16 says that we should **redeem** the time. This is the greek word *exagorazō*, meaning: to buy up, ransom; figuratively, to rescue from loss (**improve opportunity**). I have personally discovered that whatever area I choose to invest my time, is also the area where opportunities are created for me to advance. For example, if I invest time in God's Word studying money matters and discovering what God has to say concerning my money, there is always opportunity for financial increase. If I invest time into the study of joy, I experience an increase of joy in my life. This is nothing short of a supernatural phenomenon; that whatever we give our attention to, will inevitably increase in our lives. If we want "The Blessing" to manifest, we should invest time studying The Blessing. If it's peace we need, we should spend time studying peace. The value we place on any biblical subject ignites a supernatural power within us to experience the reality thereof. Notice that *exagorazō*, also means: to **buy up** time. Time is the one thing most everyone wants more of. It's one thing to make more money, increase our wealth, and accumulate possessions, but OH, if we could only buy more time! Well, beloved, in a very real sense, we can experience the expansion of time. This is also a play on words, but wise people always **make time** for the things they value. This is a Spiritual phenomenon . . . God Always blesses our time when we are good stewards of time. The foolish seldom have time for what's important. The wise **make time**! How do we make time, you ask? It's simple! We make time through the proper focus!

Recently I heard God say, "David, My people don't need more time they need more focus." He then said, "The proper focus will create and expand time." See a man with plenty of time and little focus, and you will see a man who wastes opportunities. On the other hand, see a man with little time and great focus, and you'll see a man who experiences supernatural increase! I recall the early days of my conversion to Christ. I was (and still am) a man on fire! Although I had a deep craving for God's Word, I had one problem—I worked twelve hours a day and had little time to read and study my Bible. I rose early and typically went to bed late. My place of employment was a little over an hour drive from my home. It was a hectic schedule to say the least. However, as I recall those early days, I have vivid memories of Bible study, fasting, prayer, and ministry to others. I asked the Lord, how did I manage to work all those hours and still have time to invest in these Kingdom matters? The Lord said, "Your focus was the key." While hearing these words, the light went off in my mind. I recalled how each morning while driving to work I would **use that time** to commit scriptures to memory. I also practiced the art of meditating and replaying things in my mind that the Lord had shown me or spoken into my spirit. I always carried a little writing pad in my front pocket (no iPads in those days) because the Lord was consistently downloading Kingdom information to me. Although my schedule was extremely busy, my focus eclipsed time and actually caused time to work in my favor. My focus opened my heart and mind to the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. When my pastor called, asking if I'd like to preach on a particular date, I was always ready! In spite of my busy schedule, not once do I ever recall being unprepared. Prayer and meditation was not something I did if time permitted. No! Prayer and

meditation always came first. As a result, I was actually buying up time in the Spirit! It was nothing short of supernatural the way time seemed to bow down to serve the purpose of God in my life. I learned this invaluable truth, what we make time for, determines what time does!

A few years back my father at the age of eighty years old fell and hurt himself. He broke his arm and did damage to his knees. As a result, he became immobile and needed physical therapy. He was placed in a local nursing center where therapists worked with him daily. At this facility, he was placed in a private room. Now one thing about my dad is he didn't like being alone. Because of my love and honor for my father, I purposed to be there as often as I could. It didn't take long to figure out that dear 'ol Dad expected me to do far more than visit, he expected me to practically move in with him. He wanted me there early and expected me to stay until bedtime! My Dad was a good father and he was always there for me. I remember as a child, if I was ever sick, my Dad would take vacation time off work just so he could stay home to nurse me back to health. One time I broke my arm due to a mini-bike accident. My arm was literally twisted and required surgery to repair it. I recall the first night after my surgery, around 4:00 AM I was awakened by the voice of a nurse saying, "One of you will have to get out of that bed!" That's when I realized that somewhere during the night Dad had crawled up in the bed with me. He refused to leave my side the entire time I was in the hospital. Now it was my turn. My Dad was in the nursing center and it was my distinct privilege to stay by his side. Being a pastor, my schedule is unpredictable and fairly busy. I didn't know exactly how it was all going to work out but I knew I had to be there for my father. Each day I arrived early and stayed late at the nursing center. I practically moved into the facility. All the nurses, doctors, and practitioners knew me by name. My father stayed in this nursing center for approximately one year. During which time he experienced many physical complications. As a result, he was transferred to various hospitals for different treatments. Regardless of where the hospital was located, be it near or far, I was always by his side. It's quite amazing, that during the course of this year I missed only one day being with him (even then I had someone covering for me). Someone may ask, "How did you find the time to be with your Dad every day?" The truth is, I didn't **find** the time to be with my Dad, I **made** time to be with him. One should never try to "find" time for the things or the people one truly honors. Something on a supernatural scale happens when we "make" time and prioritize that which is truly valuable and important. Physically, my dad never made it out of the nursing center. After a year long stay, he passed into the loving arms of his Savior. I still visit the nursing center every couple of weeks. I thoroughly enjoy taking snacks to the elderly and letting them know I care. Sometimes I drive by the nursing center and think to myself, "Wow, it's been two weeks since my last visit? Where has the time gone? I really need to get out there to see my friends." That's when it hit me . . . when my Dad was at this facility I never struggled being there everyday. Why? Because of the honor I had for my father. The value I placed on him, made it impossible for me to stay away.

"*Honor thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*" (Ephesians 6:2-3)

God pronounces a special blessing on those who honor their father and mother. There are two promises extended here.

1) That it might be well with thee 2) That thou may live long upon the earth

This word **well** is the Greek Word *εὖ eu*, meaning: good, well. It carries the thought of being "well off", or prosperous. Thus, those who truly honor father and mother will inevitably experience increase in their lives. This blessing also brings an increase of ones days upon the earth. This is more than long life, but a blessed and satisfying long life. God promised in Psalm 91 saying, "*With long life will I **satisfy** him, and shew him my salvation.*" (Psalms 91:16)

When considering the honor rendered to father and mother, we should always include **spiritual** fathers and mothers as well. Those who have imparted Spirit reality into us are certainly worthy of honor. God

Himself declared, "*A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father,* ***where is mine honour?*** *and if I be a Master, where is my fear?* (Malachi 1:6). The honor rendered to spiritual fathers and mothers carries the same promise of living long and well upon the earth. May I also say to spiritual fathers and mothers, always allow your spiritual children to honor you. Never rob your spiritual children of reward by discouraging their honor. There is nothing more frustrating in the life of a grateful son than for his spiritual covering to disallow his honor. There are many spiritual fathers and mothers who discourage honor, seeking to avoid religious or political relationships. However, we must understand that true honor is in no way political. Neither is it jockeying for position. Personally, I want nothing more from my spiritual father than to honor him. I love **him** and it's my deep desire to show my love and respect. I have discovered that as I render this honor, **my soul** is elevated into higher realms of Spirit reality. Thus, honor bestowed, effects the giver as much as it does the recipient. As spiritual leaders, we must never stifle the culture of honor in our midst but instead we should nurture it. As we have seen, honor unlocks mighty Spiritual power and creativity. The Bible is clear that honor is not seemly for a fool (Proverbs 26:1). I believe this passage is twofold in its meaning. First, there is a particular level of honor one should never confer upon the foolish. Secondly, the foolish are not suitable for high honor; they don't get it and they simply don't understand it. The spiritual and mental state of a fool doesn't permit him to absorb the glory and power of real honor. I recall being a speaker at a meeting one evening. As I took the pulpit, my eyes scanned the room and I spotted a gentleman that I knew from the past. He was the worship leader of a particular traveling ministry that had blessed my life immensely. Because of his association to this particular ministry I singled him out and honored him for being in the service. However, as I thanked and extolled him he got this sneaky grin on his face, and started to roll his eyes. He then looked at the people sitting next to him and winked, so as to mock the honor I was bestowing. Immediately, I understood the vanity of honoring a foolish man. I've never made that mistake again. It's impossible to honor someone who is not honorable.

"*As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.*" (Proverbs 26:1)

Double Honor

The third level of honor is recorded in 1 Timothy 5:17. It reads,

"*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of* ***double honor****, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*."

Here, we see the extraordinary level of honor that should be conferred upon those who serve in ministry. The apostle is clear that elders who rule well are to receive double honor.

The New Testament uses several different words to describe the function of ministry we call the Pastor. We have the word *poimen*, meaning: shepherd. We have the word *presbyteros*, which is translated elder and speaks of ones maturity in the Spirit. And we have the word *episkopos*, meaning: overseer which is translated Bishop. Paul begins this section of his letter by telling the church, "*Let the elders (presbyteros) who rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.*"

Before we delve into the meaning of "double honor" let us first address a very important point. The statement is made here that it's only the elders who **rule well** that are worthy of this level of honor. This word "rule" can be misleading if not properly understood. This is the greek word *proistēmi,* which means: to stand before, (in rank) to preside, to practice. It's unfortunate that the word "rule" is used here to describe the function of a spiritual leader. The usage of this word would seem to imply that these leaders are governors or lords over the congregation. But actually the word carries the thought of one standing in Kingdom authority who leads by example. This verse could be rendered, "Let those who **lead well** be worthy of double honor." An effective leader is one who leads by example. His life models the Kingdom. A leader is more than a manager. A manager *tells* people *what to do*, but a true leader *shows* them *how to do it*.

Those who lead well are not arrogant, self-willed, or self-serving. An effective leader is a person who lays down his life for the sheep. He is a firm, yet gentle soul, who patiently leads the people of God into their corporate destiny. We see a graphic picture of one who rules well in the life of the apostle Paul and his companions. In writing to the Thessalonians Paul says,

"*For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.*" (1 Thessalonians 1:5)

Notice, the message Paul preached was not in word only, but in power and in great assurance. When we think of power, we tend to think in terms of miracles, signs, and wonders. Albeit, as we read the text, we see this power was actually the fruit of love, joy, and tenderness the gospel had produced in the lives of Paul and his companions. Not only did Paul and his traveling companions preach a convincing message, but they also lived lives consistent with that message. Once Paul declared that the gospel he preached came with power, he then explained this power, saying, "*As ye know what* ***manner of men*** *we were among you for your sake.*" The Thessalonians were fully aware of their teachers' manner of life and that their motive was to benefit them. Paul further elaborates their deep love and respect for these followers in chapter two saying,

"*For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But* ***we were gentle*** *among you,* ***even as a nurse cherisheth her children****: So being* ***affectionately desirous of you****, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because* ***ye were dear unto us***." (1 Thessalonians 2:5-8)

How affectionate these words are spoken by the apostle Paul. His love and concern for this people is clear. We can clearly see by the account, that this deep affection Paul and his companions showed them had an astounding impact upon the Thessalonians.

"*And ye became* ***followers of us****, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.*" (1 Thessalonians 1:6)

The outstanding fruit of the gospel that was demonstrated to those at Thessalonica brought radical change to their lives. They became imitators (followers) of their spiritual parents, and as such, became followers of the Lord as well. Notice also that these Thessalonians were empowered to demonstrate this same affection and love to others.

"*And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that* ***ye were ensamples*** *to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For* ***from you sounded out the word*** *of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.*" (1 Thessalonians 1:6-8)

This is an astounding statement, Paul declares of these followers, that the Word of the Lord sounded out from them with such clarity that he and his companions need not to speak a word. Paul further explained, saying,

"*For they themselves* ***shew of us*** *what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.*" (1 Thessalonians 1:9)

There had been a powerful impartation into the lives of these Thessalonians. They were so impacted by Paul and his companions, that their lives (Paul says), "**shows of us** what manner of entering in we had unto you." This term "entering in" is interesting for it shows that the Thessalonians not only heard the gospel that Paul and his companions preached, but they opened their hearts to allow this Word to penetrate

(enter in) the deepest recesses of their being. The result was a radical shift in their state of mind. This passage also shows the enormous impact true leadership can and should have upon the lives of God's people today. The love, honor, and respect we show, will inevitably bring forth fruit in and through the lives of those who hear us. So much so, we need not say another word! Their lives will **show of us** what manner of **entering in** we have among them. Be it known, no man truly rules well unless his heart and ministry models the example of Paul and his companions. Only then is he worthy of double honor.

Now let us deal with the concept of double honor. What does it mean for an elder to be counted worthy of double honor? This word "double" is the greek word *diplous,* meaning: twofold. Thus, "double honor" is honor shown in two ways. First there should be an **attitude** of honor. Secondly, there is to be financial support for them as they work. The Bible is clear that those whose calling is communicating the truth are worthy of the church's financial support.

Let's deal first with the attitude of honor. We've all heard the saying, "attitude affects altitude." Ones attitude toward spiritual oversight is crucial. As already discussed, the value we place on an individual, determines our ability to receive from them. If we are privileged to be connected to an individual (or individuals) who stands before us in true Kingdom authority, one who leads us into deeper depths of God's glory and does so with dignity and respect, this person should in turn receive honor from those he serves. Paul is emphatic on this point saying,

"*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves*." (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Notice, Paul says we are to esteem our oversight very highly. The Message Bibles says, "*Overwhelm them with appreciation and love*!" The Amplified says, "*Hold them in very high and most affectionate esteem in [intelligent and sympathetic] appreciation of their work.*"

The writer of Hebrews expands this further saying,

"*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*" (Hebrews 13:17)

Note carefully, every effective leader **watches** for the souls of those over which he presides. This is the greek word *agrypnēo,* meaning: to be sleepless, to keep awake. An effective leader is always alert and attentive to the spiritual condition of those under his/her care. The writer admonishes us to submit to our spiritual leaders so they may render their watchful service with joy and not with grief, as this would be **unprofitable** for us. This is the greek word *alysitelēs,* meaning: gainless. It's important to understand that one can sit under powerfully anointed oversight and fail to profit from them. The writer makes it clear that we fail to profit if we cause grief to our oversight. One sure way to grieve oversight is through a lack of honor. Every effective leader desires honor from those he leads, not because he's egotistical, but because he understands that apart from honor, there is little spiritual growth. We honor leadership by placing value upon them personally and also on the Word they teach. Paul says, we are to **know them** that labor among us and are over us in the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:12). Below I've listed several things we should know concerning those that lead us in kingdom affairs.

1. Our Leaders Hear God On A Different Level Than We Do

There are different callings and elections in the body of Christ. God has called some into leadership positions and has anointed them for this very purpose. Simply put, those who are called to lead us, know more than we do. This is important to understand for this reason—there are two types of people you can never help: Those Who won't allow you to, and those who think they know more than you. The truth is, God doesn't

speak to everyone on the same level. There is a prescribed order in the Kingdom. God reveals truth to His chosen leaders and afterwards discloses this truth through them to the church. Paul alludes to this in his letter to the Ephesians, saying,

"*How that by revelation He made known UNTO ME the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand MY KNOWLEDGE in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His HOLY APOSTLES AND PROPHETS by the Spirit*." (Ephesians 3:3-5)

Clearly, there are mysteries that are hidden and reserved exclusively for God's Holy Apostles and Prophets. Again, God has a particular order through which He works. Our honor and regard for this order, largely determines our ability to advance in Kingdom matters. I am reminded of Korah and his band of followers. These questioned the authority of Moses and Aaron, saying, "*Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?*" (Numbers 16:3). Korah accused Moses and Aaron of being self-appointed. He argued, all God's people are holy and you have lifted yourself above the congregation. The truth is, neither Moses nor Aaron had taken this leadership role upon themselves but were strategically appointed by God to their positions.

"*And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*." (Hebrews 5:4)

"*Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.*" (Hebrews 3:1-2)

Clearly, both Moses and Aaron were Divinely appointed. Korah had no regard for God's order or choice of leadership. The name Korah is enlightening. This is the hebrew word *ice,* meaning: bald. This definition "bald" discloses the fact that Korah was uncovered. Being bald, his head (mind) was exposed to the elements. The spiritual covering of Moses and Aaron, if permitted, was designed to protect Korah and bring great peace to his heart and soul, but he would not allow it. I am a firm believer that a vital connection to God-appointed leadership alleviates our mind from unnecessary struggles. It's ironic that the hebrew word for Korah is *ice*. I believe this in itself is prophetic. When we downplay leadership, it's like kicking off the covers on a chilly winters night. We inevitably become cold and indifferent to the higher ways of the Spirit.

2. The Second Thing We Should Know About Leaders Is . . . They Are Visionaries

A visionary is a seer; He is a man illumined by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. As such, he has a keen eye for the Spirit! He is a man who is intimately acquainted with God's presence. He also serves as a messenger of God to His people. When Jesus addressed the seven churches of Asia Minor, His address was exclusively to "the angel" of each church. This is the greek word *angelos*. The words principal use in the Bible is in reference to heavenly angels, however, it is also used to refer to human messengers as well (see Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:24, 27; 9:52). It's used in the latter here referring to the pastor of each church. The pattern is clear. When God communicates vision to the church, He speaks to the pastor (or pastors) who, in turn, convey this vision to the people. As I've often said, if God were to send me to another church to serve, the first thing I'd do upon arrival is ask the pastor, "Sir, why are you here?" If he inquired as to why I asked, my response would be, "Because I want to know why I'm here." The point being, I'm not here to establish my own vision. I'm here to serve the existing vision of the house. Two visions in one house is not vision at all, but it's division. I can tell you first hand, that it's grieving to any pastor to deal with those who carry their own vision, particularly when this vision fails to flow with the vision given to him from the Lord. On the other hand, how refreshing it is to be associated with people who want to serve the vision of the house. Truly, "*He that is greatest among you, shall be your servant.*" (Matthew 23:10)

3. The Third Thing We Should Know About Leadership Is . . . The Anointing On Their Lives Is Transferable

It is abundantly clear from the scripture, that the Spirit and presence of God on an individual can be transferred to others. The Spirit that was on Moses was transferred to the seventy elders of Israel (Numbers 11:25). The authority of Moses was also transferred to Joshua (Joshua 1:5). The spirit of Elijah was transferred to Elisha (2 Kings 2:9). Paul referred to a young man named Onesimus as, "*My own bowels (heart) in the gospel*" (Philemon 1:12). Paul called Timothy, "*My own son in the faith*" (1 Timothy 1:2). Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "*For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel*" (1 Corinthians 4:15). Here, Paul appeals to the Corinthians as more than a mere instructor but as a father in the Lord. The people of Corinth had many teachers, but only Paul had deposited the seed of God's Word into their hearts that brought eternal Life. As a father, Paul cared affectionately for the people of Corinth. For that reason, he urged them to imitate him (1 Corinthians 4:16). Paul had a spiritual child who did just that, namely, Timothy (Philippians 2:20). Timothy would remind the Corinthian's by precept and example of Paul's way of Life in Christ Jesus.

"*For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church*." (1 Corinthians 4:17)

Timothy honored Paul as a father in the Lord. As a result, the mantle that was upon Paul was conferred upon him; so much so that Timothy's state and posture would cause the Corinthian's to remember Paul's manner of Life.

This level of impartation is an identification through association. To associate means to connect in thought and purpose. This is one of the highest honors we can confer upon our spiritual oversight; to Divinely connect to their God-given purpose. This level of honor is empowering for both the mentor and the protege. The leader is empowered to release spiritual glory and creativity, while the protege is advanced by receiving of this Divine flow. Paul declared to the followers at Philippi that they were partakers of his (Paul's) grace (Philippians 1:7). The Favor upon Paul had been transferred to these Philippian followers. Verse five shows us **why** these followers were partakers of Paul's grace.

"*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your* ***fellowship*** *in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*."

This word fellowship is the greek word *koinōnia*, which means: partnership, (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse, or (pecuniary) benefaction. These believers at Philippi partook of Paul's grace because of their partnership with him in the gospel. Their love, support, and honor of the apostle caused a supernatural transfer of favor to flow to them.

The Bible is clear that Joshua greatly honored Moses in that he was called Moses' **minister** (Joshua 1:1). This is the hebrew word *šârat*, meaning: to attend as a menial or worshipper; figuratively, to contribute to. The word "menial" carries the thought of a domestic servant. Joshua greatly honored Moses by humbling himself to serve the purpose of God in his life. Joshua was a contributor to Moses' success. For this reason, Joshua became Moses' successor.

We see this same principle in the life of Elisha. The Bible says, Elisha poured water on the hands of Elijah (2 Kings 3:11). Elisha refreshed the man of God, and as a result, postured himself to receive of the Spirit and mantle that was upon him. When asked by Elijah what he could do for him before he was taken to heaven, Elisha replied, "*I pray thee, let a double portion of* ***thy spirit*** *be upon me*" (2 Kings 2:9). It's evident that Elisha understood that the spirit and mantle of Elijah was transferable. This double portion anointing brings us back to our original thought concerning double honor. I truly believe that double honor postures us for the double portion anointing! The way we honor others determines how others will ultimately honor us. A

man who has many friends must first show himself friendly (Proverbs 18:24). The man who exercises great authority must first submit to authority (Matthew 8). And the man who receives honor must first be honorable, so as to give honor to whom honor is due.

Now for the second level of double honor, namely, the honor of financial support. Those whose calling is communicating the truth of Scripture are worthy of the churches financial support. In fact, this greek word translated "honor" in 1 Timothy 5:17, is where we get our English word "honorarium." An honorarium refers to money given someone to honor them. Once Paul declares that the elders who rule well are worthy of double honor, he then supports his claim with quotes from two undeniable sources. First, he appeals to the Old Testament in verse eighteen, "*For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain, and, the worker is worthy of his wages*" (1 Timothy 5:18, Amplified). Paul first quotes Moses from Deuteronomy 25:4. The principle here was that when the farmer brought his oxen onto the threshing floor to separate the wheat from the chaff, they were prohibited from muzzling the ox. Instead they were to allow the ox to eat some of the wheat as he works. The point here is that the ox has a right to benefit from his labor. Paul quotes this same passage in first Corinthians 9. "*For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn"* (1 Corinthians 9:9). Paul then poses this question . . . "*Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes?*" (1 Corinthians 9:10). He then answers his own question saying, "*For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.*" Then Paul climaxes this thought saying, "*If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?*" (1 Corinthians 9:11).

Here we have the proper order of the Kingdom. He that sows Spiritual things, should reap of the carnal or natural things of the people to whom he ministers. Although Paul was emphatic that he had not exercised this right with the Corinthians, he was nonetheless, a workman who was certainly worthy of his reward. Once Paul declared he did not exercise his right to receive financial recompense for his services rendered to the Corinthian church, he then makes this statement, "*We have not used this power; but suffer all things*" (1 Corinthians 9:12). What a failed opportunity on the part of these Corinthian followers. Paul would later write to the Philippians saying,

"*Notwithstanding ye have well done, that **ye did** communicate with my affliction.*" (Philippians 4:14)

Keeping this passage in context, it's clear that Paul's affliction was a financial one. Paul continues,

"*Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.*" (Philippians 4:15-18)

Paul deeply appreciated the continual financial gifts that were sent from this church. However, his greatest joy was in knowing that these followers, by giving to his ministry, were sowing into their own spiritual account. This was fruit that would abound to their own lives. Paul then makes this infamous declaration, saying,

"*But **my God** shall supply all **your need** according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:19)

Paul's emphasis on **my God**, clearly shows the fruit that was abounding to the account of these followers was directly linked to their giving into his ministry. Paul was "good ground" for their financial seed; thus their harvest was sure! And so it is, anyone who truly sows spiritual good into our lives, is worthy of our financial support. "...*They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel*" (1 Corinthians 9:14). The Message Bible

says, "*Those who spread the Message be supported by those who believe the Message.*" As we honor the messenger with our financial support, we are likewise empowered by the message they declare.

Honor That Comes From God Alone

Before concluding our study, allow me to briefly touch one more very important aspect concerning honor. . . There is an honor that comes from God alone. This, of course, is the highest level of honor. Jesus addressed a group of Pharisees saying,

"*How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?*" (John 5:44)

Jesus here is not inferring that receiving honor from men is wrong, rather, He is pointing out that these Pharisee's loved the praises of men more than the praises of God. Jesus spoke of them saying,

"*But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.*" (Matthew 23:5-7)

The Message Bible is very expressive,

"*Their lives are perpetual fashion shows, embroidered prayer shawls one day and flowery prayers the next. They love to sit at the head table at church dinners, basking in the most prominent positions, preening in the radiance of public flattery, receiving honorary degrees, and getting called 'Doctor' and 'Reverend.*' "

Jesus repeatedly referred to the Pharisees as **hypocrites**. This is the greek word *hypokritēs*, meaning: an **actor** under an assumed character (**stage-player**), i.e. (figuratively) a dissembler. It comes from the greek word *hypokrinomai*, meaning: to decide (speak or act) under a **false part**, i.e. (figuratively) dissemble (**pretend**). These Pharisees were not true leaders at all. They possessed no love, mercy, or concern for the people. They were simply hirelings who played the role of the script they were given. Jesus said, for **pretense** they made long prayers (Matthew 23:14). This is the greek word *prophasis*, meaning: an outward showing, or pretext. Sadly, there were many in that day who were derailed by the hypocrisy of these religious men. Jesus was emphatic to His own disciples, saying, ". . .*Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 5:20). The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was in pretense and hypocrisy. This righteousness was as filthy rags before the Father. Albeit, there is a pure righteousness that comes from God. This righteousness is full of truth and good fruits. Jesus is clear that unless one is living under the influence of the true Righteousness of God, he will in no wise function in Kingdom power and glory.

God takes great delight in honoring His people. This honor is a supernatural empowerment for the recipient. God honored Jesus at the river Jordan declaring, "*This is My Beloved Son in Whom I Am well pleased.*" Jesus was at once infused with Divine energy and power. Immediately, He went into the wilderness where He overcame the onslaught of the devil and afterward, returned in the power of the Spirit to work signs, wonders, miracles, and many infallible proofs of His Sonship. As already discussed, God has bestowed honor upon every believer by sending His Son to die for our sins. The price of redemption was extremely high. The fact that God was willing to pay this price shows His high regard for the souls of men. God not only sent His Son to die for us, but expanded this honor by giving us His precious Holy Spirit to live within our hearts. This honor can be further expanded and developed as we obey the promptings and dealings of the Spirit in our lives.

In the book of Esther the question is posed, "*What shall be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?*" (Esther 6:6)

This question was asked by the king to a wicked man named Haman. Haman answered by encouraging the king to lavish the man whom he seeks to honor with high notoriety . . . thinking that he himself was the man the king sought to honor. Haman had no idea that his answer was inspired by the Almighty, for God had determined to bestow great honor on His servant Mordecai. Haman answered saying,

"*Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.*" (Esther 6:8-9)

We see four distinct things that shall be done for the man whom the King delights to honor:

1. He Shall Be Arrayed With The Garments Of The King
2. He Shall Ride Upon The Kings Horse
3. He Shall Be Delivered Into The Hands Of A Most Noble Prince
4. He Shall Be Publicly Recognized As The Kings Honoree

Time and space will not allow us to elaborate at length on these four points as that would require its own volume. However, I will briefly mention the significance of these fours acts of honor. First, the man whom the King delights to honor will be dressed in the King's Own apparel. I once heard the story of a couple who were traveling from Maine to South Florida. The temperature in Maine was freezing. In spite of the cold weather, this couple arrived at the airport dressed in tee shirts and shorts. When asked why they were so dressed, they responded, "We are dressed for where we are going." The temperature in South Florida was in the mid nineties. This couple simply dressed for the glory they were entering into. And so it is, God always dresses a man of honor, not necessarily for where he is in life, but rather, for where he's going. God dresses His man/woman of honor by clothing his mind with wisdom, favor, understanding, etc. Paul calls this spiritual dress "*putting on the Lord Jesus*" (Romans 13:14). This spiritual attire distinguishes a man of honor as God's chosen representative. I am reminded of Aaron, the high priest. His garments were for glory and beauty (Exodus 28:2). When Aaron "put on" these beautiful garments, he was immediately set apart and recognized as the chosen and favored of God. And so it is, God beautifies the meek with salvation (Psalms 149:4). Those who are of a humble and gentle spirit are arrayed with the glory of the Father.

Secondly, the man of honor was placed upon the Kings Own horse.

"*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a* ***white horse****; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*" (Revelation 19:11-13)

The horse is without equal for beauty in the animal kingdom. His body is alive with rippling muscles. His mane and tail are items of extreme beauty. The horse is among the most intelligent of animals and few creatures can equal his strength and swiftness. In Bible days, the strength of armies was often reckoned by the number and greatness of their horses and chariots. Even in our modern world, the power of an engine is expressed in terms of "horse power." Thus, to ride upon the king's horse, symbolizes the king's beauty, power, and royal position.

"*And when He had called unto Him his twelve disciples, He* ***gave them power*** *against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.*" (Matthew 10:1)

"*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*" (Acts 1:8)

Every believer has power. The fact that God would so fill us with power is certainly a token of honor and trust, for power is not given into the hands of those who are inadequate or incapable. As certain as favor can increase (Luke 2:52), I believe that true kingdom power can also increase as we mature in the Spirit. As a king rides out front in a prominent position among his people, even so, a man of honor will always rise to the forefront to be seen and respected by his peers (Hebrews 1:9).

Next we find that the man of honor is delivered into the hands of a noble prince and paraded through the streets.

Our heavenly King delights to honor and promote His people. Proverbs 15:33 discloses a very powerful truth concerning honor.

"*The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility*."

Note carefully . . . before honor, there is humility. The Message Bible says, "*First you learn humility, then you experience glory.*" Be it known, there will be no glory apart from true humility. The Bible is clear that "*no flesh shall glory in His presence*" (1 Corinthians 1:29). True Kingdom honor is always absent of pride, arrogance, and self-promotion. Jesus taught His disciples saying,

"*When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*" (Luke 14:8-11)

Jesus is clear that His disciples are not to take the highest seat at the wedding. This assumption of one's self-importance can lead to embarrassment and humility when one is commissioned by the governor to give place to a more honorable man. Jesus here reveals that with shame one would be forced to give up his elevated position to take the lowest seat in the house. Rather than taking the high seat, Jesus teaches His disciples to search out the lowest seat in the room and be content there. In this low position, one cannot be embarrassed or humiliated for there is only one direction from here, and that's up. By occupying the low position, we posture ourselves for the governor of the feast to say, "Friend, come up higher! There's a place prepared for you up front." Then says Jesus, one will have worship (honor) from those in the room. We see this same principle elsewhere.

"*Don't boast in the presence of a king or promote yourself by taking a seat at the head table and pretend that you're someone important. For it is better for the king to say to you, 'Come, you should sit at the head table,' than for him to say in front of everyone, 'Please get up and move—you're sitting in the place of the prince.'*" (Proverbs 25:6-7, The Passion Translation)

It appears quite obvious from both accounts that eventually self-promotion will lead to humiliation and embarrassment. Instead of being humbled by the Lord in such a way, we have the distinct privilege to . . . "***Humble yourselves*** *therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time*" (1 Peter 5:6). Just as sure as the prideful shall fall, even so, the humble shall be exalted. Thus, the blueprint to honor is to live with a humble and contrite spirit.

I encourage you, dear reader, to follow this blueprint all the days of your life. There may be times when you are overlooked and under appreciated by man, but be sure that your labor of love will never go

unnoticed before the Lord (Hebrews 6:10). God will surely honor you by exalting you to a higher seat of authority in His Kingdom. Stay humble dear Saint, your DUE SEASON is coming!

