

The Secret Weapon Called HONOR

FORWARD BY ARCHBISHOP SILAS AND WINNIE OWITI

ROGERS CEDAR

The Secret Weapon Called Honor

The Secret Weapon Called Honor

Discovering the Master Key to Longevity and Permanence



AURA BOOKS

Rogers Cedar

The Secret Weapon Called Honor
ISBN: 978-9966-107-97-8
Copyright ©2017 by Rogers Cedar
Mobile: +254-718 875 439
Email: rogerscedar@yahoo.com

All rights reserved. No part of this book publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any way by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise except in cases of review or critical articles which should not be more than a full page without the prior permission of the copyright owner except as provided by copyright law.

Published and Printed in Kenya in 2017 by Aura Publishers
P. O. Box 23686 – 00100 Nairobi
Tel: +254 20 2134 678
Mobile: 0722 405 729
info@auratoday.com
www.auratoday.com

Contents

Acknowledgements 7

Endorsements 9

Foreword 13

Introduction 15

1. Honor, the Source of Your Power 23
2. Honor God 39
3. Honor Your Prophet or Man of God 49
4. Honor Your Biological Parents 59
5. Honoring Rank And Hierarchy 71
6. Honoring Leaders 85
7. The Honor of Service 95
8. Manifestations of Dishonor 115
9. Honoring Others 127
10. Honoring God With Your Body 141
11. The Protocol of Honor 155
12. Rewards of Honor 175

Acknowledgments

To Jesus Christ our Lord; for empowering us to be all that we are created to be. Thank you Lord for the gift of life and the opportunity to serve my generation. All the glory belongs to you.

To my wife, Pastor Mercy; you are the wind beneath my wings. Thank you for believing in me and for your support while I was doing this project. I love you.

To my Spiritual Authority and father Bishop Allan Kiuna and Rev. Kathy Kiuna; thank you Dad and Mum for investing in my life and raising me as a spiritual son. Thank you for being exemplary leaders that I am proud to follow and emulate.

To My Sons and Daughters in the Lord; I treasure you all and value you greatly .When I look at you, I see greatness ready to be unleashed.

Endorsements



Pastor Rogers Cedar has been divinely given a revelation on the subject 'Honor'. He teaches with authority in the area of spiritual fatherhood, sonship, and principles of excelling in the marketplace. In this book "The *Secret Weapon Called Honor"* are time-tested, proven and Biblical principles on the subject of Honor that will cure, bring you into divine alignment and usher you to a place of wealth. The plague of dishonor that has been prevalent in our generation will not be associated with you. I am a witness that this servant of God is a rare example of a man of honor I have come across in my decades of serving God in the Ministry.

I can't agree more with what has clearly been articulated in this book that "*…the principles in this book are sufficient to immunize and inoculate you against dishonor. Honor is the essence of life because out of it emanates other virtues like purity, integrity, discipline and humility. If you choose to be a man or woman of honor, every aspect or*

facet of your life will be positively affected, be it your career, profession, family or ministry.

We have not impacted nations the way we should because there has been a disconnect between fathers and sons as a result of dishonor. This book is revolutionary, it will transform your paradigm on this subject. Everyone should read this book. I highly recommend it.

Dr. Maurice Arao

UILMC Kenya World Mission

My friend Pastor Rogers Cedar has delved into this subject and dissected it from all angles. Our generation has a deficiency of honor. Allow me to extrapolate a few nuggets on this important subject of 'Honor'. Honor is the password of greatness, what you honor is what benefits you. Honor is the glue that keeps great relationships. Honor is a code of access.

God said, ***"Those who honor me I will honor and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed"*** **(1Samuel 2:30 NKJV)**. We honor God when we honor His delegated authority; therefore, this same principle applies. The way we will be rewarded by God is determined by the degree to which we value the authority He places in our lives.

Honor is one of the essential disciplines of life that determine your height of achievement. You can't outgrow your honor level. Only those who honor others are guaranteed an honorable life. There are certain things that God will never

give you personally but He has deposited them in a person within your reach; all you need is the code of honor to access them. God will not reveal to you everything; He will hide some things in divine relationships expecting you to use the password of honor to access them.

Honor spiritual fathers because what they can see while seated, you can't see even when you climb a tree. That is why they are called spiritual fathers; they see far. If you want to go far and see far, stand on the shoulders of the fathers. You must understand that honor is virtue. The people you honor automatically donate what they carry to you. Any anointing you don't honor cannot impact you. If you are too big to show honor; you are already disqualified from the realm of the great. Greatness is embedded in honor. Dishonorable and disrespectful people have no place in the land of greatness. It takes humility to honor. Honor is too expensive for proud people. Egocentric people are products of dishonor and pride. Honor and humility are Siamese twins. Don't sacrifice your glorious destiny in Christ on the altar of dishonor. Honor is a choice of the wise. Choose honor and you will perpetually stay on the speed lane in the highway of greatness.

Pastor Gordon Rogo

Pastoral & Congregational Pastor

The Purpose Centre Church-Nairobi

Pastor Rogers Cedar hits the nail on the head in this book of honor. It has been the missing piece in our Nation, communities, Churches and homes. To honor is to give reverence and respect as mentioned in this book. Not only is it your secret weapon, but it is also your protective mechanism. To honor is to come under and to serve, it is the highest act of respect. What you respect is what you will attract. Honor will also elevate you beyond your wildest dreams and expectation.

Dr. Fairest Hill

Motivational Speaker and Life Coach (U.S.A)

The principle of honor is what will take us back to the basics of Christian responsibility, protocol and personal integrity. Pastor Rogers Cedar is one man I know who carries deep understanding of this powerful truth on honor. His wisdom and experience gained by living and exemplifying a life of honor will inspire you to pursue the committed call of character and love that your destiny and assignment demands. Therefore, add honor to your life by reading this book.

Pastor Peter Kanyi

Jubilee Christian Church-Atlanta (U.S.A)

Foreword



We are living in one of the most powerful and exciting times in the history of the church, where so many churches and ministries are mushrooming from all parts of the country and beyond. This wave has brought with it an assemblage of ministers who randomly insinuate themselves in positions without the blessings of their spiritual fathers and mothers.

We live in a generation where many sons and daughters are without fathers and mothers to answer to. This lack of accountability is a problem that has persisted through ages and somehow, very few people have transcribed books on the same topic in an endeavor to avert this crisis.

As I read through the pages of this book, I am moved to concur with the author that honor is an important ingredient in the life of every believer. The Holy Spirit will reveal to you this secret weapon called Honor which when applied correctly can make you or break you when neglected.

The book of Ephesians 6, which speaks of spiritual weapons, starts with an appeal for us to honor fathers and mothers. The numerous blessings that accrue with honor have been wonderfully delineated in this book. The writer digs deep into the 'secrets' of honor as a principle that elevates you to a position of prominence in life.

As you walk into your season of elevation always recognize and honor the authority above you. God rewards honor! For longevity in life, practice honor at all levels. As you read through the twelve chapters of this book you will discover the secret to your greatness and you will be celebrated in life. This book will walk you through the different dimensions of honor as well as the consequences of Dishonor.

I therefore call upon all leaders and ministers including Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Evangelists, Teachers and those in the market place to read this book and immunize their generations against dishonor. May God bless you as you rediscover yourself through this book.

Archbishop Silas and Winnie Owiti,

Voice of Salvation and Healing Church.

Introduction



Honor is the hardware and software that bolts our relationships.

The word "honor" in Greek means to fix valuation, esteem and to revere. Picture a home, Church, organization or even a society where people esteem, celebrate and respect one another. We must esteem and fix value on each other. *Honor creates a spiritual buffer against the enemy's attacks, which otherwise erode the quality of our lives.*

Honor is a value of the heart and if it doesn't come from the heart it is not honor. If it comes from the heart, then the honor will be genuine.

Isaiah 29:13 says:

> ***"Therefore the Lord said: "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men"*** (NKJV)

Let us continue to define honor. In Latin it is the word "*honos*" which means that one has a high regard in the eyes of the public. In ministry, it is a term used on individuals who attract esteem due to their rank and anointing. Honor also applies to individuals of certain privileges and ceremonial rights due to performance. Honor means a certain level of fame, praise or expression of recognition.

In **Romans 13:7,** the Apostle Paul teaches us a lesson on justice, charity and honor:

> ***"Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."***

i) "Customs to whom customs is due"- Honor the customs of the people in the land so long as those customs do not violate the scriptures or human conscience.

ii) "Fear to whom Fear" – Honor the dignitaries, authorities and rank in the land. Be cognizant of the rank in the region and relate appropriately.

iii) "Honor to whom Honor" – Honor the anointing.

Honoring the anointing is the only way you receive the anointing. Jesus said, in **Matthew 10:41:**

> ***"If you receive a prophet as one who speaks for God, you will be given the same reward as a prophet. And if you***

receive righteous people because of their righteousness, you will be given a reward like theirs."

The principle of honor is what will take us back to the basics or the fundamentals of Christian responsibility, protocol and personal integrity. The synonyms of honor are decency, scrupulousness, rectitude and morality. ***Honor has to do with an ardent ethical code and it refers to a person's word being given as a guarantee. Honor is not a good idea; it's a God idea, a requirement and not an option.***

Where there is honor, there is courtesy. The Webster dictionary defines courtesy as excellence of manners or behavior. If you treat with honor a dishonorable boss, you will find favor with God for obeying His word. The Bible says in **Proverbs 15:23** that humility comes before honor. ***Honor is the hardware and software that bolts our relationships.***

To honor also means to ascribe value to a person without stumbling over whom they are not. It is to celebrate the grace that is on a person without them needing to be something else. It is kin to showing respect. The inability to celebrate another will disqualify you from receiving the very thing that you are praying for. Honor is a Kingdom key. Life flows from giving, not just receiving.

Jesus said the following:

"Give and it shall be given unto you good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto you. For the same measure that you give it shall be measured to you again" **Luke 6:38.**

The power of honor, given in love softens hearts and brings healing to the soul. We must understand that what people do is quite often not who they really are. When you honor who they are, you are calling forth their true identity and potential. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance, not someone's judgment, criticism or condemnation. The power of honor can break a curse that rests upon another, that came from unrighteous judgment as well as provide healing to those that bestow honor.

Jesus established a standard of honor when He rose from supper, took a towel, and washed His disciples' feet. His message was "If I have honored you, then you too should honor others."

> ***"If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet "*** **John 13:14**.

Having God's blessing and favor comes by bestowing honor. In **Matthew 10:39-40**, Jesus said.

> ***"He that finds his life shall lose it; and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it. He that receives you receives Me and he that receives Me receives the Father that sent Me."***

John 12:26 says,

> ***If any man will serve me, Him will My Father honor***.

If you want to be loved, give love to others. If you want honor live an honorable life and bestow honor unto others. If your desire is to be financially prosperous, plant financial seeds. Whatsoever you sow and cultivate is the fruit you will reap.

The scriptures records in **Isaiah 58 :10 -11**:

> ***"If you will draw out your soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall your light rise in obscurity, and your darkness as the noonday…. and you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. "***

Many people want the gifting and the glory that they see in great people without honoring them. Likewise, there are those that want you to lay hands on them just for the gift but their heart is far from you. Whenever our hearts and mind align with that of heaven, we release the nature, life and glory of heaven on earth. One of the ways to receiving the life of God is by giving honor. We have all experienced how the Lord loves to come and inhabit our praise during a worship service, as we worship Him in Spirit, ascribing unto Him the glory and honor with hearts of thanksgiving and praise.

Revelation 4:11 says:

> ***"You are worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honor and power: for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created."***

Worship attracts the presence of God, for God inhabits the praises of His people. In doing so we are honoring the Lord who created mankind in His image. Likewise, we attract His presence when we honor (not worship) one another and in doing so, His presence releases life to us and to those around us. The principle key that unlocks the blessings of heaven is that in giving, we release from the storehouse of heaven that which we need. It is in giving honor that your life is enriched

by the Lord's presence, for honor attracts the presence of God. When you bestow honor, God in turn honors you with the light of His life - in essence, His glory. The opportunity to ascribe honor attracts and sustains the presence of Christ in your life.

Dishonor creates a separation between people. There are seven things that the Lord hates. King Solomon declares that one of these seven is ***"He that sows discord among the brethren"*** (**Proverbs 6:19**).

We are commanded in **1 Peter. 2: 17**,

> ***"Honor all men, Love the brotherhood, Fear God. Honor the King."***

Moses gave the commandment of the Lord with the promise of longevity and prosperity that comes by honoring our Father and Mother. This includes our forefathers of the faith, and our spiritual fathers and mothers. Those who dishonor often are sick, oppressed and live in financial and spiritual poverty. What you don't learn through honor, you will learn through pain.

Dishonor opens the door to the operation of evil spirits that have the right to oppress because it counters the divine favor, blessing and life of the Lord. We can walk in the plague of dishonor when we demean others, when our conversations have the edge of disrespect, rebellion, indifference and defiance. Consider King Saul who disobeyed Samuel. Instead of utterly destroying the spoils of war, he offered the sheep and oxen as a sacrifice unto the Lord. The prophet Samuel finds out and despite Saul's logical explanation, declares unto him:

"Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as the sin of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you from being King. (**1 Samuel. 15: 22-23**).

"Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed David in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." (**1 Samuel 16:13-14)**.

Whom you honor and dishonor will shape your future for it is the determining factor to fulfilling your destiny. Although David, as a young lad, was anointed by Samuel to become King of Israel during the reign of Saul at the time an evil spirit came upon him, David honored him by playing his harp and refreshed the King. Even when Saul launched a full scale manhunt to kill him, David still honored him. While sleeping one night, Saul's life was in David's hands but David said, ***"God forbid that I should touch the Lord's anointed."*** David was a man of honor who bestowed honor to who it was due and because of that, he became King of Israel at the appointed time. He feared God more than he feared men, that God called him a man after His own heart. The reason why David was a man after God's own heart is because He sought to know God's heart and it became his own.

Consciously or unconsciously, dishonor releases a negative spiritual climate into the atmosphere that becomes your habitation in the natural. Likewise, honor creates a positive

spiritual atmosphere that manifests in the natural. As you honor your authorities and others, the Lord turns your desert to become a spring of water. Oftentimes the breakthrough that we need rests on someone, and we can obtain it by honoring them. The realm of the miraculous lies in the culture of honor where value is given to the gifting of the Spirit that rests upon a person. Biblically, cities remained in a state of poverty when they failed to recognize the gifting of a person that God had sent to them. Destiny will take you to the threshold that leads to your purpose, but who you honor will determine if you walk through that door. (See **Matthew 10:42**)

Honor is the right of passage to your purpose in God. Honor causes us to draw the anointing as we tap into the goldmine of the grace of God. You can only receive a mantle or impartation from someone by honoring them. Elisha received a double portion from Elijah because he honored him. Your promotion and longevity is not determined by your anointing and gifting, but by whom you have decided to honor. The unfulfilled heart desires and dreams will be fulfilled as you operate and put the principle of honor in motion. In the economy of heaven, for you to receive an impartation from a spiritual Father, you must transact with the currency of honor. There will be durability, stability, solidity and perpetuity in your life as a result of honor.

CHAPTER 1

Honor, the Source of Power



"The principle of honoring fathers is one major key that will unlock your destiny and lead you to longevity and permanency."

"The fragrance of honor is as distinct as the odor of dishonor."

- Bishop Tudor Bismarck.

Among the many definitions of the word honor, is 'to add weight or esteem at the highest level'. Its origin goes way back to a time in history when people used to weigh shekels (coins) to determine their value. The heavier or weightier the shekels, the more value was assigned or ascribed to them. Putting the word honor in context means, the more you value something the more weight you will give it.

When we honor something or someone we give them our deepest respect. The extent you value something or someone determines the extent to which you will appreciate, respect and celebrate it or them. It is sad to say that many people have a myopic view and mind-set when it comes to honor. They have therefore abused and misused the word because of their misconceptions. Applied correctly, honor can trigger the blessing and favor of God upon one's life. Your behavior or attitude can cause you to be classified either as a person of honor or dishonor.

In other words, one's lifestyle and deeds can categorize a man or woman as being honorable or dishonorable. My assignment is to jump-start you or redirect you to walk in honor. The principles in this book are sufficient to immunize and inoculate you against dishonor.

Honor is the essence of life; out of it emanates other virtues like purity, integrity, discipline and humility. If you choose to be a man or woman of honor, every aspect or facet of your life will be positively affected: be it your career, profession, family or ministry. When you give or show honor, you attract honor and reverse the cycle of dishonor.

There is an interesting relationship between familiarity, dishonor and honor. Whereas familiarity breeds contempt and dishonor reveals the true condition of a person's heart, honor deepens a relationship, releases blessings and attracts God's power, resulting into miracles.

The Bible gives an account of a certain noble man whose son was terminally ill. He asked Jesus to go to his home and heal his son.

> ***"Jesus simply replied, "Go home. Your son lives." The man believed the bare word Jesus spoke and headed home."*** **John 4:50** (MSG).

On his way home, his servants met him and told him that his son had been healed at the very time that Jesus had uttered the words above. He assayed the words and he gave them the weight they deserved; he honored Jesus and got his miracle.

Without obedience to a positive word that releases the power there in, it remains just that –a good intention. The noble man was not walking in familiarity. Dishonor and familiarity are so subtle and they hinder the flow of God' power.

If you study the powerful and miraculous life of Jesus Christ, you will realize that He honored His Father and the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, when Jesus went to His hometown or city, the residents and neighbors had no respect for Him and as a result many miracles did not happen there.

> **Matthew 13:53-58**: ***"Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables that He departed from there. When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief."***

Whenever you honor God who is the ultimate and sovereign authority, and the power structures that He has put in place, His power is released and miracles happen. Honor creates an atmosphere for miracles but cynicism lowers and causes the anointing to ebb out. The reason we do not see the power of God – blind eyes being opened, the dead being raised or cripples walking in our churches today – is that we do not honor the power structures God has put in place. Dishonor short circuits the flow of the power of God. If the body of Christ can put the principle of Honor to work, we will experience signs, wonders and miracles. ***Honor is the currency of heaven's economy.***

When we create an atmosphere of honor, which is the necessary currency of heaven's economy, we will have all that we need. A little boy attended a meeting at the mountain side. He was wise enough to carry some lunch unlike most of the people there. When everyone else became hungry, the disciples noticed his stash of food and reported it to Jesus.

> **John 6:9-14:** ***"There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore, they gathered [them] together, and filled twelve baskets with***

the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, this is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

Honor puts you and what you have in God's hand while dishonor leaves you with nothing. In His hands little becomes much. Jesus fed the five thousand people because they honored His word by sitting when He told them to sit. The Disciples also honored Jesus when they obeyed His instruction to distribute the bread and fish after the multitudes had sat, the result was that there was multiplication.

When Jesus walked on water towards the disciples in ***Matthew 14:22-23,*** Peter did not have much to offer but only a little faith and honor. Though it be little, in the economy of heaven, faith when mixed with honor creates an atmosphere of miracles. When Jesus spoke the word, "come!" Peter responded in honor and he was able to walk on water. In other words, Peter literally walked on the word "come!" It was safer for Peter to sink near Jesus than to remain seated in the boat.

Honor is not based on feelings but has an outward corresponding action that emanates from obedience and conviction.

Honor includes an inner predisposition and attitude combined with an outward expression of esteem and reverence.

Proverbs 3:9-10: ***"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (KJV).***

If you know you are supposed to Honor God with your first fruits and increase, then you will not withhold even during financial difficulties. This is because you understand that in the event that you withhold, you are not giving honor to whom honor is due and that is God. Whenever we do not honor a life source such as a spiritual or a biological parent, God withdraws His blessing.

Struggling to give honor and double honor where necessary is a sign of dishonor.

> **1 Timothy 5:17:** ***"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."*** **(KJV)**

In my years of doing ministry, I have observed that one of the major areas that we have fallen short is in the area of honoring fathers. We have a generation that has despised, neglected, frustrated and dishonored fathers. What we forget is that fathers have paid a very hefty price.

The principle of honoring fathers is one major key that will unlock your destiny and bring longevity and permanency. I have seen people rise and prosper but just fizzle out and fade in obscurity because of dishonoring spiritual fathers. The problem with our generation is that the moment somebody experiences some little breakthrough or prosperity, they begin to forget that there was a spiritual father somewhere who invested their time and resources for them to reach where they have reached in life.

It is inappropriate for you to be drinking espresso and cappuccino in posh and exquisite restaurants in town while your biological parents wallow in lack back in the village.

Prodigality is a Sign of Dishonor

Esteeming the principle of submission under a spiritual authority will keep you from walking in dishonor, rebellion, and the resultant curse of prodigality which manifests as wastefulness.

Luke 15:11-22: ***"Then he said, "There was once a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, I want right now what's coming to me.' "So the father divided the property between them. It wasn't long before the younger son packed his bags and left for a distant country. There, undisciplined and dissipated, he wasted everything he had. After he had gone through all his money, there was a bad famine all through that country and he began to hurt. He signed on with a citizen there who assigned him to his fields to slop the pigs. He was so hungry he would have eaten the corncobs in the pig slop, but no one would give him any. "That brought him to his senses. He said, "All those farmhands working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death. I'm going back to my father. I'll say to him, Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; I don't deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.' He got right up and went home to his father. When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him. The son started his speech: "Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned before you; I don't deserve to be called your son ever again." But the father wasn't listening. He was calling to the servants, "Quick. Bring a clean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet."*** **(MSG)**

While some schools of thought assert that it was not wrong for the prodigal son to ask for his inheritance because it was his right, I believe that he was out of order on two counts: first, by asking for his part of the inheritance. This is portrayed as a sense of insecurity in that the inheritance was already his. He lacked a sense of ownership.

Respect is earned but honor is given and so is an inheritance given to you when you become of age, you don't ask for it. The father of the prodigal son, being an honorable man, did not withhold his son's inheritance but rather gave it to him, because he had already set it apart. Secondly, dishonor began to manifest when the prodigal son strayed, veered off from his father's tenets and principles and squandered the inheritance in wild living. This son took his level of dishonor a notch higher by dining with pigs. This was against Jewish custom and it was not a reflection of where he came from, bearing in mind that his father was a man of honor. Please understand that the ***fragrance of honor is as distinct as the odor of dishonor.*** An inheritance is something of value that needs to be honored and not wasted. His frivolous spending threw him in a financial quagmire during the famine. The prodigal son then realized that the servants in his father's house were eating better than he was. ***Any time a son walks in dishonor, servants will eat better than he does.***

Dishonor started with his asking of the inheritance, but escalated when he discarded his value system. ***Prodigality is synonymous with dishonor.*** The prodigal son, having been ostracized and lampooned, came to his senses and realized that the honorable thing to do in spite of his blunder was to go back to his father. There is nothing that can set one on

the path of honor like repentance. ***Honor is a perquisite to repentance.*** Honor came back into his life when he returned to his father's house.

Notice that on arrival:

a) **His father was waiting for him with open arms.** There was a party held especially for him on his arrival back. My father, Bishop Allan Kiuna says ***"as a father, always leave your door open, because sons will always walk out and come back in."***

b) **The father ordered for a fattened calf to be slaughtered for Him.** Notice that the father, being a man of honor, did not start fattening the calf on the day of the prodigal's son arrival. He had already made prior arrangement and that is why the Bible says he asked for the ***"fattened calf"*** to be brought.

c) **He was given new raiment.** In having the best raiment placed on him, the father was telling his son as well as the observers, that his position of son-ship was being restored. This also symbolized the restoration of the covering he had lost when he walked out in dishonor. The same occurred in **Genesis 27:15**, when Rebecca took the finest clothes of the eldest son Esau and put them on the younger son Jacob. In Hebrew custom, the elder son, the firstborn in the family received the best inheritance. Just like it was with Jacob, the inheritance was transferred to the prodigal son who was the youngest.

d) **New Sandals.** The prodigal son returned home without sandals-a sign of having become extremely destitute. In ancient biblical times, only servants and slaves went bare

foot. Therefore, when the father ordered for new sandals to be brought out and put on his son's feet, what he was saying was that his son who had returned was not to be treated as a servant but as a son with all entitlements.

e) **He was given a signet ring.** Presenting a ring in ancient times was a sign of great affection and a symbol of being in an office of power among the high and mighty in society. Pharaoh removed his signet ring and honored Joseph by putting it on his ring finger when installing him to be second in command. The ring showed Pharaoh's affection and honor for Joseph. (**Genesis 41:42**). In the book of Esther, the King took off his ring, the royal signet by which the decrees of the government were signed, and gave it to Mordecai and by this transferred to him all the power and authority necessary for his promotion. (**Esther 8:2**). Honor brought Mordecai to a place of power. Through honor the prodigal son was restored to his position and authority and he was given the power of attorney.

Honor is the Source of Your Power

God has made you in His image and you are unique and valuable in His Kingdom. He has created you with gifts, abilities, talents and resources that will cause you to be a person of greatness and impact as you walk in honor. You have a role to play. Be decisive, take the initiative and be willing to risk. In whatever you do, apply Kingdom principles and you will be honored in this life. Honor is the secret weapon that will deliver your victories in life, and the key that will unlock the doors of possibilities and prominence.

As stated earlier in Matthew 13, we see that Jesus was unable to perform many miracles in His home town because the people dishonored Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ concludes with a teaching on honor because this is an important aspect if we are going to walk in the fullness of what God has for us.

> **Matthew 13:57-58**: ***"Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.***

Honor releases the power of God while dishonor greatly hinders its expression.

Jesus termed the refusal of His hometown folk to honor Him , "lack of faith" or "unbelief." In other words, when we dishonor a man or woman of God, we shut down the power of God. To be successful, you need to submit to leaders who are imperfect without dishonoring them. A true Christian esteems and respects people.

When honor is in place, the fullness of what God wants to release is not inhibited. Bishop Tudor Bismark in his book 'The Spirit of Honor' extrapolates that *"Lack of honor inhibits the manifestation of the Christ anointing and the Spirit of revelation. There is no greater seed you can sow than the seed of honor. When you sow honor, you increase your options in life. When you sow a seed of dishonor, your options in life are short-circuited. There has been a serious lack of honor in our nations and the entire body of Christ due to lack of teachings on the subject. The manifestation of the power of God is inhibited or limited by dishonor."*

Normally, people who are from a different local house or church are able to draw more from the anointing that a man of God carries than those in the house or church. We cannot get

the benefits of the gifts that God has placed within the body of Christ if we walk in dishonor. Familiarity is the catalyst of dishonor and the killer of destiny. Dishonor is the seed and fertilizer for instant loss.

Honor the Source of Your Power

The scripture records in **Deuteronomy 8:18:** ***"But you shall remember the Lord your God for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth..."***

The King James version translates "the ability "as "***the power".*** The word power also means strength. A strength is a positive and a beneficial attribute or character that gives you an advantage over other people. That word ***power*** can also be translated as ***grace, anointing, wisdom and knowledge.*** It also means the ***physical strength or good health.***

The scripture says that God is the source of your power. It is God who has given you the ability to recognize business opportunities in the market place, close business deals, increase your stock or open another branch, and know whether or not to invest in a particular business venture.

Consider Samson's account in the book of **Judges 16:16-17**

> ***"And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."***

Samson was a man chosen by God to rule over his people and given tremendous strength to accomplish this feat. This responsibility came with a set of instructions which Samson disobeyed with seemingly little repercussions, until one day, he met Delilah! Be careful with your so called secret life, there is always a Delilah somewhere in your life. The scriptures record that one day, after many failed attempts to know the source of Samson's power, Delilah vexed his heart and in the end Samson revealed the source of his power. I wonder what would make a man like Samson do such a thing even after Delilah had proved twice that her intentions were evil.

How Do You Relate With the Source of Your Power?

a) Honor the Source

Samson dishonored the source of his power or strength - God. Please note that it was God who had given him those specific instructions, disobeying them demonstrated that he disrespected God. ***When you honor God, He honors you but when you dishonor Him, you will be dishonored in life.*** So, honor your Source.

b) Protect the Source

King Solomon admonishes in the book of **Proverbs 12:23** that:

> ***"A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness." (KJV)***

Samson disclosed the secret of his strength**.** There were many Nazarites in Samson's time, but none was as strong as he was.

The secret to his strength was a covenant he had with God for the mission of his life. When he allowed a stranger into the innermost part of his life and revealed this secret, he acted in dishonor and he paid dearly.

c) Sow into the Source

As I conclude this chapter, let me mention again that spiritual fathers and biological parents are also a life source. In my book *The Dynamics of Son-ship,* I have stated that the literal meaning of the word honor is to add wealth. The apostle Paul used the same word for honor, *'diplous',* in Greek, which refers to a value of money paid, and by analogy, esteem of the highest degree. We should not be frightened to be personally very generous in our dealings with our spiritual fathers. ***When you respect and honor your spiritual father, in essence, you respect and honor the source of your strength.***

Honor is the means of opening the heavens for our own financial blessing. We should also be aware that by properly honoring those over us in our actions and speech, we are adding value to them in other ways. If we uphold their honor, giving due praise, encouragement and appreciation, we position ourselves to download an impartation, inheritance and generational blessing.

When we fail to honor them, we end up with 'faint praise'. ***Faint praise is when we say something 'nice' about somebody, but understate their value.*** This is akin to character assassination, for to dowplay another's value or grace is to belittle them. This approach of lack of honor is mean-spirited, and destructive to the work of God. It falls short of keeping with the Spirit of Christ. It is the unwillingness to honor another, or to express

appreciation, or to give the esteem that is due. It shows dishonor, or perhaps unhealed hurts, or a despising, cynical, independent spirit. ***"The grace you do not honor cannot lift you, and the anointing you despise cannot spice your life.***

What is Your Secret with God? What did God Tell You to Do?

There are people who have received specific instructions concerning their spiritual authorities, some other person or even the house of God that was attached to a blessing; however, as soon as the blessings began to flow they walked in disobedience, and even quit church or contributing towards church projects and tithing. There are those who now despise their pastors and spiritual fathers, and reason that they cannot tithe or give their supposedly "*hard earned*" cash in the house of God. They feel like they are indispensable! They have forgotten the man of God that laid hands on them and anointed them when they were low. They have not only dishonored the man of God but ***the God of the man or the woman for that matter!***

Some of you know that if your man of God had not prayed for you, you would not have succeeded. ***Always remember that you flourish because of the grace of your man of God.*** Then there are those that went ahead and revealed their secret to the Delilah's of life, who ended up cutting their hair: some of them have lost vision, dreams, investments etc. May God lift you up. May He restore you back to your former position of power and influence. When Samson turned back to the path of honoring God, his strength was restored and eventually his impact was greater and so shall yours.

CHAPTER 2

Honor God



"Do not stain your service to God with the blood of a duty offered in disobedience."

Proverbs 3:9: ***"Honor the LORD with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase."***

In the book of Proverbs, we see a collection of teachings from Solomon written to his son, directing and showing the young man how to live a life that is pleasing to God. The above scripture goes beyond tithing or faithful stewardship in our giving. It also applies to our stewardship, as far as our giving is concerned and to several other aspects of our Christian life as well. The term "first fruits" that Solomon uses in **Prov 3:9**,actually has roots that extend as far back as **Exodus 23:19**, which says:

"The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe the kid in his mother's milk."

It is interesting to consider:

1. The Place – The House of the Lord

Note other references regarding this precept:

Exodus 34:26: ***"The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."***

Numbers 18:12: ***"All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the first fruits of them which they shall offer unto the LORD, them have I given thee."***

Numbers 28:26: ***"Also in the day of the first fruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the LORD, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work."***

Deuteronomy 26:10: ***"And now, behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God."***

Nehemiah 10:35: ***"And to bring the first fruits of our ground, and the first fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD"***

2. The choice – The First of the First Fruits

They were not to bring crumbs, or leftovers, but rather the first of the first. Not only does God desire the first of the first but we are told where it is to be given, in the house of God.

a) God desires our first fruits when it comes to our worship

God desires our best when it comes to our worship in His house. Worship doesn't start from the first congregational song to the final amen in the service! Worship does not start with the preaching. Worship therefore is a life style of giving God your best in every aspect of your life.

b) God is honored when we sing, dance, pray, give, tithe, serve and give it our all.

Psalms 13:6: ***"I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me."***

Psalms 21:13: ***"Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power."***

Psalms 30:4: ***"Sing unto the LORD, O you saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."***

c) God desires our first fruits when it comes to our work.

What we give to God should be our very best! If you teach, you should do your very best. If you are in Sunday school, you should do your best. If you are serving in the security department, give it your best. If you are in the marketplace, you should give it your best. Anything you do shoddily or with mediocrity is tantamount to dishonor.

Colossians 3:23: ***"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men".***

God desires our first fruits when it comes to our lifestyle: what we say, do and even how we conduct ourselves. Christians are living in dishonor by being lackadaisical and lethargic when it comes to this. Remember that God is honored by our first fruits not by our left-over's but the best that we can possibly give God.

d) God desires our first fruits when it comes to our wealth

Many people only give when they have something left. God desires to be first even in our giving. The scriptures records in **Proverbs 3:10** ***"So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."*** This speaks of provision. There will be a sufficient provision of bread for the eater for the ensuing year and of seed for the sower when the time of sowing returns. Our motive in bringing our substance and first fruits to the house of the Lord is not filled barns and presses bursting out. These are simply the rewards of obedience. Our motive is seen in the purpose of this text in **Proverbs 3:9-10** which says:

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: 10 so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Scriptures record in **Proverbs 3:10** ***"Honor the Lord with your wealth.*** "To honor means to hold another with great respect, to esteem, or to worship. The God we serve is omnipotent,

omniscient and omnipresent, and because of His majesty, is worthy of honor and therefore worship. The reason the God we serve deserves honor is because He has no match or equal.

In referring to the majesty of this great God, it is recorded in **Revelation 4:11**,

> ***"You are worthy our Lord God, to receive Glory and Honor and Power, for you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being."***

It is the understanding of the fact that this great God created all things and by His will they have their being. It is the same understanding that makes us release the very best of our substance as we honor God with the first fruits of all our crops. This indicates the fact that we should not give our God left overs or what we don't value**.** If you don't value what you are giving, God will not value it or even receive it.

Our honoring God is what attracts the rewards of honor that are discussed in the last chapter of this book.

Malachi 3:10, the scripture records that we should:

> ***"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it." (NKJV)***

Many Christians have a wrong notion and perception of God. They see Him as a great taker who just wants to take from them. This mind-set of dishonor disqualifies you from being a man or woman of honor. You will hear them say, "He wants

my money", or "He wants this and He wants that from us!". As much as it is true that we are called to give all we have to Him, we have to realize that God is the greatest giver.

In **John 3:16** the bible says,

> ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*** (**NKJV**)

We have a generation that believes that we need to hoard and amass but not give. ***Our philosophy and motto has been "get all you can , put it in the can then sit on the can".*** Everything God created was designed to reflect His giving nature - the Sun gives heat, the clouds give rain, trees help provide oxygen and the earth gives resources. Everything that He created reflects God's generous Spirit. We cling to what is ours and refuse to give it up. Clinging to everything we have is part of our old nature. Now that we are new creations, we have been re-created to reflect God's generosity.

Generosity is the fountain tap of fulfillment while dishonor is a manifestation of lack of revelation. It is the spirit of honor that says "Be generous, courteous and respectful" because we know that it is biblical.

Honor Begets Honor

> **1 Samuel 2:30:** ***"Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed."***

God is in the business of recompensing men and women according to His rule of infallible justice which is applicable to saints and sinners. This concurs with the general principle

that is enunciated in our text. ***If you honor God you will be honored in life but if you dishonor God or any life source you will be dishonored and be lightly esteemed***. It is common sense and the duty of every creature to honor its Creator. It is incumbent upon all to acknowledge God's existence and sovereignty and render honor and homage to Him. God's personal grandeur and the perfection of His character demand that we honor Him. He has made Himself known to us in a way that He has not revealed to the rest of His creatures. The galaxies and whole creation attest to His handy work. It would be criminality on our part, an indictment and an insult to divinity if we withheld the honor that is due to God.

We honor God by confessing His deity in all our prayers and praises including with our substance, lifestyle and even the way we treat or relate with others. Many have fallen into the trap and fallacy of dishonoring God in our churches today especially by disregarding scripture. Your mind may stagger and reel under a heavy load if you attempt to understand God by your finite mind because He cannot be fathomed and comprehended in that way. We have ignored the Triune God and His works which is absolutely essential to obtaining the blessing promised in His word "***Those who honor me I will honor***."

We honor God not only by confessing His dominion but by proving the reality of our confession as we yield to Him through obedience. It is no use for you to say, "I honor God," and yet continue to live contrary to His Law. If we do honor Him, we shall seek to obey His commandments. Many may take **Proverbs 3:9-10** lightly and not practice it, not realizing

that the omission of it is tantamount to the sin of commission. We should not argue or quarrel with the requirements of God's commands; ***we need to understand that if we violate a principle, it will violate us.***

Any man who goes around selecting and choosing what scriptures to believe and apply even as they obey some and neglect the rest, does not honor God. Honor is rendering obedience to God's will and tenets in all things. This includes the social duties that appertain to your home as a husband or wife, and the duties and services that your church or boss requires. ***It is never right to offer to God a sacrifice while you disrespect your spiritual authorities.*** You cannot say you are submitted to your boss or loyal to spiritual authorities but are disrespectful to your biological parents; or fail to pay your tithes while loving your spouse and family because eventually, you will be jeopardizing the security and establishment of your family.

Do not stain your service to God with the blood of a duty offered in disobedience. Let your walk and service be blameless in all the commandments of the Lord. If that is not so, your claims of honor will be rendered null and void.

The other way of honoring God is by trusting Him at all times. Remember that the heavier our challenges, troubles and weaknesses, the greater the opportunity of glorifying God through the help of His Holy Spirit.

Can you trust God? When you are in tough times, honor God, when things are good, honor God. It is easy to bless the name of the Lord when your barn and bank account are full. Can you glorify Him now that the car has broken down, the rent is

not paid and your fridge is empty? The sons of Eli – Hophni and Phinehas – were priests, but they did not honor God. Therefore, God dishonored them too. They were despised and people loathed their very services in the sanctuary because of their sin.

Eventually God thrust them out of the priest's office. ***Being a good orator with flowery sentences, or having great business acumen cannot take the place of applying kingdom principles.*** Honor God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The worship of Mammon has become the golden calf of our day. People spend lavishly on themselves, go to posh and exquisite restaurants at the expense of God's house. They give God left-overs and don't pay their tithes.

I have seen people pledge towards the purchase of church land or a project and not redeem their pledges, but pay heftily to attend a comedy show or secular music concerts. There is nothing wrong with comedy but honor your pledges for crying out loud. If you honor God, you will be honored in the eyes of those whose opinions are significant and mighty in this life. If you are not honored before men at all, it would not matter much, for those who God honors, will be honored in life.

Worldwide fame and notoriety pale significantly in the light of God's honor. A story is told of an orator whose entire audience left while he gave his speech, with the exception of one man. For a moment the orator felt discouraged until he discovered that the one man who had stayed behind was Plato. If you ever found yourself in a situation, without the approval of men, be content to have God's approval.

CHAPTER 3

Honor Your Prophet or Man of God



"When you love you give, if you honor you sacrifice."

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13: ***"...respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work."***

Malachi 1:6 – ***"A son honors his father…"***

Your prophet or man of God is your pastor or spiritual father. Until your pastor becomes your spiritual father you are not ready for your next level. Honor is the life-blood of relationships and without it there is no 'giving'. There can be no impartation, spiritual inheritance or generational blessing if there is no honor. It is sad to note that the place of honor

has been filled with the dead weight of negative attitudes and wrong opinions towards spiritual authorities. Where honor is absent, dishonor is present. Dishonor will keep your life at the low ebb of assumptions, pride, faint praise, and cynicism.

From the Wisdom of Solomon, we are instructed:

> **Proverbs 14:1:** ***"The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tear hers down."***

The woman referred to here can be symbolic of churches everywhere. It is with the giving of honor that the believers of a church build up their fellowship, or tear it down. The Scriptures are clear enough in **1Timothy 5:17.** ***"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."***

If we are going to walk in honor as it relates to our spiritual authorities, let's consider the following:

a) Know Them

The scripture records in **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (KJV)**,

> ***"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."***

Of immediate interest is the phrase from the King James version, "know them," which is common to a number of translations, but in others is variously rendered as, 'respect those', 'appreciate those', 'honor those', and the like. In the New Testament Greek used by the apostle Paul, the word he

used is ***'eido'***, which properly means to ***see*** either literally or figuratively. By implication, this means to know, to be aware, to behold, to consider, having knowledge, to look on, to perceive or to be sure.

One of the requirements for us to apprehend the grace that is on a spiritual father, is that we must have eyes to see, to behold, to perceive or understand the grace that he or she has been given. We must *see* in our fathers something good that others cannot see. It is that perception that will cause one to sanctify their spiritual authority in their hearts and not take them for granted. We are to be fully involved in their lives. We must understand their vision, their motivation, and their hearts' desires.

We must perceive their calling and go further by lifting the load off their shoulders as we carry the weight of the ministry together with them. We cannot appreciate, respect, and honor leaders over us if we do not fully know, understand and willingly share and participate in their works. The text says that we are to, ***"...esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."*** The spirit of Christ calls for His appointed leaders to be loved, understood, accepted, supported, and appreciated. There must be honor in the house, and it must be given to our leaders. ***Honor is not really honor unless it has a practical dimension.*** What are their needs? We must help to meet them.

What are their struggles? We must carry the burden of prayer for them. What kinds of things do they like? We can seek to be a blessing to them. What kind of friendship and support would they appreciate? We must be there for them. We are

to be generous toward our spiritual fathers, for generosity is, without exception, an expression of honor.

b) A Son Honors

According to the prophet Malachi ***"A son honors his father…"*** **Malachi 1:6**. How does a son honor a father? Firstly, like Jesus honored His father. If we are to be transformed into the image of God's son, then we too should honor God in the same way Christ honored Him.

Jesus represented His Father, spoke on His behalf, repeatedly spent valuable time with Him, walked in a mature relationship, was never ashamed but proud of His Father, remained teachable and in close relationship with God. He reverenced His Father and upheld His honor. He always looked for a quiet place where He could be alone with His Father. He spent much time listening to His Father, conforming Himself to His Father's will, and learning His Father's ways. This led to a mature, intimate and true Father-Son relationship.

Parallels can be drawn from the aforementioned that can instruct, not only how our relationship with Christ ought to be, but also how we need to relate with our spiritual parents. A son who wants to pursue and imitate his father , will spend more time with him. He or she will want to sit, listen, and seek to develop appropriate and accountable relationship with his or her father.

We simply have to spend time with each other, walk with each other and care about each other, if we are to obtain the grace that comes from a father-son relationship. You will need to seek out your spiritual father, spend time, sit, talk and share

with them your concerns and learn their ways. This is the way you imitate, honor, and pursue your spiritual authority.

Just How Does a Son Honor a Spiritual Father?

Ask yourself the following questions:- How did Timothy feel about Paul and how did he serve him? How did Timothy 'see' Paul? What were Timothy's attitudes and values in serving him? How would he have spoken to others about him? How did Timothy treat Paul? The following scripture references give a clue (**2 Timothy 1:4** and **Philippians 2:20-22**).

When you answer these questions, you will have developed a blue print on how to relate and walk with your spiritual father. Now, how did *Elisha* feel about *Elijah*? Deep in his heart, how did he feel about following, pursuing and serving him? (**2 Kings 2:6, 12**). Think of how Joshua served Moses with fidelity, extravagance, submission and a yielded spirit; how he showed wholehearted devotion and passion. (**Exodus 24:13, 33:11**, **Numbers 11:28-29, 27:18**)

Finally, think about how the *disciples* followed *Jesus*? Would we find any less devotion in them than in Joshua or Elisha before them, or in Timothy who came after? (**Matthew 19:27**) No! Except for the son of perdition, they all drank the cup of Christ's baptism (**Mark: 10:38-39**).

The problem in modern, denominationalized and institutionalized Christianity is that people do not see the need to be personally devoted to their spiritual leaders; yet this is what the Scriptures call for in defining the apostolic faith of the cross of Jesus. So, how does a son honor his father?

Four Ways a Son Honors His Father

1. A Son is Not Ashamed

A son is not ashamed to be associated with the father, but feels blessed by the relationship, is proud of the association, and is pleased to speak of his father's name. He knows the good that is in his father and is glad to represent him and rejoices when speaking in honor of him. Eventually, we will reap whatever we sow. If you want to reap honor, you had better sow honor! If you honor your father, your sons will honor you. My spiritual father came to minister in a conference that I was hosting and made a statement that I will never forget. He said "*the extent to which you lay your life down for your spiritual authority is the extent to which your spiritual sons will lay their lives down for you*". A son who is embarrassed about the relationship does not understand sonship, and is not spiritually mature.

2. A Son Honors a Father by Being Teachable

There are those who speak of being sons, but do not have a teachable spirit. All they want is what they can get from the relationship and that is the blessing of a father. They are just leeches and parasites who want to take what they have not worked for. This is nothing other than independence, pride, and spiritual ignorance. Such a person is spiritually immature. The willingness to be taught is an expression of humility, and it is the attitude of submission that marks a true son.

3. A Son Reserves a Unique Place in His Heart for His Father

As a father's role in a son's life is unique, so should a son's love for his father. A spiritual son should not identify somebody as

his spiritual father, only to treat them casually. There should be a special place of honor, affection, respect and submission in the heart of a son for a father. Whilst in general we are to honor the church fathers (**1 Timothy 5:17**), and scripture entreats us to respect every older man as a father (**1 Timothy 5:1**), there is nevertheless a special sense of affection and great respect toward the one we regard as our covering in Christ. In saying this, I do not mean that we should not respect other great men and women. When you have determined that a certain person is really a father in the Lord to you, you should esteem, serve, and honor them. A father-son relationship cannot really be prescribed by text. ***There are things that are taught and some are caught***. You cannot take a set of words and say, ***'Here are the rules'***. There are certain things that can only be established through the *grace* of son-ship as one's heart matures in spirit and wisdom. It is a life to be explored, rather than a game simply played by the rules. The bottom line is a son must have a heart for his father.

4. A Son Honors His Father's Thoughts, Wishes and Desires

What a father speaks ,thinks, wishes and desires should be important to a son , since one important role a father plays is to share their immense wisdom with their spiritual sons. A father in the faith has much wisdom to offer sons, and this is a primary role of fathers. My wife and I settled it a longtime ago that whatever our spiritual authority tells us is 'a thus saith the Lord'. The calling for all spiritual leaders, especially fathers, is to teach, encourage, correct, discipline, and rebuke when necessary. The rebuke serves the role of pruning or circumcision and promotes fruitfulness and

productivity. What happens when a son is convinced of a certain course of action, but the father wants him or her to wait? It is not uncommon for God to speak to spiritual fathers concerning their sons. Therefore it would be detrimental to deal clandestinely with your spiritual father. ***Always be transparent, honest and truthful.*** There is a Ghanaian proverb that says *your father can see something while seated that you cannot see while standing.*

Whenever I am rebuked by my authority I look at my heart and never argue on whether they are wrong or right. A father may not always be correct, for he does not know all things, and makes mistakes too. More often than not, grace is at work, and God uses a father's words to instruct a son. Even if not totally correct, often what a father says has in it the seed of truth which can be helpful if looked at through the lenses of honor. Don't judge hastily and jump into conclusion that your leader has missed it. More often than not, by the grace of God ,they are speaking a truth that is not yet revealed to the son.

Therefore, a father's thoughts ought to be respected and heeded. The father's words express the heart of God toward us and we would be foolish and naive to discard the wisdom that has been given to us. So be thoughtful, be wise, be careful, don't be hasty in judgement, have respect, pay attention, and honor your man of God's thoughts, wishes and desires. In closing, **Deuteronomy 5:16** says, ***"Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.*** "This commandment is so

important, and has such permanent and enduring principles, that Paul repeated it in the New Testament, and referred specifically to its promise, ***"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."*** (**Ephesians 6:2-3**).

This implies that it was not just a commandment in the Law of Moses, but has been re-emphasized as a promise and principle of life for the body of Christ in the grace dispensation. It embodies a dynamic and powerful apostolic principle. To dishonor our parents, both natural and spiritual, is to effectively deny our blessings and cut ourselves off from the fountain of our supply. To consistently give honor, activates the power of God on our behalf. You are not only promised the possibility of a longer and healthier life, but also the distinct assurance that *"it will go well"* with you. The mouth of that godly man or woman; the pastor, the leader of the ministry, the apostle or prophet, is appointed by God to be a fountain of life to you.

The principle is, you need to know how to honor servants of God. When you recognize who your father is, go ahead and love, serve and respect him and you will receive the blessings that accrue to those who honor spiritual authority. When you are willing to be a son in the house, willing to love, serve, and honor a father, God opens the fount of blessing and the heavens on your behalf.

CHAPTER 4

Honor Your Biological Parents



"Honor is not limited to how one responds to authority by submission and service, but it includes one's character and disposition." ~ Rogers Cedar

Exodus 20:12: "***Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."***

The scripture records in **Deuteronomy 5:16** that,

"Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

Looking at the New Testament, the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, emphasizes the same command as follows:

> **Ephesians 6:2-3:** ***"Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land"***.

This command is not optional and applies to all people. lf you obey other kingdom principles and do not obey this particular principle you are walking in error. If you have parents, you are to honor them no matter how old or uneducated they are, regardless of your standing and position in society. It is paramount for you to remember that you will never outgrow this command. It is for every race, nation and culture. It is so sad to note that in our day, we place a higher premium on honoring self at the expense of those around us who need and deserve to be honored. Regardless of your parents' position or standing in life, regardless of how you may feel about it, God commands all of His people to,

"Honor your father and mother."

Honor goes beyond superficial flattery and involves locating the things that your parents have done right and then praising them for those things whatever they might be. When children do not honor their parents, the very fabric of society begins to unravel and decay and the end result is disaster. It was the ancient Greek philosopher Plato who said, ***"What is honored in a land will be cultivated there."***

Honoring your parents is an attitude accompanied by actions that says to your parents: "You are worthy." You are the person

God sovereignly placed in my life. You may have failed me, hurt me, and disappointed me at times, but I am taking off my judicial robe and acquitting you from the courtroom of my mind. I choose to look at you with compassion as people with needs, concerns, and scars of your own."

In the Law of Moses, God reveals what would happen to people who do not honor their parents. The scripture records in **Exodus 21:15 ,17** ,

> ***"Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death";… "Whoever curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death"***.

It is evident that God takes parental role seriously. Many in the society at large have a distorted view of what honoring parents means. God's purposes are not advanced when we act as if certain issues do not exist or happen. Your parents might have been hurtful in the past as you were being brought up or at some point in your life.

We all need to get to a point where we have truly forgiven because forgiveness demands that those issues should not influence your attitude toward your parents. ***A wise person once said that to forgive is to set a prisoner free only to turn around and find that the prisoner was you. Not forgiving is like drinking poison and expecting the person you are holding the grudge against to die.***

People who fail to forgive have ended up with zero returns for their labor. I adjure you to drop the attitude that ***"it doesn't matter"*** because it does matter. It matters to God, and it should matter to you. Make every effort to improve your

relationship with your parents in whatever ways you possibly can. Take cognizance of the fact that they have done some things right too. May be your perspective is just clouded by your pain. Appreciate the sacrifices they have made for you. Look at them from the same prism that Christ looks at them, that is with compassion, mercy and forgiveness, even as God in Christ has forgiven you. Honoring our parents is always sure to release the blessing.

> **Ephesians 6:2:** ***"Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise."***

It is worth noting without fear of contradiction that God goes out of His way to record for us the benefits of obeying a certain command in His Word, it is not wrong to desire those benefits. Let's look at the benefits of honoring our parents more closely:

a) That it may go well with you

The Bible says good things are going to happen. It is a guarantee that God will bless you. God will bless you at your point of greatest need if you obey the command to honor your parents. Your business, career, ministry, family, health and every aspect of your life will be blessed.

b) That you may live long in the land

The literal meaning of this phrase is that those who honor their parents will live longer than those who don't. If we look a little deeper, it indicates that God is promising even more than a longer life for the one who chooses to obey. I believe ***"that you may live long in the land"*** is also making a promise

about your legacy. The benefits of honoring biological parents are immense in that in the family that chooses to honor their parents, there is a ripple effect that goes on for many years. When you honor your biological parents, your children see something modeled. They will likely then choose to honor you. Settle this in your heart that if you honor your parents, your children will follow suite and this will in return influence their lives positively and can continue for many generations. When we do not honor our parents, it devastates and hurts them. Let's look at the story of David and Absalom.

> **2 Samuel 18:18:** ***"Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up a pillar for himself, which is in the King's Valley. For he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance." He called the pillar after his own name. And to this day it is called Absalom's Monument."***

When Absalom killed his half-brother as revenge for the rape of his sister, Tamar, the family began to disintegrate. David was so angry with Absalom that he fled Jerusalem to avoid his father's wrath. Absalom spent three whole years in exile and never contacted his father. One would conclude that David would be filled with rage and hatred toward his son during this time. The Scripture records in **2 Samuel 13:39**, ***"The spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom."*** David hated his son's actions, but still felt deep love that exists between members of the same family. Maybe a similar situation exists in your family this very moment, you could have been "banished" by your parents and wrongly assume that they do not love you.

David finally overcame his negative feelings enough to call for his son to come home.

The Scriptures record in **2 Samuel 14** as follows:

> ***"So Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king's presence." (v.28)***

When Absalom came back to Jerusalem, David did not give him audience . Absalom reasoned,

> ***"Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still. Now therefore let me go into the presence of the king" (v. 32).***

Finally, David allows Absalom to come in:

> ***"So he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom"* (v. 33)**.

A fairy tale ending was never to be. The Bible tells us clearly in **2 Samuel 15:6,12**, that Absalom went out and stirred up trouble.

> **2 Samuel 15:6** says, ***"Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." … "And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing."***

A son who had been rejected for five years but now reconciled to his father, still had so much anger in his heart that he pulled the nation away from his biological father. David was devastated by Absalom and his group of conspirators. **2 Samuel 15:30**.

"David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went".

As you daily progress in life, keep in mind that the relationship between a biological parent and their children is cast on stone and as such no negative circumstance should ever break that bond. Perhaps you had an awful relationship with your parents, as a little child, a teenager, or perhaps it was cozy early in your life, but now that you are grown and married you have drifted far apart. You're thinking to yourself, "My parents never care about me!" The truth is, they are probably thinking of you right now. You may perhaps be saying, "Why don't they call me?" In some ways, your relationship with your biological parents could be like the one David had with Absalom.

There are mixed feelings of love and frustration that causes people to act in ways that may be very different from what they truly feel. Maybe you find yourself in a situation not unlike Absalom's, where all the signals from your parents seem to say, "Stay away! We don't need your honor!" Don't believe it! Just as there is within the heart of every child a longing for the blessing, so there is within the heart of every parent a longing to be honored and recognized for the love that has been given. Listen and understand, I tell you in no uncertain terms that your parents *do* care, and it *does* matter to them. I know what you are perhaps thinking and saying even now, "You don't know my parents. You don't know what they have done or not done. There is no way that I am going to honor them."

Scripture records in **1 Corinthians 13:11**,

> ***"When I was a child, I spoke like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways."***

The questions we need to answer here are, ***how do children speak?*** The following are some phrases that capture how a child speaks: *"Give me what I want!" "Why can't I?" "That's not fair!" "When is my turn?"*

How do children think? Most often, their thoughts follow *the* pattern: "Why *are we doing that?" "I don't like that." "Let's do what I like to do."* Basically they are egocentric and everything revolves around them.

How do children rationalize? They do so in a somewhat juvenile way: "How *can I get another cookie? I wonder what I will get for my birthday next year. It's only 364 days away.* Isn't that how a child rationalizes things?

Putting away childish things includes learning to honor your parents ; seeing them from an adult's perspective, not from a child's perspective. Although this should be the scenario, it is heart breaking to note that some physically and spiritual mature Christians and parents continue to act like children toward their own parents. They mature in their relations and dealings with others, but when they get to their biological parents they are like little children again.

Erma Bombeck, a prolific writer on matters of parenting, noted that *"Deep within every parent's heart whether he or she can articulate it or not is a longing for the day when one's precious child comes around the corner and says, "You really did love me, and some of those things that you told me to do that I thought were so bizarre I was wrong to ignore, and you were right! And when I was an immature student who thought I had all the answers and made things so hard for you. I knew nothing! I am so sorry for all the grief*

that I gave you. You did not do everything perfectly, but you were a good father. You were a good mother!"

We must honor our parents even if we are not in the mood to do it because this is something that God Himself wants communicated. That is a part of becoming mature. God forgive us for being so selfish regarding our own parents. Maybe you feel angry or hurt or neglected or misunderstood by your parents. It's time to get past those things. We must honor our parents because bringing up children is an exhausting process. Your kids will grow up and handle you in your later years the way they have observed you treat your own parents. Honoring our parents needs to be a priority in our daily lives and not something we just treat casually.

1Timothy 5:8 says,

> ***"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."***

This should not be true among God's people.

This provision is far more than financial. It should also involve the giving of our time and emotional energy . Probably you are thinking, "what if *I tried to honor my parents and they reject me ?"* We must honor our parents even if we think they are abusive. Maybe your parents abused you or are even now as you read this book they are emotionally or physically abusing you. You could have gone through a painful experience, but you have to let go because focusing on the pain only perpetuates

it; finding something good to focus on promotes healing and reconciliation. Honoring your parents does not mean exposing yourself to further pain. It is just a step of obedience to God that will yield good results in your life. The process of honoring our parents is done in a thousand little things over time. Have the habit of writing a formal tribute in honor of your parents as a reminder of honoring them and as a sign of your appreciation. You cannot have expensive gadgets and phones while your parents' phone in the village is held together by a rubber-band. It is not appropriate to be spending several thousands in exquisite restaurants eating burritos, lasagna and drinking ice tea as your biological parents are starving in the village. That is the height of dishonor. Here are some practical ideas to get you started:

a) Be Sincere

Don't say a bunch of things you don't mean so and pretend that you approve of everything your parents do or that they are perfect.

b) Be positive

Philippians 4:8 says,

> ***"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, think about these things."***

Focus on the good whatever it is. If you cannot see it, pray and ask the Lord for wisdom, and He will show it to you.

c) Do it openly

Do this in front of your spouse and children, if possible. It is a wonderful mentoring moment. God will use it to spread a legacy of honor throughout your family.

d) Make up your mind to do it

Don't put it off. The time is now. Honor Your Parents.

CHAPTER 5

Honoring Rank and Hierarchy



"We may be age mates but we are not grace mates"

Romans 13:1-2: ***"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves."***

The reason many people in church end up in dishonor and eventually miss out on their destinies is because they do not understand God ordained authority. All things have been created by the authority of God, and all laws on earth are held together through authority. The Bible says that God upholds all things by the Word, which is His authority.

Satan tried to set up his throne above that of God by violating His authority. Satan's dishonoring of God's authority subsequently gave rise to sin and was the reason for which he was condemned by God. ***If we want to serve God effectively, we should never violate the matter of authority.***

To do so is to walk in disobedience and follow the devil's principle of dishonor. Satan is not afraid of us preaching while not submitted. He is only afraid of us when we are submitted to the authority of Christ . For this reason, we have to learn to submit to God's authority. Most of the disputes and upheavals in the body of Christ are caused by a lack of understanding of the topic of authority.

Before Paul understood authority, he wanted to decimate the church from the earth. Later, after he met the Lord on the way to Damascus, he realized that it was difficult to kick against the goads (God's authority) with his feet (man's energy). He immediately fell down, acknowledged Jesus as Lord and submitted to the instruction of Ananias in Damascus. The apostle Paul at his conversion was brought not only into a realization of God's salvation, but His authority. Paul was an intelligent and capable man, while Ananias was not as famous. Had Paul not submitted to God's authority, how could he possibly have listened to the words of Ananias?

Unless a man meets authority on the way to "Damascus," he cannot submit to an insignificant, small brother in "Damascus." Our submission is not to a person but to God's authority. In matters of submitting to spiritual authority it is important for you to focus on the God of the man and not just the man, lest you dishonor the man and end up rebelling against God.

Never split from your spiritual authority to go start a Church in dishonor. The greatest demand God has on man is not bearing the cross, offerings, consecration, or self-sacrifice. God's greatest demand on man is submission. When God commanded Saul to smite the Amalekites and utterly destroy all that they had, he spared Agag the king of Amalek. He also retained the best sheep, the oxen, and all that was good under the guise of wanting to offer them to God. (**1 Sam 15:1-3)**. Saul should have understood that ***"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed, than the fat of rams" (v. 22).***

One of the problems I have seen in the region I minister is that nobody wants to be a number two by submitting to a spiritual authority in a local church. Everybody wants to be a founder and president of their own ministry. You need to understand that if you ordain yourself as a president and a founder of a church or ministry in rebellion, you will have to contend with demons that founders and presidents contend with.

In the instance that your ministry grows bigger than that of your father, stay loyal and submitted .Never walk in dishonor. Obedience is the highest expression of response to God's will. Our service to God is not a matter of voluntary sacrifice or of denial of self ;it is a matter of accomplishing God's will. To overturn God's authority is to overturn God. Hence, the Bible says that rebellion is like the sin of divination, and insubordination is like idolatry **(1 Sam. 15:23)**.

If people understood what God given authority was, there would be no dishonor. According to the Apostle Paul, all authority comes from and originates with God.

That means that God also gives and removes authority to and from people both in the secular and spiritual spheres. When the children of Israel told Samuel that they wanted a king like the other nations, Samuel thought that they were rejecting him. However, God said Israel had rejected him. Samuel warned them of what a king would do to them but they rejected theocracy and wanted to settle for a monarchy.

Authority is something that should be understood by every Christian, since it is the basis of our relationship with Christ. We have confused direct authority – our access to God as priests through the Blood of Jesus – with "delegated authority".

> **Matthew 10:40-42:** ***"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."***
>
> **Luke 10:16:** ***"The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."***

As we see from these scriptures, God places Himself one step behind His delegated authority. The attitude with which we receive God's representatives is the attitude with which we receive God. We see this clearly with the Apostle Paul.

> **Acts 9:5-6:** ***And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get***

up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

During his encounter on the road to Damascus, it would have been easy for Jesus to tell him everything that was needed. Instead, Jesus tells him to go to the city and receive further instruction on what to do. Paul does this and Ananias, a simple believer, comes and lays hands on him to receive his sight and the Holy Spirit.

Why did Jesus do it this way? Why involve Ananias? Because, Paul encountered spiritual authority on the road to Damascus, and his submission was tested by his receiving from Ananias. The Lord has determined that there are certain things that we will never receive, unless we can receive from His delegated authority. Thus, we stay dependent on each other in the Lord. God's authority represents God Himself; whereas, His power represents His acts. Many times we seek after the power of God so that mighty acts might be done, but forget about His authority. A rouge approach to acquisition of authority is a Satanic principle and is directly opposed to the principle of authority exemplified by the submission to the God of our Lord Jesus. It is possible in our Christian walk to stand with Christ in terms of doctrine, and yet stand with Satan in terms of behavior. Pride caused Lucifer to desire to usurp God's authority and to ascend His throne. When we serve without orders, in disobedience to authority, we attract God's judgment. Nadab and Abihu offered "strange fire" (unauthorized fire) to the Lord. They were the sons of Aaron which meant that they had helped with the offerings many times.

They had seen Aaron perform the sacrificial rituals and probably did not see anything too difficult in them. Consequently, they felt perfectly capable of doing the offering and proceeded to sacrifice without realizing that only Aaron had the authority (right and the responsibility) to make the offerings. Because they lacked understanding about God's delegated authority, they suffered the consequences. **(Leviticus 10:1)**

God and His delegated authority are inseparable. You cannot dishonor God's representative on one hand and receive God on the other. God jealously protects His authority. Ten times the children of Israel tempted God; five times they disbelieved Him, yet God forbore and forgave but for this dishonor, God judged them. They went alive into the pit (Sheol, hell). Even though the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church, dishonor can open the gates of hell. When the church walks in dishonor and rebellion, defeat is inevitable. All sin releases the power of death, but rebellion against authority releases it the most.

King David, a man after the Lord's own heart, exemplifies the proper attitude toward God's authority. Saul was anointed King over Israel when the people demanded a king. When Saul disobeyed the Lord's commandment in the matter of King Agag, he was rejected by God as king and David was anointed king by Samuel. Even though David had been anointed as the incoming King, Saul still sat on the throne. Saul had not descended from the kingship and David was yet to assume office. Saul sought to kill David because he knew that David was to be the new king. What was David to do?

1 Samuel 24:3-7

> ***He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave. The men of David said to him, "Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly. It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe. So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed." David persuaded his men with these words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul arose, left the cave, and went on his way.***

David refused to act in dishonor. He refused to raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, and even the act of cutting off the hem of King Saul's skirt caused him guilt. When others told him that it is the Lord's will to kill Saul, David refused to lift his hand against the Lord's anointed.

Like David, we need to remember that we are in subjection not to the man but to the anointing that is on the man. The same anointing that came upon Saul when God called and delegated His authority to him, was still upon him. David so respected this that later, he even ordered for the execution of the soldier who killed Saul. **1 Samuel 26:8-11**.

There are two types of authority: natural and spiritual. All authority, whether natural or spiritual, is derived from our relationships. The natural authority in a family is derived from God's order and structure and our relationship to it. Spiritual authority is derived from our relationship with the Lord and the work that we are called to in Him. All authority relates to responsibility. If we have responsibility, we have authority and vice versa.

I have authority in my family because I am the husband to my wife and the father of my children. Because they are related to me, they are subject to my authority. They are not subject to me because I am good or wise but because God established it that way. My family does not have to decide to be subject or not. They are subject by virtue of being my family. They have to decide to walk in obedience.

Remember, submission is absolute, but obedience is optional. Spiritual authority has nothing to do with being great or exercising authority over people but instead is service to others. "Authority" when used as a noun, comes from the word *exousia*, derived from the verb *exesti*, which means, "It is lawful." Therefore, the most basic meaning of the word is *'derived or delegated right'*. It can also mean, depending on the context, *'permission to do something, liberty, the ability one has to perform or accomplish something, or the right to exercise power.'* The word authority, when derived from *exousia*, emphasizes the right, more than the power to do something. There are two basic forms of this right to exercise authority:

a) ***Intrinsic authority,*** which has to do with moral authority. This authority is derived from one's own person by virtue of the person's character.

b) ***Delegated authority,*** that is, authority given to a person from another source. Since "***there is no authority except from God"*** **(Romans 13:1)** - speaking of the right of magistrates to exercise authority over others.

We may deduce from this that every kind of authority, other than God Himself, is derived or delegated authority, and therefore secondary to God. Even moral authority is derived from being created in God's image. Each kind of derived or delegated authority has certain conditions and qualifications in order for it to be exercised properly. The Scriptures are careful to distinguish between spiritual authority and the authority of magistrates. The authority that Paul speaks about in **Romans 13** is the right and power to enforce obedience, but the authority Peter speaks about in **1Peter 5** is the responsibility to serve God's people, for God's purposes, in God's ways. Below is a scripture that makes it clear that spiritual leaders have been given authority to lead, with certain conditions and restrictions:

> **1 Peter. 5:1-5:** ***Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never***

fades away. In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

a) The Mark of Spiritual Authority is Christ-likeness

Spiritual authority is not taken, but given or offered. When you try to force people to do or believe something, to enforce your right to influence them, you are no longer exercising spiritual authority, but operating in the flesh. Jesus came over 2,000 years ago as a suffering servant. He came to win the hearts of people by serving them, and ultimately dying for them. Spiritual leaders in His church are commanded to do the same.

Mark 9:35: ***"He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."***

b) Spiritual authority includes persuasion

Paul is a good example of someone who employed every means possible to convince the churches he planted to do what he felt was right. He pleaded, cajoled, warned, and persuaded all to touch the hearts of God's people and move them to obedience to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:11: ***"Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others..."***

c) The Mandate of Spiritual Authority is to Lead

It is vital to note that, when Paul appeals to his authority as an apostle in correcting the saints in Corinth and Galatia, he is not thinking institutionally or positionally, but rather, relationally. The apostolic networks and chains of command we see in the body of Christ today tend to operate in a manner that is completely foreign to what Paul had in mind when he spoke of his apostolic authority. Paul appealed to his authority to see new Christians free from the control of false teachers, and to preserve the truth of gospel; not to establish a network of churches that reported to him at the top. He was concerned about the believers being brought under the influence of false doctrine. The ministry of those given spiritual authority is three-fold:

i) Guard the Flock

- Against wolves from within - Acts 20:28-30,
- Against false doctrine – 2 Timothy 4:1-5,
- Against deceivers – 2 John 7-11,
- Against those who cause divisions – Romans 16:17
- Against immorality – 1 Corinthians 5:9-13.

ii) Govern the Flock

- By tending the flock - **1Peter. 5:1-5** ***"Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in t he glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it not for sordid gain***

but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock."

- By correcting the flock - **2 Timothy 2:24** ***"And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth."***
- By bringing order to the flock - **Titus 1:5** ***"I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you" 1 Timothy 3:15 "You know how the church ought to conduct itself."***
- By making decisions that affect the flock - **1Timothy 5:17** ***"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor..."***

  Acts 15:13-22 ***"James spoke up: brothers, listen to me, it is my judgment...then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided..."***

iii) Guide the flock

- By teaching from the Word – **1 Timothy 4:11** ***"Command and teach these things."***

  2Timothy. 4:1: ***"I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching."***

- By equipping and preparing others for the work of ministry – **2 Timothy 2:2** ***"And what you have heard from***

me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well."

- By imparting passion to others - **Romans 15:20,30,16:26** ***"It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ is not known...I urge you, brothers...to join me in my struggle...so that all nations might believe and obey him - to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen."***

Cynicism, disrespect and disorder must be dealt with in the body of Christ today. We need within the church a hunger for fresh understanding concerning the nature of spiritual authority and obedience. Tom Marshall once said, ***"We live in freedom only within the constraints of divine order in all of our relationships."***

The Bible makes it clear that obedience merely for the sake of obedience is not necessarily good. We can obey evil or obey good; we can obey man when we ought to obey God. Obedience that produces conformity is not healthy. Obedience to gain acceptance feeds the flesh. Webster defines ***"authority"*** as "the right to command and enforce obedience." When we accept Jesus Christ as our ***Lord***, this means that He is supposed to become the ***authority*** over our whole life – (**Luke 6:46**). In addition, the Bible becomes the source of authoritative instruct-ion for our Christian Life.

General Principles of Spiritual Authority

1. God's Kingdom is One of Order

God is a God of order and not disorder. The church must accept His authority and reflect His order if she is going to be

effective. **(1 Corinthians. 14)** The issue of Spiritual Authority is vital for the success of the Church and her mission.

2. To Be Given Spiritual Authority, We Need to Come Under Authority

This is a principle we see working out from Adam in the garden onwards. Rebellion ultimately disqualifies us and God will remove our authority. Whoever we are, we need to find out who God wants over us in the Lord, and be subject to them. Once we learn to come under authority we will find a secure healthy place from which we can exercise authority.

3. Spiritual Authority Comes with God's Ordaining Not Man's Attainment

Once God's anointing and appointing is recognized, we must be careful not to slander or speak against a spiritual authority, for example, Miriam and Aaron; Korah, Dothan and Abiram; Ham and Noah etc. We must maintain the dignity of God's anointed leaders. A rebellious spirit delights in spotting defects in authorities and belittling them. This gives an excuse for throwing off restraint. This attitude is judged by God. However, it must be noted that the above point can be used by those who abuse authority. Whilst, we cannot ignore good biblical principles just because some people abuse them, we must equally emphasize other principles that bring a correct balance.

CHAPTER 6

Honoring Leaders



"Faithful submission to the representative authorities that God has allowed in power is pleasing to Him."

1 Timothy 2:1-7: ***"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, [and] giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and [for] all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this [is] good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in***

Christ, [and] lay not ;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." (**KJV**)

When we talk about honoring leaders, we do so against a background that is inundated with a culture that despises and dishonors leadership. I have observed that there is an increasing tendency to dishonor leadership. We see evidence of dishonor in every area of authoritative structure in the home, church, and society in general. It is important to understand that the believer's opinion and attitude toward leaders and those in authority matters to God. God is very concerned with the authorities and leadership that He has set in place, as well as with His people's attitude toward those leaders. It is God who has placed these leadership and power structures in their place for His purposes, honoring them is ethical and very biblical like we already learned.

The church in Rome was unique in many ways. She was not founded by an apostle but came into existence through a combination of scenarios. First, she was started in its earliest seed form by those Jews who were in Jerusalem for the celebration of Pentecost on the day the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples and ushered the New Testament Church into existence. As a result, when those who were part of the three thousand that were saved on that day returned home to Rome after Pentecost concluded, they took their new faith in Christ with them. Those returning Jews began a network of house churches throughout Rome that grew steadily.

The second scenario that contributed to the formation of the church in Rome was the persecution of Christians, led by Paul, which broke out immediately following the martyrdom of Stephen in **Acts 7**.

During that persecution, many Christians fled from Jerusalem to neighboring regions to avoid imprisonment and execution. One of the most popular places to seek asylum was Rome because of the relative ease of starting life over there.

Merchants could easily start new branches of their businesses. Tradesmen had options of numerous trade routes. In addition, it was not illegal to be a Christian at this point in Rome's history. Adding those factors together meant that the fledgling church in Rome began to get an entirely new wave of believers joining their various fellowships around the city. One of the challenges of not having an apostolic foundation was that the Roman Christians did not have a formalized theology or system of belief. Consequently, each of the house churches did what seemed right and appropriate to them with regard to applying what they knew about Jesus to their daily living. Because there was no unity in belief, there was no unity in fellowship either. As a result, the strife and conflict between various house churches escalated to the point of being a civic nuisance. This led to all of the Jews (the Roman government did not differentiate between Jews and Christians) being expelled from Rome for a nine-year period.

After that expulsion, only the Gentile minority was left to fill the Church of Rome. The practice of the church changed rapidly under its new Gentile influence. When the Jews returned from their nine-year expulsion, they returned to congregations that did not remotely resemble the ones they had left. Conflict arose sharply once again, this time between Jewish and Gentile believers. Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, to calm this simmering situation among the

believers. In doing so, he provided a theological *magnum opus* to demonstrate how orthodox Christian belief should be married to orthodox Christian practice in a variety of cultural situations. One of the critical situations addressed had to do with how Christians interacted with their government.

Government was a particularly important topic for Paul to address because of the current government-sanctioned expulsion of the Jewish believers in the Roman church. It was understandable that the Jews, though converted, still had a strong resentment towards those governmental leaders. An additional layer of the friction between the church and the Roman government was the prevalent imperial cult of Caesar, which required all in Rome to participate in acknowledging the Roman Emperor as a pseudo-deity. At the very least, the requirement to proclaim, "Caesar is lord!" would have been in sharp contradiction with what the Roman Christians believed. Paul begins his response to this practical matter with a divine view of history.

> **Romans 13:1:** ***"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."***

The manner in which Paul addresses this cultural issue leaves no room for doubt as to whom it applies. Literally every single person with a soul is who Paul has in mind. Every person is to submit, which is the actual connotation of the word, to secular governing authorities. It is significant that Paul uses the word ***"submit"*** instead of ***"obey."*** This is the same word Paul uses throughout his writings to exhort believers to submit to one another, wives to submit to husbands, slaves

to submit to masters and Christians to submit to spiritual leaders. What he has in mind is not a blind obedience, but a recognition and acknowledgment of the position of authority. It means a respectful honoring, which generally entails obedience. However, such obedience is not necessarily a blanket agreement to every directive of government officials. After all, Paul would never encourage the Roman believers to begin chanting *"Hail Caesar! Caesar is lord!"* with gusto out of respect for secular government. That example actually illustrates the importance of Paul using "submit" instead of "obey" beautifully. The importance lies in the area of supreme submission of a Christian versus lesser submissions. The Christian's supreme submission is to God; all other submissions fall well beneath that. Therefore, for these Roman Christians, when obedience to the secular authorities stood in sharp contrast to faithfulness to God, the choice to submit to God was a clear one.

The reason Paul gives for urging this submission to secular authorities lies in the origin of their civic power. Specifically, the only reason they have authority is because God ordains it. Paul's reasoning here hearkens back to the response Christ gave to Pilate during His trial in **John 19:10-11**. When Pilate asked Jesus whether He knew that Pilate had the power to either crucify or release Him, Jesus rebuked him and explained that the only power Pilate had was what God had allowed him to have. To explain the point further, Paul clarifies that the secular rulers that existed were instituted by God.

This was an especially poignant note given the Roman believers' recent history and current struggle with the Roman

authorities.

> **Romans 13:2:** ***"Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."***

Paul, having established the importance of submitting to those in authority, now addresses the opposite negative implication.

He does so by describing it in two linked ways. The *first* thing of note is that, because it is God who ordains their position and service, to resist the authorities is equivalent to refusing to **honor God.** This is extremely strong language from Paul, as evidenced by his follow-up warning. The *second* thing to note is that this prideful refusal to acknowledge governmental authority leads to judgment.

The judgment incurred may seem harsh, but the correlation Paul is drawing is that anyone that would consistently refuse to acknowledge authority would also consistently refuse the establisher of that authority, which is God Himself. There is some disagreement among conservative scholars as to whether this "judgment" refers to punishment meted out by the secular authorities, or eternal judgment from God. However, since Paul's argument is based in equating the earthly authorities with God's will, it makes most sense to connect judgment with eschatological judgment.

Faithful submission to the representative authorities that God has allowed in power is pleasing to Him.

This understandably does not include rulings of secular authorities that war against God's character and will. Evidences

of civil disobedience are found in a handful of passages, most notably **Acts 4:19** and **5:19**. However, when those authorities do not thwart the purposes of God, then for the believer to live in submission to those authorities as unto God is an act of faithfulness in which God is pleased.

On the other hand, when one violates the law, it must be understood that God uses the authorities He has ordained as a measure of punishment. This, of course, is predicated on the law consisting of God's moral law and not some corruption that is in contrast with God's character. The Apostle Paul makes it clear that God uses the secular authorities as an agency of punishment. When civil authority punishes wrongdoers, the authority, acting as God's servant, is 'an instrument of vengeance' through which God is exacting his wrath on human sin.

> **Romans 13:5:** ***"Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience."***

Paul summarizes his argument by revisiting his first reason for submission – the avoidance of God's wrath, and then briefly adds a second reason. This second reason is for the sake of conscience. The idea of conscience refers to the believer knowing the character and will of God and consequently, understanding that persistently violating secular authority is a rejection of what pleases God. These two reasons elevate honoring one's civic leaders beyond merely practical ways of avoiding trouble to a point of worshiping the Lord by

honoring what He has ordained.

The truth of this passage can be extremely unpopular, when those who are in civic leadership present policies which we are in significant disagreement with. It can be made even more so when evidence of corruption might be available. Unfortunately, neither of those two realities could be classified as an abnormality in many communities for believers.

In light of that, how are believers to honor the civic leaders in their communities? First, it is critical to take the divine view of the situation. In other words, see those leaders as Paul describes God's point of view in our passage.

As part of doing so, the believer must refuse to allow his or her own approval to be the litmus test for whether or not God is the one who ordained that specific person's position of leadership. In particular junctures throughout the Bible, God raised ruling authorities over His people that were harsh, oppressive, and even opponents of God (Nebuchadnezzar for instance). In every one of those instances, just like our instances today, God is firmly and sovereignly in control of everything that transpires to bring that person into leadership. God's plan is at work, even if His methodology seems odd to us at times.

We must seek to praise those that we are aware of ,who exemplify the character of God in the way they execute their leadership responsibilities. It is all too easy to become fixated on those we disagree with or frustrate us. However, in our societies now there are so many public servants, politicians, business leaders and police officers who lead with humility and Christ-like character and should be honored for their

approach to leadership. Naturally, leading consistently takes incredible courage and fortitude. Taking time to encourage those individuals who honor God with their work ethic and influence is an important part of being a citizen. Public servants need our prayers.

There are numerous ways to organize our prayer lives to pray for them specifically. For our public servants to continue to have the strength and resolve to change our societies, cities or nations through their decisions and leadership, we must pray for them as specifically as possible. God cares about what type of citizens we are in our community. His desire is for His people to leave lasting marks of Christ's character in their communities. That means cooperating with the authorities that He establishes. It means that we serve those around us in such a way that directs attention to God, not ourselves. It means being a peaceable neighbor who cares for those around them.

When we honor our public servants, we are not merely honoring their efforts, according to this passage in Romans, we are celebrating the movement of God that has led Him to ordain their places of leadership and influence for His purposes. We honor them because we believe that God is using them and will continue to use them. In light of that, we praise God for them and pray that His will is made known in their lives and through their lives in the communities in which God has planted them.

CHAPTER 7

The Honor of Service



"There is nothing that can so exalt a man from the dunghill or dust bin of life to the pedestal of prominence like service."

John 12:26: ***"If anyone serves me, he My Father will honor."***

It is a great privilege and a great honor to serve God. Many would prefer to be their own masters and bosses and do as they please. Service is a requirement and a prerequisite for promotion. It is prudent that you must always avail yourself to serve God in whichever capacity He requires because it is an honor to do so. Whoever despises and shuns service spurns the counsel of God, despises His Law and tramples on His commands. Service is the pathway to greatness, prominence and distinction.

There are dimensions and heights you will never attain in life until you understand that service is a great honor. It is through service that we bear the yoke and burden of Christ even as we feel His pulse. He who refuses to serve becomes a slave and a generational thief because what God has given you for generations can only be released through service. Do not rob your generation. Give them what God gave you for them – do this by serving them.

If you will not obey the Lord Jesus by serving, you will become a captive to a tyrant master called Satan. There is nothing that can so exalt a man from the dust bin or dunghill of life to the pedestal of prominence like service. Stooping low in service for the sake of your generation is the epitome of wisdom. The scripture records ***"If anyone serve me, him My Father will honor."***

One of the best services we can render to God is to obey the instructions He gave us. Dr. Myles Munroe is quoted as saying: *"Obedience enhances performance, while disobedience diminishes performance."* God is not obligated to give you another instruction if you have not obeyed the last instruction He gave you. Secondly, we honor Him also when our service is sacrificial. As you serve with patience and excellence you will become a recipient and beneficiary of the rewards of service. When you serve faithfully your service will not go unnoticed and you will be honored in life. God looks at what we call menial and lowly tasks differently .When done with the right motive and spirit, they become as great, in God's sight, as those that we may deem as prestigious. It is a tragedy

that those who serve God are dishonored in our generation and endure the largest share of ignominy. As far as God is concerned the most honorable thing to do is serve Him.

We have a generation who instead of honoring those who serve them, their retribution are hisses, derision and scorn. Remember that ***"friendship with the world is enmity with God"*** and that if any man will be a friend of God, he will generally be an enemy to this world. Nevertheless, any man who serves God faithfully will surely be honored in return. So long as you are seeking to glorify Christ in your undertakings, endeavors and pursuits, you will become a point of reference and a force to reckon with. In the process of serving God and your generation, not everyone will celebrate you, but do not allow that to deter you. One wise man said that in life you will not totally be accepted until you are first completely rejected. Rejection is the usher of life.

You may have been slandered and criticized but God will vindicate you by reason of your service. You may be operating in obscurity and oblivion but keep serving because there is honor in service. You may not receive accolades but continue serving. Your season is coming.

The scripture records in **John 4:34**

> ***"My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work."***

What Jesus was saying is that, "what keeps me going and energized is not to float my ideas but to accomplish the will of He that sent me." Jesus was saying , "I am a man on a mission and my sole agenda is to serve my father." If Jesus values

service that much, then it must be important and we should value what God values.

Exodus 9:1-2

> ***"Go back to Pharaoh," the Lord commanded Moses. "Tell him, 'This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so they can worship me."***

God in His infinite mercies heard the cry of the children of Israel and sent Moses His servant to talk to Pharaoh to release His people. The essence of that freedom was so they could go and serve Him or be useful to Him. That has always been the plan of God for His people. He knows that we need freedom from the task master in order to serve Him. Therefore, God does not set people free so they can live for themselves but so that they can serve Him. ***You should serve God with your means so that you don't run out of means. Those who serve God with their means do not run out of means.***

> **Deuteronomy 10:12:** ***"And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul."***

> **Deuteronomy 10:12:** ***"So now Israel, what do you think God expects from you? Just this: Live in his presence in holy reverence, follow the road he sets out for you, love him, and serve God, your God, with everything you have in you." (The Message Translation)***

Matthew 22:37: ***"Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind."***

Exodus 23:25: ***"So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days."***

A sickness-free life is a preserve for those who serve God. Barrenness will not be mentioned in your camp. God has committed Himself to fulfill the number of your days. Remember, God is committed to those who are committed to serve Him.

Job 36:11: ***"If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures."***

Serving God is the highest and greatest endeavor as long as we live. However, many people are not even interested, neither willing to give their ***time, strength*** *and* ***hearts to the God*** who gave them life. What an indignity (dishonor) on our part. Studying the life of Joshua, Job, David and many other servants of God, we see great men who exemplified classic models of faithful servants. Through their lives, they consistently demonstrated how to serve God in sincerity and in truth.

In **Exodus 33:11,** the Bible tells us about Joshua as a young man serving the LORD; and in **Joshua 24:29**, it tells us about Joshua as an old man serving the LORD. He served God faithfully even in his old age. He not only served God alone,

but also led his family and Israel in serving God throughout their lives. Joshua's well-lived life influenced Israel to serve God faithfully. The way we serve the Lord might seem insignificant to others, but if we are serving Him faithfully in sincerity and in truth, we become a great encouragement to many believers. Through our good testimonies, our lives will touch other lives and serve as motivators to lead others to serve God faithfully.

In **Psalm 37:4,** it is written,

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Many believers want to experience the blessing of this verse in their lives, and truly, it is a good desire to be experienced as long as their hearts and strength are not focused in serving other things.

Joshua 24: 15 says,

And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Joshua was coming to the end of his life. He desperately wanted to leave his nation standing on a firm foundation. In his last formal address to the people of Israel, Joshua delivered a strong call to them to faithfully serve to God. Joshua mentioned some basic elements necessary for committing to faithful service to the Lord. Key to those was ***choice.***

Faithful service to God is not just a matter of the **heart.** It's also a matter of the **will.** Serving God is not mandatory. However, choosing is mandatory. Everyone will worship something. Whatever you serve you worship. Don't be cheated sister girl, if all you think about is that job, you are worshipping it.

The Etiquette of Service

Service to God will require the following:

1. **Sacrifice**

   Romans12:1 ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."***

Serving God requires sacrifice on our part. It is never easy but we have to and must sacrifice and deny ourselves some necessary pleasures and leisure time.

Mark 10:45. ***"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"***

2. **Excellence**

   Galatians 6:4: ***"Let everyone do his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work well done and won't need to compare himself with someone else."***

God is a God of excellence. All His ways are excellent and as such, demands of us to serve Him with excellence. He has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light that we may show forth His excellence.

3. Diligence

Ecclesiastes 11:6: ***"In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, either this or that, or whether both alike will be good."***

We cannot claim to be serving God while dragging our feet. God's service requires diligence and haste. Jesus said the King's business requires haste.

4. Perseverance

2 Corinthians 12:12: ***"Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds".***

Serving requires perseverance in order for us to reap the benefits thereof. It takes resolve, firmness and insistence for us to apprehend the blessings that come with service.

- **Serving God requires endurance**

James 5:11: ***"Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful"***

- **Serving God Requires Steadfastness**

1Corinthians 15:58: ***"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord"***

'Steadfast' and 'immovable' denote a solid, determined, settled, unmovable attitude of service. A Christian who follows this

guideline will certainly not be easily moved from their calling. Be careful of anyone who would try to cause a detour.

> **2 Peter 3:17:** ***"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."***

I wonder if there would be any today who would qualify to be a martyr. Believers today will compromise and turn back just because a friend threatened to leave them because of their belief. Is it possible to find a Dr. Krapft today, a David Livingstone or a Jim Elliot? Am just wondering. Never allow those who do not believe in service to convince you to do the contrary. Remain steadfast.

5. Truth and serving Him with all our hearts

> **1 Samuel 12:24 :** ***"Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you"***

God is moved by our service when it emanates from a heart that is pure and sold out to Him. He wants us to serve Him in truth.

> **1 Chronicles 28:9:** ***"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever."***

God wants us to serve Him with a loyal heart and willingness of mind.

6. A pure conscience

2 Timothy 1:3: ***"I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day"***

Never serve God to be seen for you will have received your reward.

7. You serve without ceasing and with your spirit (Service requires consistency).

Galatians 6:9-10 ***"And let us not grow weary while doing well, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do well to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."***

Never allow yourself to grow weary as you serve God. You have to keep encouraging yourself in the Lord. Scriptures says, ***"Let the weak say they are strong."*** Moments will of course come when you will feel like throwing in the towel but that does not mean that you do it.

8. Service will demand righteousness

Psalms 101:6: ***"My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, he shall serve me"***

9. You serve as unto the Lord and not unto men.

Ephesians 6:6-8: ***"Not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and***

not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free."

If you are serving to please men, then you have your reward. Let your service always be as unto the Lord. It doesn't matter whether someone is watching you or not.

10. You serve in love and out of love for God

1 Thessalonians 1:3: ***"We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"***

It is John Wesley who wrote concerning service and said: ***"Do all the good you can by all the means you can by all the ways you can in all the places you can and at all the times you can to all the people you can as long as you ever can."***

11. We must serve with Gratefulness

Why should we serve God with gratefulness? We serve Him with gratefulness because He has given life to us through Jesus Christ. If He never did anything else for us, that would enough to be grateful for the rest of our lives to serve Him. ***"Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!"*** **Psalms 68:19**. Serving creates meaningful thankfulness. Serving is a way to give back and to show that we are grateful.

12. True service requires and calls for faithfulness

1 Corinthians 4:2: ***"Moreover it is required in stewards that one is found faithful"***

Are you a faithful servant? One day you're going to stand before God and He is going to say to you, "What did you do with what I gave you – the talents, the abilities, the experience, the freedom, the education or the family background?"

Hebrews 6:10: ***"For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister"***

Your mind-set should be: "I am a servant of God and I should live for my Lord." Without a heart for God, you cannot make a mark on the earth. If everything God is saying doesn't move you, there is nothing you will ever say that will move Him. If you serve God with all you are, you will never be stranded in life. Where is your heart?

If your heart is not with Him, don't expect His hand to be on you for blessings. If you are in church only to collect, you will never stop being disappointed. But if you are in church to serve God with your time, with your talent, and with your substance, to be part of the lifting, promotion and progression of His Kingdom, it is only a matter of time; all your mockers will soon see you at the top.

God will never bless you more than you are willing to promote His Kingdom. *It is not your prayer that will change your position; it is your willingness to serve God with your time, ability, talent and*

substance. God is a lifter. He said, "Honor me and I will honor you, lift me and I will lift you, promote me and I will promote you, serve me and I will service your life." It is wisdom to serve God with all He has given you.

Your longevity in this life is predicated upon your usefulness to the Kingdom of God.

He has not given you divine health for nothing, but so that you may use it to serve Him. The Bible says ***"So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear (serve) God for nothing?"*** **(Job 1:9).** The devil thought that Job was serving God for the things he had; what he did not know is that his service brought forth the things, and taking them away did not mean anything to Job because his commitment to serving God was intact and nobody could take that from him. Until God becomes the center of your life, everything will keep falling apart. Until you are ready and committed to serve God, you are not ready for good to come your way. Serving God is your insurance against bondage, lack, shame and poverty and is the pathway to promotion. Your level of commitment to serving with your talent, money and time will provoke heaven's commitment to you. The time has come when God wants to manifest to the whole world that serving Him is profitable. He wants the whole world to see that following Him and His ways, is the most profitable venture on earth.

It is time to go for God and to serve Him unreservedly. If you must be distinguished in life, then you must purpose to serve God with all your strength. Be consumed with God and not how to make money. If you carry God the way you carry that business of yours, you will become a sign and a wonder.

As a matter of fact, it is God who gives us power to create wealth, and so when you serve Him with your heart, you can imagine what happens to your life. Satan will always negotiate your commitment. Therefore, be vigilant. When the Israelites wanted to go, Pharaoh's heart began to weaken. He said to Moses:

> **Exodus 8:28:** ***"So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Intercede for me."***

Satan is out to negotiate your liberty by advocating for moderate Christianity. He cannot stand the truth and he knows that your destiny is anchored on your unreserved commitment to God. Average commitment results in a life of mediocrity. The quality of your commitment determines the quality of your destiny. Nothing could negotiate the commitment of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They took their lives in their hands and went into the fire. Howbeit, they did not come out of it the same, they came out of the fire as rulers. The king could not negotiate Daniel's commitment. Daniel was not afraid of being thrown into the lion's den for praying to his God. He came out of that den the most honorable man in the whole world. Never allow anyone to negotiate you out of serving God with your talents, time and treasures. If you do not serve God, you will serve men.

If you refuse to dance to God's tune, you will dance to the tune of men. Those who serve God do not beg men. They do not crave for human connections because God brings divine connections their way. Until you are committed to serving

God, you will keep serving men and circumstances all the days of your life.

Serving God with all that you are and all that you have, qualifies you for all that God has; and all that God has is more than enough for your life.

Your best qualifies you for God's best, and God's best is more than enough for your life. When you truly begin to look for God, you will not look for gold; it will automatically locate you. An unreserved and uncompromising commitment to God will put you into the struggle-free zone in life (**Job 36:11)**.

When God was not given His rightful place, Israel was plagued and these things are written for our examples. Only the blessing of God can make you rich. It makes one rich without adding any sorrow. Your expertise will not make rich. Your sweat and toil will all be in vain, for except the Lord blesses you, you cannot be blessed. The word confirms this:

> **Psalms 127:1-2:** ***"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; For so He gives His beloved sleep."***

Benefits of Service

1) Long Life

> **2 Kings 20:1-6:** ***"About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to visit him. He gave the king this message: "This is what the Lord says: Set your affairs in order, for you are going***

to die. You will not recover from this illness." When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, "Remember, O Lord, how I have always been faithful to you and have served you single-handedly, always doing what pleases you." Then he broke down and wept bitterly. But before Isaiah had left the middle courtyard, this message came to him from the Lord: "Go back to Hezekiah, the leader of my people. Tell him, 'this is what the Lord, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you, and three days from now you will get out of bed and go to the Temple of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my own honor and for the sake of my servant David." **(NLT)**

King Hezekiah was to die but because of commitment to serving God in the days past, he had the confidence to face God and plead for his life. His petition was granted and God added fifteen years to the number of his days. In other words, if he was destined to die at age 70, God added fifteen more years to him, meaning he would die at age 85.

Isaiah 38:5: ***"Go and tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years"***

What have you done for God that you can remind Him of? Or have you blown every opportunity that the Lord gave you for serving Him in the name of being busy or not being recognized?

2) Protection and deliverance

Daniel was an addicted servant of God. Even the king recognized the fact that Daniel served the Lord continually with joy and a pure heart. No wonder God was obligated and committed to deliver him. The kind of service that will attract the attention of God is the one that is continuous no matter what is happening.

> **Daniel 3:17:** ***"If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king."***

> **Daniel 6:20:** ***"And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"***

3) Beautification

God calls those who serve Him as "Mine." When you serve God, you are spared of calamities that befall those who choose not to serve Him. God says He will make you jewels.

> **Malachi 3:17:** ***"They shall be mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them my jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."***

4) Eternal life

Serving the Lord guarantees you honor, glory and eternal life.

> **Romans 2:6-7:** ***"Who will render to each one according to his deeds" [a] eternal life to those who by patient***

continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality."

5) Divine guidance

Those who serve the living God are assured of divine guidance. They will not be stranded.

Exodus 15:13 ***"In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling."***

Psalms 25:9: ***"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way."***

Psalms 32:8: ***"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you."***

Isaiah 58:11: ***"The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail"***

6) Divine health and healing

Serving God guarantees you divine healing and health.

Exodus 23:25-26 ***"So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days"***

7) We are assured of the peace of God

John 14:27 ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."***

Jesus spoke these words to His disciples who had been with Him and served Him tirelessly. When the Master was about to depart, He turns to them and gives them peace that surpasses all human understanding.

8) Honor

Those who serve the Lord will be honored by God. **John 12:26** says : " ***If anyone serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, he My Father will honor."***

CHAPTER 8

Manifestations of Dishonor



> "If you honor the Truth (Jesus), the antagonistic conditions of life will bow to honor the position of Truth. However, dishonor opens the door for the enemy." Roger Cedar

People who are lackluster, unjust, corrupt, opaque, pretentious, unprofessional and unethical in their dealings have a culture of dishonor. In our day and time, we have mastered and learned to dishonor the civil and religious institutions of life, and as a result we have become the home of lawlessness and disorder; we are experiencing the breakdown of the family, the church, and society at large.

Francis Frangipane claims that *"Most nations possess a singular focal point that epitomizes their culture: for the Asian nations, honor*

and respect preside over their societies; for Germanic nations, discipline and obedience set the standard; for America, the central theme would be freedom and rebellion to tradition. To express compliance or honor is considered a weakness."

It is worth noting that in the American protestant history, for the secular individual, to protest was to walk a heroic and patriotic path. On the other hand, for the religious soul to defy the edict of a king or pope was courageous and noble. They considered that there was virtue in a heart that fearlessly spoke against evil. Here is what God's word commands:

1 Peter 2:17-18

"Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect..."

This text points us to very important issues: Honor all men, honor the king and servants are to be submissive with respect.

There is something within us that frowns and grates at the idea of honoring people. More often however, we will only honor God. We feel it is our task to keep others humble lest their pride take over. In fact, it is our pride that has taken over, not theirs, and it is fueled by our jealousy of another's success.

God calls us to honor all men.

The people you know may be full of frailties but by showing honor, you show them that they are important to God. Worth taking to heart is that there are some that we honor for their attainments and intrinsic worth to God. The call of God is to honor all. Understand also, that you do not honor the actions of sinners, but the humanity of sinners. We are not to worship

people, as those who swoon over celebrities but we are to show all men honor. You cannot dishonor someone and expect to lead them to Christ. You cannot sincerely communicate the love of God, if you do not respect the person to whom you are speaking.

Manifestation of dishonor in the Bible.

1. Reuben's Immorality

> **Genesis 35:22**: ***"And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve (NKJV).***

Reuben slept with his father's concubine and defiled his bed, thus dishonoring his father. Many times people see the glory of a spiritual father at work and the fruit of his labor, and they desire it and try to fornicate with it, hoping to produce fruit of their own. You honor authority by respecting the call of God upon their life and the fruit of their loins. You come along side to serve them, accomplish their vision and produce fruit for the kingdom of God.

2. The Despisers of Saul

> **1 Samuel 10:23-27:** ***"So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!" Then Samuel explained to the people the***

> ***behavior of royalty, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched. But some rebels said, "How can this man save us?" So they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace."*** (**NKJV**)

In the above scripture, we see some of the Israelites questioning Saul's ability to be king and to rule over them. They did not take into account that Saul's inauguration was Kingdom orchestrated and not a matter of gifting. It is not in our place to question God's choice of an authority figure. Honor them as you would honor God.

3. Ham's indecency (Genesis 9:20-24)

> ***"And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him."*** (**NKJV**)

Ham dishonored his father by not covering up his nakedness. His other two sons covered their father's nakedness. Noah was a just and righteous man who made a mistake. The authorities in our lives might make mistakes, falter or even sin but we must not be quick to uncover them like Noah's son.

4. The Greed of Gehazi

2 Kings 5:13-27: ***"But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him." So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?" And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'" So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him. When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere." Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow."*** (**NKJV**)

Gehazi went after Naaman to receive a gift from him. He used Elisha's name and influence for personal gain and in the end he reaped leprosy. Do not use the authorities in your life as a stepping stone for your own gain. Allow God to promote and reward you.

5. The Disrespect of Nabal (1 Samuel 25)

As David's influence grew in his domain, he came into conflict with Nabal. David's men had rebelled against Saul's rule, encamped in Nabal's area for some time. They treated Nabal's shepherds kindly, protecting them from harm and not stealing anything for themselves.

> **1 Samuel 25:15-16:** ***"But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep."*** (NKJV).

Because of this David found a reason to send a delegation to ask Nabal to donate some lambs for a feast for his army. Perhaps realizing the weakness of his claim, David instructs his delegation to be extra polite to Nabal. Nabal would have nothing of it. He refused to give David anything for the feast, insulted him publicly, denied knowing David and impugned David's integrity as a rebel against Saul.

> **1 Samuel 25:10:** ***"Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master."*** (**NKJV**)

6. The Profanity of Herod Agrippa

Flavius Josephus wrote the following account of Herod Agrippa's death which matches the account found in the Bible: "After Agrippa had ruled in Judea for three full years, he traveled to the city of Caesarea, which in the past was called Strato's Tower. There he put on an exhibition in honor of Caesar, declaring this to be a festival for the Emperor. And there came a large number of officials and those of a high-ranking status. At sunrise on the following day he put on a robe made of all silver and walked into the theater. Then the silver shone brightly as the sun's first rays fell upon it and he sparkled in the sunlight, dazzling the crowd and causing a sort of fear and trembling in those who were viewing the spectacle.

The crowds then began to shout from various parts of the theater, words which in truth were not for his best, addressing him as a god, and crying out, ***"We have in the past honored you as a man, but now we honor you as one with a nature greater than any mortal being".*** The king did not rebuke nor disagree with the flattery of the crowd. Shortly afterwards he experienced a violent attack with a severe pain in his stomach. The king was carried quickly into the palace and word of this account reached the ears of all his subjects, and that it would not be long before he died. When he had suffered for five straight days from the pain in his stomach, he died at the age of fifty-four after ruling for seven years." The Bible gives an identical account in **Acts 12:19-23:**

> ***"After Herod had the apostle James put to death with the sword, and put Peter in prison, Peter was broken out of jail***

by an angel of the Lord. Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while. He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastusa trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king's country for their food. On the appointed day, Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of man." Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died".

Herod dishonored God.

Manifestations of Dishonor in Modern Times

1. John Lennon – Musician

Some years during his interview with an American Magazine, he said ***"Christianity will end, it will disappear. I do not have to argue about that. I am certain. Jesus was okay, but his subjects were too simple, today we are more famous than Him."*** It was not so long after Lennon claimed that the Beatles were more famous than Jesus Christ, that he was shot six times and died.

2. Tancredo Neves – Former President of Brazil.

As he ran for office during one of his presidential campaigns, he said that if he got 500,000 votes from his party, not even God would remove him from Presidency. It's in the public domain that he got the votes, but he got sick a day before being sworn in as president, then he died.

3. **Cazuza** – Bi-sexual Brazilian composer, musician and poet.

During a show in Rio de Janeiro the capital city of Brazil, while smoking his cigarette, he puffed out some smoke into the air and said ***"God, that's for you."*** He died at the age of 32 years of lung cancer.

4. **Thomas Andrews –** The man who Constructed the Titanic

After the construction of Titanic, a reporter asked him how safe the Titanic would be. With an ironic tone he said ***"Not even God can sink it."*** It is public knowledge and I think you know what happened to the Titanic. The ship hit a large iceberg and slowly sunk to the bottom of the ocean killing 1,517 passengers including Thomas Andrews, with only 706 survivors.

5. **Marilyn Monroe** – Actress

This celebrity actress was visited by Billy Graham during a presentation of a show. The man of God had a word from God for her. He said the Spirit of God had sent him to preach to her. After hearing what the Preacher had to say, she said ***"I don't need your Jesus."*** A week later, she was found dead in her apartment.

6. **Bon Scott** : Musician – ex-vocalist of the AC/DC.

On one of his 1979 songs he sang ***"Don't stop me; I'm going down all the way, down the highway to hell".*** On the 19th of February 1980, Bon Scott was found dead, he had been choked by his own vomit.

7. Campinas Brazil in the year 2005

A group of friends, drunk and went to pick up a friend. The mother accompanied her to the car and was so worried about the drunkenness of her friends. Holding her hand, she said to the daughter, who was already seated in the car: "My daughter, go with God and may He protect you." She responded: ***"Only if God travels in the trunk, because inside here, it's already full."*** Hours later, news came by that they had been involved in a fatal accident, everyone had died, and the car could not be recognized what type of model it had been. Surprisingly, the trunk was intact! The police said there was no way the trunk could have remained intact. To their surprise, inside the trunk was a crate of eggs, none was broken.

8. Christine Hewitt – Jamaican Journalist and entertainer.

She said the Bible was the worst book ever written. In June 2006, she was found burnt beyond recognition in her motor vehicle.

9. The Legislator

A certain spiritual father prayed for a certain young man to get into a legislative post as a member of parliament .The young man was in his days of obscurity, struggling to pay his bills and to meet his needs.

This young man was eventually elected to the position and rose to prominence. He started serving his constituents for a term of five years. It so happened that one day the city father and his wife went to this member of parliament to see him over an issue, but he was unwilling to see them. The young man turned legislator kept the City father and his wife waiting

for many hours at the reception and eventually dismissed him without seeing them.

He started ignoring his phone calls and dishonoring the city father. When the time of elections came, the city father met another aspirant who was walking in honor and looking forward to contest for the same position that the other young legislator had been elected to. The city father just gave the aspirant a handshake and said ***"Take it"***. When the time for elections came, the dishonorable legislator lost his seat and the aspirant who was walking in honor won the election and became the ***"Honorable."***

A Powerful Example of Leaving a Legacy of Honor

A Case Study of Jonathan Edwards

Leaving a godly legacy for your children should be the goal of all Christian parenting. A great example of this is Jonathan Edwards, the Puritan preacher from the 1700s. Jonathan and his wife Sarah left a great godly legacy for their eleven children. At the turn of the 20th century, American educator and Pastor A.E. Winship decided to trace out the descendants of Jonathan Edwards, almost one hundred and fifty years after his death. His findings are astounding, especially when compared to a man known as Max Jukes. Jukes legacy came to the forefront when the family trees of forty-two different men in the New York prison system traced back to him. Jonathan Edwards' godly legacy includes, 1 U.S. Vice-President, 3 U.S. Senators 3 Governors, 3 Mayors, 13 college presidents, 30 Judges, 65 professors, 80 public office holders, 100 lawyers and 100 missionaries.

Max Jukes' descendants included: 7 murderers, 60 thieves, 50 women of debauchery and 130 other convicts, 310 paupers, 400 who were physically wrecked by indulgent living. It was estimated that Max Juke's descendants cost the state more than $1,250,000. This is a powerful example showing how a parent's leadership can have a profound effect on their children and generations to come.

CHAPTER 9

Honoring Others



"A Dishonorable man uses the position of honor in a wrong way."

"Life is about People"

"Honor is the opposite of control; the father of the prodigal son did not control him neither did God the Father control Jesus."

Within the body of Christ, we are commanded to honor every member.

1 Peter 2:17. ***"Honor all men" and also "honor the king"***

We are additionally required to honor the following:

a) The Church Elders

1 Timothy 5:17: ***"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine"*** **(KJV)**

a) Our employers and those senior in rank

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

c) We are to honor widows

1 Timothy 5:3: ***"Honor widows who are really widows."***

d) Spouses

1 Peter 3:7: ***"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."***

Ephesians 5:22: ***"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord."***

e) The Unseemly

1 Corinthians 12:23-25: ***"And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another."***

f) The Aged

Leviticus 19:32: ***"You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the LORD."***

In fact, when the gray-haired enter a room we are told to stop talking, stand and acknowledge with reverence the entrance of an older individual. It is not just enough to honor someone but it is also important to respect their property.

Treating people with honor makes your world a better place to live in, whether it's at home, at school, or out in your community. In many societies and cultures today it is not uncommon to find adults, teenagers and even children who have thrown honor for people in authority out of the window, and the end result of this has been catastrophic. Many of us do not understand that honor is like two-way traffic, it needs both to be given and to be received. You must bear in mind that honor is not demanded, it is earned and if you expect to receive honor, you must also carry yourself around as one who deserves to be honored. When you receive honor, give back honor also.

Honoring other people is a matter of the attitude of the heart, and is not usually written on people's faces. Honoring other people is a choice that you must deliberately and consciously make. ***It is not an uphill task, it is easy and all you have to do is treat people the way you would like to have them treat you.***

Here are a few ideas:

1. Don't Insult People or Make Fun of Them

It is important for you to know that men come in sizes and at no particular time will we all ever be equal. On that premise, it will be important for you to honor all people regardless of their gender, social standing, cultural beliefs or even educational backgrounds. Insulting a person because of their cultural beliefs or because of their tribe or where they come from is a sign of mockery, dishonor and backwardness .

2. Listen to Others When They Speak

Communication experts will tell you that communication is not complete until there is a response. In our time and day people are bombarded with lots of life challenges and on many occasions they want somebody to listen to them. You must never forget that each time a person comes to you to open their hearts and share their hurts with you, it is a sign that they honor you. It is very easy to be caught up in the trap of just hearing a person talk, yet you are not listening. Honor other people by learning to give them a listening ear, since this will aid many hurting people in the process of emotional catharsis.

3. Value Other People's Opinions

Every single person has the desire to be appreciated and celebrated, and any time they are ignored it works against them. Nobody wants to work with a dictator, whether it is in the home, church, ministry or even at the work place, who just wants their way, but listens to no one else. When people are treated like that they read dishonor. In our daily interactions

with people, you will always get opinions regarding various subjects, and the honorable thing would be to value each person's opinion however foolish they may look. It is pride and a sign of dishonor to always assume that you hold monopoly of the truth and nobody else's opinion counts. Value other people's opinions and you will earn their respect and honor.

4. Don't Talk About People Behind Their Backs

Talking about people behind their backs is a sign of dishonor and cowardice. As a spiritual son being raised in your father's house, you must not be party to those who malign your spiritual authority with their words. Be careful not to talk about others, because those you talk to about others will one day tell others about you. As a leader, people will bring you cases about others. Usually the accuser seems right until the accused gives their story. In such cases, the honorable thing would be to call both parties and listen to them all in your presence. If you will honor others, then don't talk about them behind their backs.

5. Invest in People

The greatest investment that Jesus ever made was in people. There is nothing that moves the heart of God than when you start to appreciate and invest in people.

One wise general in the kingdom of God while speaking to ministers of the gospel said, "*Do not raise money, raise people and you will have all the money you need to do ministry.*" Investing in people's lives is an indication that you honor them and you are mindful of their well-being.

We live in a nation made up of many different cultures, languages, races, political inclinations and backgrounds. That kind of variety can make all our lives interesting, only if we get along with each other and honor each other. We have to respect each other.

Here are some questions we need to carefully answer if we will honor people who are different from us:

1. What does it feel like to be honored?
2. What does it feel like to be dishonored?
3. What role does honor play in your relationships with friends and family?
4. What are honorable behaviors?
5. How important is honor in our lives? Why?
6. Do you consider yourself to be a person of honor? Why or why not? In what ways do you show honor to others?
7. Do you have to like someone to honor him or her? Why or why not?
8. Describe one person you honor in your life. What does this person do to earn your honor?
9. Does a person have to earn honor, or do all people deserve it?
10. How do you show honor to others? Do you show honor to strangers differently than you do to friends?
11. Does it feel different to be dishonored by a stranger than to be dishonored by a friend? How?
12. What are the benefits of people treating each other with honor?

13. When was the last time you dishonored someone? What was the reason? How did you express this dishonor? What effect did your dishonor have?
14. When was the last time someone dishonored you? What do you think was their reason for treating you in that way?
15. What are some reasons people show dishonor to others?
16. If someone treats you with dishonor, do you have to treat that person with honor? How should you respond to someone who shows you dishonor?

The Lord Himself bestows honor on people: **John 12:26** says, ***"If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."***

Psalm 91:14-15 says,

"Because he has loved Me, I will rescue him, and honor him."

So if the Lord has no problem honoring people, considering His great glory, why are we so willing to dishonor each other?

Stages of a Relationship

Every relationship follows four stages of development in a precise sequence. It is practically impossible for you to have an effective relationship if you lack knowledge. Progression in a relationship takes time. A good, healthy, fruit-producing relationship doesn't happen overnight. These stages are:

1. First impression

This is the introductory stage. Relationships begin when people meet and form an impression of each other. Impressions are based on outside appearances and behaviors. In this stage, we make an assessment of what we think the person is like, based upon the clothes they adorn , appearance, the way they talk, laugh, the things they say, and so forth. We form our first impression based totally on the outward fleshly appearance and demeanor of a person.

2. Acquaintanceship

In this stage, one moves beyond an outer assessment and begins to make an inner assessment of the other person. There is seeking for more personal knowledge. We might call it curiosity stage, testing or experimenting. In this stage, "half-conversations" begin to occur with lots of questions. It is characterized by testing the other person's attitudes, values, and reactions. In this stage, you must set boundaries and limitations. This is where you find out where the person is going and if there is any commonality to build upon. If a person senses agreement at this stage, the relationship can progress.

3. Deeper disclosure

This is the third phase in the progression of a relationship. This is when people share private information with another person; deeper insight into self, family, friends, frustrations, prayer needs, prejudices, desires and hopes, things that cause discomfort or pain. The more the disclosure, the greater the potential for trust. This stage requires a high degree of

vulnerability. If you truly want to get close to another person, you are going to have to trust a person with what you consider to be private feelings and thoughts.

Disclosure is the foundation on which trust is built. When trust is violated and vulnerability is betrayed, the relationship ends at this point.

4. Friendship

This stage is generally characterized not only by a great deal of trust and disclosure, but also by faithfulness and a high degree of expectation. The more disclosure occurs, the stronger the base of trust. The more the desire to continue in a relationship, the higher the "expectation level" rises. You begin to expect the other person to be there for you when you need them. You count on spending time with them, communicating openly with them and doing things spontaneously to encourage and express concern for each other. When friendship develops, two people begin to spend time with other friends who are like them. They develop a circle of friends. In friendship, you begin to anticipate and to explain your friend's behavior .

Relationships vary between different people and different groups. Those who are in positions of authority expect us to obey them and we expect them to know what they are talking about, so typically we do as they say. Friends expect us to offer support, encouragement and fun, which is what we expect from them. You will need to develop skills if you are to maintain happy, healthy and rewarding relationships. It is important that your relationships are built on a strong ground, since they become a strong social support for others. It is only through relationships one can make a lasting impact on others.

We appreciate the people we love more than anyone else. Their words sink deep into our heart, not just our mind.

That's why the most effective way to make a lasting impact on others is by building relationships with them. Relationships help us identify and capitalize on our gifts, talents and help us work on our weaknesses especially where we feel challenged by those who are our peers or those who are above us. You have to realize that your *associations* will determine your *assimilations*. There are some individuals whose company you will enjoy, with nice personalities but who do not add value to your life.

Jesus told Peter,

> ***"Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, and not from God's."***

How would you like to be addressed like that? Would you ever address a close friend in this manner? Jesus did! He clearly priced integrity and truth above His relationship with Peter. He cared more about pleasing God than offending Peter. Pricing truth above relationship will preserve every aspect of your life. Every relationship has a hidden agenda and it is your responsibility to find out what that agenda is. We live in a very individualistic society, where people take great pride in their independence and ability to stay detached from others. The perception that so many have, is that investing in relationships, is an unnecessary baggage and a hindrance to forward progress.

King Solomon once said, ***"A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment." (*****Proverbs 18:1)** To isolate yourself is to celebrate selfishness and to celebrate

selfishness is to eliminate God from the equation of your life. It is impossible to walk through life with another, unless the celebration of common values is present.

Why are Relationships Important?

1. They Multiply Our Efforts

> ***"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken"*- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**.

2. They are a Source of Learning

The quality of the relationship deeply influences the hopefulness required to remain curious and open to new experiences, and the capacity to see connections and discover meanings. We feel "related" when we feel at one with another (person or object) in some heartfelt way. Our peers challenge us to move higher and higher as we both try to come up with something new, thereby driving away stagnation and mediocrity. ***"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend"* Proverbs 27:17**

3. They Provide Protection

When Saul was planning to kill David, Jonathan helped protect David by disclosing his father's plan . Your friends will speak well of you:

1 Samuel 19:1-6

"Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David; but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted greatly in David. So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore, please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide. And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you. Then what I observe, I will tell you." Thus Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you. For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and the Lord brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?" So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "As the Lord lives, he shall not be killed." Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. So Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past"

4. They Usher and Position Us for Our Assignment

Saul was in the company of prophets when he received his prophetic call to kingship. Esther was divinely related with her uncle Mordecai who reminded her why she was in the palace ***"At such time as this***". Ruth maintained a relationship with her mother in-law Naomi and she was ushered into her place of purpose and destiny. Ruth got married to Boaz on the wings of her relationship with Naomi.

"So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest" **Ruth 1:22**

5. They Help Mold Us for that Which God Has in Store for Us

Relationships enhance our life experience exponentially, particularly the relationships we have which are divine connections. Our character is molded consistently when we are in relationships where accountability is demanded.

CHAPTER 10

Honoring God With Your Body



"If you sin, God can forgive you, but if you don't exercise, your body will not forgive you."

1 Timothy 4:8: ***"For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." (NKJV)***

The city of Corinth was probably one of the most successful trading cities. However, it also had great moral decay. In those days, if someone said you lived like a Corinthian, it was considered a great insult because the people in the city of Corinth lived in drunkenness and sexual depravity. In urging the believers in the Corinthian Church to flee from immorality, the Apostle Paul exhorted:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: ***"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."***

We hear it so often ***"Honor God with your bodies."*** We nod our heads in agreement while wondering, "What does that even mean?" Paul wrote two letters to the Corinthians because the church at Corinth was struggling to understand their faith in light of the pagan Greek culture; something many of us can identify with today. The city of Corinth was immersed in sexual worship; with thousands of temple prostitutes filling the city at night. The Greek culture celebrated the body in a sensual and pagan manner. As Christians living in this culture, Paul's Corinthian Church had one foot in the world and the other in the Church door.

2 Corinthians 6 confronts this mixing of Christ and immorality. Paul warns the church to ***"flee immorality"*** (and then explains why this is so important): ***"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"*** **(v.19)**

Paul was making a profound point here. It is worth noting that our world is very much into the amusement and fitness of the body. In many leading economies and markets there are scores of cosmetic products available to clean up, paint up, and fix-up the body.

There is nothing wrong with this but many people use these products without knowing their source, or if they have been scientifically proven to be fit for use. The users of this

products care little about the side effects because they are more concerned about their physical shape, fitness and outer beauty. Someone may argue that it is their concern what they do with their bodies; however, they are not to let those things control their bodies and define their lives. The question then will be where will all the investments in that temporary, outward beauty go to? We also live in societies that have the slogan "If it feels good, do it."

This is why bible tells us in **Matthew 26:41**:

> ***"All of you must stay awake and pray that you won't be tempted. The spirit is indeed willing, but the body is weak."***

Our body is weak and it is what we tend to respond to. We give in to its cravings and what it lusts for. Being a follower of Jesus Christ means living in obedience to His Word and His will for our lives, and that includes obedience in the matters of sexuality and morality.

The Apostle Paul tells us in **1 Thessalonians 4:3-5,7**:

> ***"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; …For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life."***

Is God condemning sex? No, absolutely not!

God created sex and it is sacred. I also wish to reiterate that sex was meant for procreation and enjoyment between a man and his wife.

God's Word also teaches that sex is to be enjoyed only within the boundaries of a lifelong, committed marriage between husband and wife. In **Matthew 19:4-6** Jesus said,

> ***"God made them male and female." This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together."***

God has called us to holy living. Therefore, we are challenged to practice spiritual discipline with the help of the Holy Spirit. We must run away from practices which are harmful to us for we are called to honor God with our bodies. What does it mean to honor God with our bodies? When God created our bodies, He did so with the intention that we would use them to honor Him. If you are going to fulfill your assignment, you must understand the **3 M's**:

a) The Message – This speaks of what you have been sent to proclaim or your assignment in life.

b) The Method – How to disseminate the message.

c) The Man – Speaks of you as the vessel and the carrier of the mandate and bearer of vision you have been given. Bishop Dr. David Oyedepo said, *"If you do not rest, men will lay you to rest."* Learn to respect and honor your body by having enough rest, eating well and exercising. The body that we live in is very important and we ought to treat it with care because God made it and values it.

King David rightly said ***"I will praise you; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are your works; and that my soul knows right well."*** **(Psalm 139:140)**

Your body is unique. You were created by God and you are not an accident. Every detail of your body, every cell and organ is God's handwork. There is a purpose for your body.

The Bible says in **1 Samuel 16:7:**

> ***"But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."***

God's value for the human body extends beyond creation. Our bodies are so important to God that He has promised to raise them from the dead. *Keep in mind that just like the temple, the body is a place of worship, but it is not an object of worship***.** We worship in this building, but we don't worship the building. It is God's building; respect it, keep it clean and honor it. Remember that the day you become born again, or in other words the day you let Christ into your life, something significant happens; your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to build you up in the image and likeness of Christ to the glory of God. The Holy Spirit lives in us twenty-four hours a day. So every waking moment; my body is to be a place where God is worshipped and honored. Your body is not a hotel with check out time at one o'clock on Sunday when church is over.

The Bible also says, ***"You are not your own. You were bought at a price."*** What that means is your body is not just a temple, but it is God's temple and it belongs to Him. God bought you. The bill of sale is the cross of Calvary where Jesus died and paid

for your sins. When you begin to see your body as a temple where God lives, it will change your entire perspective.

In Galatians 3:27, Paul writes

> ***"...for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."***

We have put on Christ; He is in us, and we are in Him. The blood of Jesus Christ was the price that was paid for our lives and our bodies. We have an obligation to ***Honor God with our body.*** Every aspect of our lives should honor God.

The Apostle Paul admonished us in **Romans 12:1-3**;

> ***"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, His good, pleasing and perfect will."***

Your body is not intended for the gratification of self, but for the **glory** of God. This is contrary to the popular notion amongst most people who say, "It's my body, I can do what I want with it." No, it's not yours and you cannot just do what you want with it. We must operate like Joseph while he was in Potiphar's house; a momentary gratification should not be at the expense of a lasting glorification. Our body naturally wants to do things that are not right. But we must control those inordinate and fleshly desires and not give in to them. We must not let our flesh rule us; we must rule our flesh.

The truth we must embrace is that whatever negative thing that happens to our bodies affects our minds, emotions, soul and eventually our destinies. What you watch, see, listen to or get involved in that is negative affects our relationship with God and others. Protect yourself and your family from the world's garbage. There is a phrase in the computer world that goes ***"garbage in, garbage out"***. On every occasion allow your spouse to check your browsing history randomly. Be discerning when it comes to films and music. Listen to lyrics and go to web sites that review movies.

The Apostle Paul says ***"Therefore honor God with your body."*** The word used here for "honor" is the same word that gives us the word "doxology". A *doxology* is an expression of praise to God. The word honor also means to carry weight, to weigh down, to make heavy. This means His Word weighs heavy upon the decisions you make, the actions you take, even in the words you speak. God has made a way for us to honor Him. He did this by Jesus dying on the cross to pay the price for our ransom and by sending the Holy Spirit to be our helper.

The Greek word for helper is *"Parakletos"* which means one who walks alongside you.

Jesus said in **John 16:13-14**:

> ***"When the Spirit of truth comes; he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me"***

Bruce Wilkinson, author of the best seller *Prayer of Jabez,* said: *"Sexual immorality is a threshold sin. On one side of the threshold is immorality and on the other is purity. On one side are guilt, lying, deceit, addiction, and shame, and on the other side are freedom, honesty, transparency, liberty, and a clear conscience. Believers who are in bondage to immorality find that unless they experience victory in this area, they cannot grow in holiness or serve the Lord with passion and power…"*

So when the Apostle Paul says our bodies are ***"temples of the Holy Spirit"***, he's pointing to the fact that our bodies are valuable to God. We have the honor, as Christians, to bear the Spirit of God within our hearts.

How Can We Glorify God with Our Bodies?

Here are several ways:

1. Be a Faithful Steward

True health is not about looking good on the outside, but treating our bodies with the respect and care it deserve so it functions optimally. What we eat, how much we sleep and how often we exercise all have an effect on our body's overall function. God blessed us with bodies to house our souls. In order to do God's kingdom work, we need our bodies to function. Aside from the circumstances we can't control, we should be faithful stewards of the bodies God has given us by not taking our health for granted.

2. Know Your Worth

The media tells us that confidence is about how much clothing we are willing to take off. This is a lie. Real confidence cannot

come from something exterior. Real confidence is an inner assurance, a boldness based on objective truth. Showing off a great body is not confidence at all. Our bodies have value in God's eyes. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed about it, because the world was perfect. When sin entered the world, shame came with it. God gave a covering to Adam and Eve to deflect the shame. Stylishly covering our bodies is not a lack of confidence; it shows we are giving our bodies the same glory and value that God gives it. Do not cheapen the beauty God gave you by advertising it for the world to see.

3. Be a Blessing to Others

By honoring our bodies physically and spiritually, we are equipped to bless the people God puts in our path. This brings Him glory by pointing to His work in our lives. You are a temple of God, bringing His love and truth into a world that desperately needs it. By living out that truth, we can all point back to our Creator, bringing Him glory for His design.

4. Taking Regular Baths

Bathing is one of the most fundamental ways we honor our bodies. Whether we shower or soak in the tub, bathing requires an intimacy with our own bodies. Bath time is also a time of vulnerability; as we cannot offer our bodies this care without stripping them of the clothing that usually affords them a kind of protection. Luke's Gospel tells a story about the sinful woman who entered a house where Jesus was having supper and began bathing his feet with her tears and wiping them dry with her hair.

> ***"Then turning toward the woman, [Jesus] said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love."*** **- Luke 7:44 - 47**

In John's Gospel, we see Jesus on His knees, bathing the feet of his friends. This is seen as a lowly act, one normally required only of non-Jewish slaves, and Peter at first wished to resist.

Jesus responded by explaining that life must be shaped by such acts of generosity

> ***"If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet"*** **- John13:14.**

Paying attention to our bodies during bathing, indicates that the body is worthy of care by reminding us of our being created in God's image.

5. Dressing Appropriately

We need to understand that clothing our bodies not only offers a way of protecting ourselves from the gaze of others, but has long been a source of delight for human beings. Graduates dress in academic robes that distinguish them as students who have completed a program of study. Brides and grooms dress themselves gloriously for each other to prepare for and heighten the moment when they exchange their vows. The

more special the occasion, the more careful we are about how we dress ourselves and what our dress says about us. It is said that ***people will address you the way you are dressed. Do not dress for where you are coming from but for where you are going.***

Dressing is not just a secular practice. In the Book of **Exodus 28:2**, God commands Moses to ***"make sacred vestments for the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron."***

The Bible also records:

> ***"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."*** **(Colossians 3:12)**

Wearing nice clothes to church may appear to be more important to some Christians than practicing the Gospel values of hospitality to the stranger, solidarity with the poor and inclusion of those cast out by society; but it is important nonetheless.

6. Touching

The boundary of skin that our bodies place between us can be bridged through the touch of another. Our culture cries out for ways of understanding and teaching what is an appropriate way of touching. The mother who sings joyfully with her children as she bathes them, teaches them that appropriate touch seeks to honor, not diminish another. The woman

who wept over Jesus' feet shows that although touch can be extravagant and surprising, its power lies in its gentleness. Jesus' own washing of the feet of His disciples teaches us that it is appropriate to cross the boundaries between us only from motives of generosity and not from a desire to please ourselves alone. Acts of touching, such as foot washing and exchanging signs of peace in worship, offer us opportunities to learn to touch one another in peace and love. The longing to be touched reminds us again of our shared vulnerability and how we need one another in order to honor the body.

7. Worship

The body that was formed and shaped and loved by God is the same that longs for God.

> ***"O God, you are my God, I seek you,"*** the psalmist writes. ***"My soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water"*** - **Psalm 63:1**.

Our desire for God is not only a desire of the spirit, but also of the body. Sacraments like the Lord's Supper reminds us that every time we gather with others to nourish our bodies, we have an opportunity to draw closer to one another and to God. Kneeling in prayer and worship, drawing our breath in song all remind us that we come to God as embodied people. The Christian practice of honoring the body requires that we view the world through the prism of Jesus' wounded but resurrected body.

8. Exercise regularly

"If you sin God can forgive you, but if you don't exercise your body will not forgive you."

Regular exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Study after study shows the benefits it can have. Not only does regular exercise help you manage your weight and reduce your risk of developing diseases, it can help prevent and treat mental health problems. It can boost your wellbeing and mood, and is a great way to unwind from the stresses of life. Older people and seniors also hugely benefit from keeping active. Whatever stage of life you are, there are plenty of different exercise options to try.

Exercise does not just mean going to the gym or heading out for a run. It may be as simple as walking to and from the shops instead of getting in the car, or getting off the bus a few stops earlier. If you do not exercise currently or haven't for a while, it does not take much effort to get started. After all, doing some physical activity is better than doing none at all. Even doing a little more exercise than usual can help reduce your risk of certain long-term health conditions. It does not have to be time-consuming. By becoming more active throughout your day, you can quite easily achieve the recommended activity levels but having stated that, a rigorous exercise is necessary unless advised to the contrary

CHAPTER 11

The Protocol of Honor



"Whenever you are given access by an authority, whether it is your spiritual father or mentor, that is not the time for you to be on social media, Facebooking and chatting on WhatsApp. Use that time to ask questions that can take you to your next level in life. There is a way you sit, talk and conduct yourself when you are given access by an authority."
- Rogers Cedar."

1 Timothy 5:17: ***"Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine."***

How do We Show Honor?

If 'double honor' is the ideal level of honor, then the minimum foundational requirement would be to at least show honor. But how do we show honor? *Some things are caught, not taught.*

1. Observe Rank and Hierarchy

> **1 Peter 2:17:** ***"Show respect for all men [treat them honorably]. Love the brotherhood (the Christian fraternity of which Christ is the Head). Reverence God. Honor the emperor."***

Recognize and know where men's gifts are. Do not relate with people who are above you the same way you do with your peers, friends or contemporaries. You must know the necessary protocol and ethics in your interactions and relations. When you observe rank and hierarchy you will sow, show and develop honor.

The protocol of honor is at the core of every relationship.

Honor becomes the bedrock and undertone in every relationship. When you give or show honor you will attract honor.

2. Walk in wisdom

> **James 1:5 (NLT)** ***"If you need wisdom ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking."***

The bible teaches in **Proverbs 3:13-18:**

> ***"Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.18 She is***

a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all that retain her."

i) Wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge correctly and to use understanding with prudence.

ii) Wisdom is the ability to recognize difference in people, difference in countenance, difference in the moments, times and season.

iii) Wisdom is not about following rules or commands, but it is being able to interpret the power behind the rules or commands, so that you are not governed by the rules or commands but have a revelation of the benefits that accrue from following the commands.

iv) Wisdom is the correct interpretation and application of knowledge.

v) Wisdom is also the ability to make sound judgments and the capacity to discern what is proper, useful, just, conducive, and the appropriate action to take.

vi) Wisdom is being able to see things from a heavenly perspective and applying what you see to your life, to produce undeniable results.

The genesis of wisdom is the fear of God and it comes through learning and receiving correction.

Proverbs 4:7: ***"Wisdom is the principal thing therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."*** (KJV)

It is not wisdom to tear others down because you will be tearing your future. Be gentle with the maimed, scared and hurting. Any time you see arrogance and dishonor in a person, it is lack of wisdom. Jesus was the personification of wisdom.

3. Value and Appreciate Access

By definition, access is the ability, right, or permission to approach, enter, speak with, or use; it also means admittance: it is the state or quality of being approachable. Access speaks of permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach or pass to and from a place. It means to approach or communicate with a person or thing.

It is Dr. Robb Thompson who said that ***"The greatest gift one can give you is access."***

There are people who cannot handle access; whenever they are given access they abuse it. It is important to know how to behave before greatness. Whenever you are given access by an authority, be it your spiritual father or mentor, it is not the time for you to be on social media, Facebooking and chatting on WhatsApp. Use that time to ask questions that can take you to your next level in life.

There is a way you sit, talk and conduct yourself when you are given access by an authority. This wisdom is reflected in little nuances like knowing whether it is acceptable to chew gum or not, when it is acceptable to high five them, sit or stand when addressing them or what form of salutation to use.

4. Be in order

Order, by definition, is a condition in which each thing is properly disposed with reference to other things and to its purpose; methodical or harmonious arrangement. Order is the foundation of all good things. Order is the state or condition in which everything is in its right place, functioning

appropriately. Order is the proper arrangement of people or things in relation to each other according to a particular design, pattern, method or sequence.

Disorder cannot give you order or honor. Order is what brings honor and it is easier than disorder. The dictionary defines order as *"an authoritative direction, instruction, command, mandate, to regulate, conduct, or manage: to order one's life for greater leisure."*

Order will make you easily noticeable and unmistakably obvious. For you to walk in honor in this season, you must get back in proper order and alignment. God is a God of order. In fact, the bible declares that ***God is not the author of confusion but of peace*** (**1 Corinthians 14:33**). God does not bless something that is out of order. If you want God to bless and increase you, so that He can reveal you, you must put your life in order.

The bible says in **1 Corinthians 14:40: *"Let ALL THINGS (not some things or most things) but all things be done decently and in order."***

You must put your life in order and remove all chaos and confusion if you expect God to increase and multiply the work of your hands. *Where there is order there is progress; where there is order there is productivity; where there is order there will be maximization of potential.*

Every time there is order, the blessing of God will come into a place; whether the people are religiously minded or not. It appears to be a universal principle. For instance, the difference between wealthy nations and developing nations is not so much their natural or human resources. In fact, many

African countries are many times wealthier than their donors in terms of human and natural resources. The difference is in "**order**". When something or someone is out of order, we call that person or thing, chaotic or confused.

Here are four reasons why order is key to developing or cultivating honor that will lead to personal success.

a) Our Great God is a God of Order

Genesis 1:2 says:

> ***"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."***

b) God Wants Order in the Way We Think, Speak and Act

There should be order in what we hear, how we think and what we speak.

> **Proverbs 23:7:** ***"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you but his heart is not with you."*** **(NKJV)**

c) Order is a Prerequisite for Miracles

> **Matthew 14:16-20:** ***"But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the***

disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained." (NKJV)

d) God Can Use Others to Bring Order Into Our Own Lives

In Moses' case it was Jethro. Moses was paid a visit by Jethro, his father-in-law. Jethro means **excellence**.

In **Exodus 18:17-20** in the Message Bible says:

Moses' father-in-law said, "This is no way to go about it. You'll burn out, and the people right along with you. This is way too much for you; you can't do this alone. Now listen to me. Let me tell you how to do this so that God will be in this with you. Be there for the people before God but let the matters of concern be presented to God. Your job is to teach them the rules and instructions, to show them how to live, what to do."

Moses was out of order and there was no excellence in his ministry; but we see God connecting him with Jethro, who was used by God to guide him by giving him instructions that brought order in his life.

5. Be meek and Humble

Colossians 3:12: ***"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience."***

The Greek word used in **Colossians 3** is a combination of two words that together mean *"a humiliation or lowliness of*

mind." A humble person has a modest opinion of himself, viewing himself as small before God and small before men. He understands that whatever he is and whatever he has is only because of God's grace. He also recognizes and rejoices in the strengths and talents of others. He submits to those over him and is courteous and yielding to those under him.

He is concerned of the welfare of others, and is willing to lay down his own desires for the benefit of others. Being meek and humble involves a proper view of ourselves. A humble person is content with the position God has put him in and is not trying to eclipse those who are over him.

> **Proverbs 15:33:** ***"The fear of the LORD [is] the instruction of wisdom; and before honor [is] humility."***

There is *genuine* and *fake humility*. Genuine humility is the capacity of a person's spirit as it is submitted to God. Your strength and power is seen in humility. To be meek is to be gentle and mild. The meek person is not self-centered. They are willing to put themselves in second place and submit to achieve what is good for others. Meekness is the opposite of self-centeredness, self-will, and self-interest. In other words, the meek person is not preoccupied with self at all. Meekness is an attitude or character trait of heart [**1 Peter 3:4**] where a person willingly accepts and submits to the will and desires of someone else, and for Christians, particularly toward God.

To be humble is to be cast down and to be courteous. Humility is also an attitude. [**Acts 20:19**] Humility is the opposite of pride, haughtiness, and self-exaltation. Even the greatest person in the Bible did not rely on himself. He modeled these qualities.

Numbers 12:3: "*Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men who were upon the face of the earth.*"

Be a low maintenance person who is teachable and always willing to learn and be corrected and God is going to cause you to be tremendously mighty.

6. Have an Impeccable Character

Proverbs 26:1:*"As snow in summer and rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool."*

When you are a man or woman of integrity, it gives God glory, and honor to your spiritual fathers. Character is that quality within us that enables us to live by our values. The development of Christ-like character is the biblical approach for man to become an ethical being able to live peaceably with others and be productive in society. In this life, the battle between character and situation; spirit and flesh, is never ending.

Encouraging examples provided in scripture of how character can prevail include those of Joseph while serving in the house of Potiphar (**Genesis 39)**, Daniel as he remained steadfast in his commitment to worship God instead of the image of Nebuchadnezzar (**Daniel 3)**, and Paul as he continued to honor his role as an apostle to the Gentiles even at great personal peril (**Acts 27**; **2 Corinthians 11:16-33**.)

In each case, an important implication of the story is that character, strengthened by faith in God, can enable one to be victorious even in overwhelming circumstances. One of the most poignant examples of individual character overcoming the power of situational pressures is found in **Esther** chapters

3-5. As Esther is elevated to the company of the king, Haman's plot against the Jews is reversed when Mordecai, Esther's uncle, appeals to her for help.

She is profoundly influenced by his argument that perhaps she was raised to her "royal position for such a time as this" (**Esther 4:14**). Risking personal safety, she appeals on behalf of the Jews to King Ahasuerus. Against considerable odds, her influence carries the day and the course of history is changed. People of strong character act according to their commitments and values despite possible short-term pressures and temptations to the contrary. The strongest possible character is one in which there is no conflict between values and short-term urges. One's character is to a large extent a matter of the values one has and the extent to which one is able to act on them. A person of strong character is capable of being committed not only to certain values but also to relationships.

7. Serve an Authority

> **Proverbs 27:17-18**: ***"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit; so he who waits on his master will be honored".***

Serving your authority is an opportunity to be developed, grow and sharpened. When metals that are compatible work together, they develop and complement one another. In scripture, the following pairs give credence to this fact: Elijah–Elisha; Paul–Timothy; Moses–Joshua. God matches a father's ability to a son's needs.

The stronger metal is not supposed to destroy the lesser metal. When we understand the fruit-bearing agencies in one's life, you will protect that fruit and you will reap the benefits of what you have nurtured

8. Remain Submitted

Submission is better than obedience. When you submit under a spiritual father, he will help strengthen your will by pressing and testing you into your process so that you do not short circuit your development. Interpreting your tests matures you so you can move on to the next test .This is how you will be a person of honor. Cursing the test will delay your process. Spiritual fathers help you interpret the tests, not avoid them, as you remain submitted.

As part of a providential pathway, your tests provide essential preparation and positioning for your progress in life. Instead of you nursing, rehearsing and cursing because of your challenges and experiences, fathers insist you mature and grow. They help you see how the test fits the blueprint of how God works together through these experiences and events, in ways that are for your good even though He might not have originated them. Eventually some of your greatest opportunities will be as a result of the battles you fought and won.

> **Philippians 2:5-11:*"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and***

became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth; And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (KJV)

9. Cultivate an Attitude of Praise And Worship

Psalm 149:6-9:*"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute on them the written judgment-- This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD"* (NKJV)

What is Praise?

a) To praise is to commend, which means to recommend as worthy of confidence or notice.

b) To praise means to approve and to show high esteem. It means to express favorable opinion of. When we praise, we are reciting and declaring our highest esteem and approval.

c) To praise is to glorify; it is to bestow **HONOR**, praise or admiration. When we praise God, we glorify and magnify His attributes which are goodness, mercy, loving kindness, righteousness, justice etc.

d) To praise God is to boast about God; it is to brag about what God has done and what He can do.

e) To praise is to advertise, celebrate and exalt God. To praise means to adore and to honor. It is to cherish and to put value on Him who alone is worthy to be praised.

What is Worship?

Worship in Hebrew is *"shabach"* which means to bow down and to prostrate one self. In Greek it's the word *"proskuneo"* which means to kiss like a dog kisses his master's hand.

a) Worship conveys the idea of bowing down or to lie prostrate; to face the ground.

b) Worship brings you into a position or posture where you make yourself vulnerable to anything God may wish to do. Worship is bowing down, making you vulnerable and esteeming God higher than yourself. Talk about how soldiers used to approach the king, bowing down without any weapon. They came defenseless and vulnerable before the king.

10. Understand Your Spiritual Covering

A covering, or the word covering, means something that is placed over and around something or someone to conceal, shield or protect it. To be under a covering means coming under authority of an individual, ministry, church or a group of apostolic leadership, or an apostolic father for the purposes of mentoring. It is during the covering, shielding, protecting and training that impartation takes place. Your covering can be your pastor or spiritual father. The key point is that spiritual authority shields and protects those who are under it. *An apostolic covering is the process and mechanism of spiritual shielding, protection and means of tapping into the grace.*

True apostolic covering offers fatherhood and mentorship to individuals and groups of people. The principle of apostolic covering is the rubbing of a piece of coal until it becomes diamond. Spiritual covering is the process of taking someone, a ministry or church from where they are to where they ought to be. It is seeing the destination of your sons or those under your covering.

Psalm 92:13**: "*Those that be planted in the house of the lord shall flourish in the courts of our GOD."**

Proverbs 31:23-25:***"Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth [it]; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honor [are] her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." (KJV)***

It is through your covering that you develop strength and honor. The scripture speaks of strength and honor for your clothing. Individuals who do not understand covering do not walk in honor. You become the beneficiary of the grace and anointing your spiritual covering carries and it causes you to walk in honor. Mordecai was Esther's spiritual covering and that is why he ensured that Esther was protected in the face of eminent danger.

Esther 6:1-3: ***"On that night the king could not sleep; and he ordered that the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, be brought, and they were read before the king. And it was found written there how Mordecai had told of Big than a and Teresh, two of the king's attendants who guarded the door, who had sought to lay hands on King***

Ahasuerus. And the king said, what honor or distinction has been given Mordecai for this? Then the king's servants who ministered to him said, nothing has been done for him."

Protecting your leaders will build honor and cause you to walk in honor. Protect the visionary or your set man because you are their first line of defense. Likewise protecting those that are submitted under you is an honorable thing to do.

11. Walk in Revelation Knowledge

To reveal means to "uncover", "to unveil" or "to disclose". To reveal means to uncover something that exists but is hidden. Revelation is the coming into light of what is already in existence. Therefore, the knowledge of Jesus is actually the unveiling of truths about Him that existed from eternity that are now uncovered for you.

Proverbs 25:2-3:*"It is God's privilege to conceal things and the king's privilege to discover them. No one can comprehend the height of heaven, the depth of the earth, or all that goes on in the king's mind!"*

2 Peter 1:2:*"Grace and peace be multiplied unto youth rough the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

From the above scripture **2 Peter 1:2**, we see that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. It doesn't say that God will give us; it says God has already given us all things. These things not only pertain to your spiritual life [godliness], they are also pertaining to life - practical living. From these we see God's will for us; He desires us not only to be giants in the spirit but also giants in life. Though these things are given through the power of God; they are obtained through knowledge. They are not obtained by power, sweat and "hustling". They are not obtained through the knowledge of these things rather; they are obtained through the knowledge of Him.

As matter of fact the knowledge of Him is the multiplying factor:

> **2 Peter 1:1-2:**"***God's favor is multiplied in your life through the knowledge of Him. God's peace- (perfect well-being, all necessary good, all spiritual prosperity, and freedom from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts) is multiplied through the knowledge of him."***

We know God by revelation. Your knowledge of God is by revelation that is why Jesus asked in **Matthew 16:13-17:**

> ***"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, who do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them but who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona:***

for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven."

This is the difference between knowledge that is in the mind and revealed knowledge that is from the Holy Ghost.

12. Giving of Honorarium

The word honorarium comes from the Greek word ***"honus"*** from where we get the word honor. Honorarium means a payment fee for performance. ***You can tell if you are honored by the honorarium you are given.*** In our definition, we mentioned that the Anglo- French word honor is ***"honur"*** which connotes elevation.

Romans 13:7:*"Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."*

Notice the precedence in the series of scriptures. You must observe protocol by respecting power structures. Giving financially into the life of your spiritual authority, pastor, prophet or spiritual father, including biological parents is a sign and proof of your honor to them. As you give and sow in the life of your spiritual authority, you will grow in the grace of giving (**2 Corinthians 8:1-15).** The Lord will increase and establish you financially and you will not struggle with giving.

It is said that ***"the pocketbook or the wallet is the acid test of the reality of our surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ."*** In a magazine article entitled "Giving Less, Believing Less." Joel Belz writes, *"Grace has symptoms. If one does not have the symptoms, then it means one does not have the condition. In other words, people who*

have genuinely experienced God's grace will demonstrate liberality in their giving. If liberality in giving is evidence, then it means those people have genuinely experienced God's grace. Giving ourselves to God makes the difference. It changes our perspective on money and material things."

In **2 Corinthians 8:6-7** Paul applies this to the Corinthians. He challenges them to ***"bring to completion this act of grace of giving."***

The Apostle Paul was telling them, "You have excelled in so many ways: I want to see you excel in the grace of giving too! You have excelled in faith and a continuing attitude of trust in God for Him to guide and supply your needs. You have excelled in speech: the ability to give expression to your faith and to share your faith effectively with others. You have excelled in knowledge and understanding of spiritual truth. You excelled in complete earnestness: the earnestness with which they pursued their Christian lives. You have excelled in love. Round off all these qualities out by excelling in the grace of giving."

The Apostle Paul says he was not commanding them but he was encouraging them to prove the sincerity of their love for the Lord. The apostle Paul moved on to present the Lord Jesus Christ as the supreme example of giving:

> **2 Corinthians 8-9:** ***"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor so that you through his poverty you might become rich."***

13. Have an attitude of gratitude

Attitude is the manner, disposition, feeling or position with regard to a person or thing. It is also the tendency or orientation, especially of the mind. In other words, attitude is a way of looking at things. Choosing to be positive and having a grateful attitude is going to determine how you are going to live your life. It is Viktor E. Frankl who said, ***"****Everything can be taken from a man or a woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."* Nothing can stop a man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal. In the same way, nothing on earth can help a man with the wrong mental attitude. Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character. *Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.* Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you but by the attitude you bring to life. It is not so much what happens to you but how you respond to what has happened. Develop an attitude of gratitude and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger and better than your current situation.

14. Repentance (Luke 15:12-20)

The writer of the book of Hebrews places ***"repentance from acts that lead to death"*** at the head of a list of six "elementary truths of God's word."

> **Hebrews 6:1 –** ***"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God."***

A correct understanding of repentance is absolutely fundamental to biblical Christianity. Paul informs us in **Acts 17:30:**

> ***"These times of [past] ignorance God has overlooked but now commands all men everywhere to repent."***

Repentance is a part of the very "foundation" of the true Christian faith. Repentance is the divinely appointed means of repairing the relationship between God and mankind. To repent means to *change*, or "have a change of mind." W. E. Vine states, *"In the New testament the subject [repentance] chiefly has reference to repentance from sin, and this change of mind involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God"*. This change of mind is a change of attitude and mental perspective, which results in a change in behavior. It means turning *from* the way of life that is contrary to God's law, and turning *to* the way of life that is defined by God's law.

CHAPTER 12

Rewards of Honor



"Honor doesn't Give to get - it Gives to give."

"Honor Is a Secret Weapon."

God promises rewards to those who honor and obey authority. The following Bible verses reveal that this principle affects many aspects of life.

1. Honor Will Help You Build a Godly Family

The Rechabites honored their father. Have you heard of the Rechabites? Read about them in **Jeremiah 35**

> ***"Jeremiah called the descendants of Rechab in to the temple and offered them wine to drink. But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, 'You shall not drink wine, neither***

you nor your sons forever. You shall not build a house; you shall not sow seed; you shall not plant or have a vineyard; but you shall live in tents all your days, which you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.' They had honored their father Jonadab for over two hundred years. And because they had demonstrated honor, Jeremiah offered this word from the Lord: "But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father and kept all his precepts and done all that he commanded you, therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before me."

Whenever you honor the Lord and His messengers, He will bless you, your seed, and successive generations will reap the benefits that accrue from your legacy of honor.

2. You will have a long life

Ephesians 6:1–3: ***"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother that thou mayest live long on the earth"***.

3. You will bring delight to the Lord.

Colossians 3:20: ***"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."***

4. You will avoid fear of condemnation

Romans 13:3-4: ***"For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?***

Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same, for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

5. You will maintain a good conscience

Romans 13:5: ***"Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake.***

6. You will bring joy to your authorities

Hebrews 13:17: ***"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."***

7. You will receive God's reward

Colossians 3:18-24: ***"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."***

8. You will avoid blaspheming God and His Word through rebellion

1Timothy 6:1: ***"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own master's worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed."***

9. You will be given clear direction

Proverbs 6:20–22: ***"My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee."***

10. You will be protected from evil people

Proverbs 6:23–24: ***"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: to keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman."***

10. You will gain discernment

Proverbs 15:5: "*A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent."***

12. You will receive praise from your authorities

1 Peter 2:13–14:***"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of***

them that do well".

13. You will honor those whom God has placed in authority over you.

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

14. You will escape the destruction of pride.

1 Timothy 6:2–4: ***"And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teaches otherwise he is proud, knowing nothing."***

15. You will receive the grace God gives to the humble.

I Peter 5:5–7: ***"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for the careth for you."***

Honor leads us to value church leaders and give weight to what they tell us. Dishonor makes us scorn and devalue what

our authorities tell us; causing us to take their words lightly. Do not curse church leaders; honor for church leaders is critical for your life.

In the book of **Acts 23:1-5**, Paul demonstrates the importance of honoring Church leaders. When he was commanded to be slapped by Ananias, he hurled a stern verbal insult at him. Someone whispered in his ear that Ananias was the High Priest! He quickly apologized, quoting

> **Exodus 22:28** ***"You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people."***

God equates cursing a church leader with reviling Him.

16. When You Honor Your Church Leaders, You are Honoring God

They are God's messengers; God's representatives. We demonstrate our honor of God by honoring the leaders He has set before us. Jesus took this teaching one step further: It is not the words you speak that matters, **it is the attitude of your heart**; you can say "yes" with your mouth but be going "Yeah right. Like I'm not going to do that" in your heart. Paul said: ***"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls. Church leaders are keeping watch over your souls"***. That is their job. And how you honor your church leaders will determine if you are walking in honor or not. When you fail to honor the requests of your church leaders:

a) You rob yourself of spiritual light for salvation; you rob your children of spiritual light, for they will grow up with an attitude of scorn toward the church and toward the pastor.

b) You rob yourself of rewards; for God uses His messengers to speak to you, guide you and to watch over the welfare of your souls. Your pastor is entrusting you with wealth in the form of spiritual truth; when you honor him, you will grow in the truth they teach.

To honor their teaching is to honor them. The benefit is eternal. When you fail to honor them, you will walk in darkness.

17. Honor Determines the Destiny of your soul.

> **John 12:26:** ***"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."***

If you do not honor the messenger, you dishonor the Word. God honors his servants as they follow Christ; and He honors His Son. The cross is the anchor of the Christian walk; our daily walk, our daily life in Christ must begin at the cross:

a) At the cross, we lay aside our fleshly wants and desires, our sin and selfishness, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

b) At the cross, we lay claim of the exchanged life; we identify with the resurrected Jesus Christ who lives in us and through us.

c) At the cross we realize that God uses apostles, prophets, pastors, deacons, elders and teachers to build up the Church; to work to conform us to Jesus Christ.

We honor the fact that they are God's messengers to us. To dishonor biological and spiritual authority is to scorn the God who gave them charge over you. Please, understand that God has a divine order of doing things. He has given gifts to the church to build it up, to teach, to chasten, to rebuke and to

instruct. If you fail to honor God's Way, you are playing with the destiny of your soul.

> **Psalms 92:12-15: "*The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the LORD; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the LORD is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.***

Those who honor parents, both biological and spiritual honor the Lord and:

a) They will be planted in the house of the Lord.

b) They will flourish in the courts of our God.

Each of us must seek to honor God by our faithfulness to the leadership of the church. When you dishonor church leaders, you will reap dishonor in your life.

18. Honor determines the direction of your family.

Eli is a picture of how dishonoring God can ruin your family and even your descendants. And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him,

> **1Samuel 2:27-34 (KJV)**: ***"Thus the LORD has said, 'Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh? Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel. Why then do you scorn my***

sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?' Therefore, the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed".

Sure enough, his sons were slain, and when Eli heard the news, he keeled over and broke his neck and died.

19. Things will be well with you

Ephesians 6:2–3: ***"Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee."***

This is what I call a *blank cheque* command. God did not restrict in any way the things that will be well because of honor. When He says it shall be well with you, He means that all shall be well:

a) It shall be well with your vision.

b) It shall be well with your business.

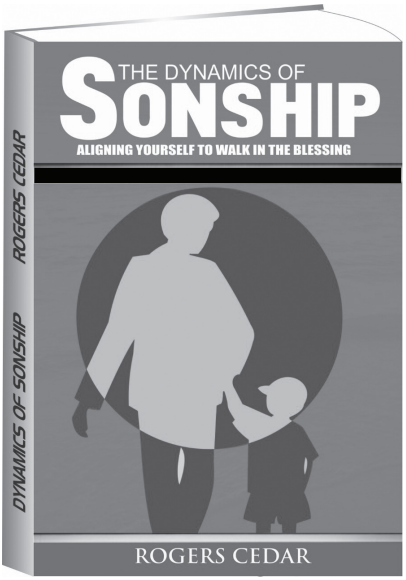
c) It shall be well with your relationship.

d) It shall be well with your marriage.

e) It shall be well with your ministry.

Other Books By Rogers Cedar

All available at amazon.com @ USD 10

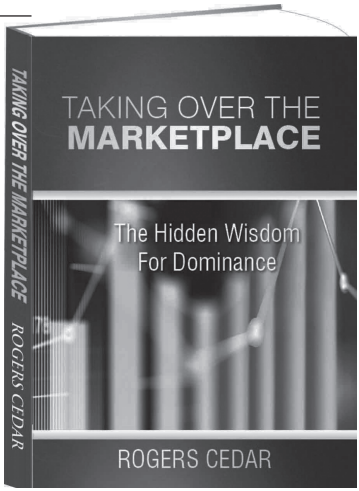


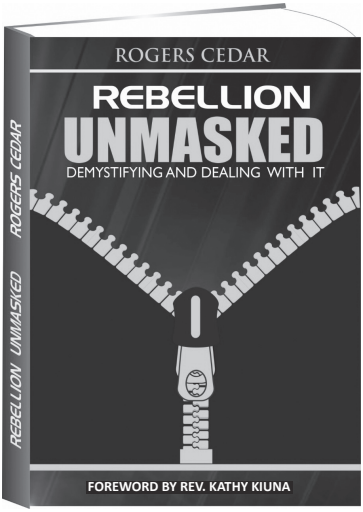
The Dynamics of Sonship

You cannot effectively father if you have not properly been fathered. In this current reformation, the transfer dynamics of spiritual resources is Impartation. Impartation never happens by osmosis or radiation but rather through a conscious deliberate relationship.

Taking Over the Marketplace

There is an ongoing warfare and tension in the Marketplace between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. Your victory and the ability to take over the marketplace lies firstly in developing a kingdom mindset and secondly having a Kingdom perspective of why you are in the marketplace.



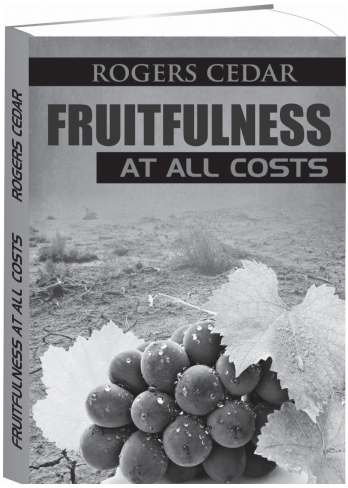


Rebellion Unmasked

Man manifests his rebellion not only in word and reason but in thought as well. Rebellious words come from rebellious reasoning, and reasoning in turn is "cooked up" in thought. Hence thought is the central factor in rebellion.

FRUITFULNESS AGAINST ALL ODDS

God will always leave you with a seed that will usher you into fruitfulness and productivity but there is a cost or a price to be paid as well as a process.



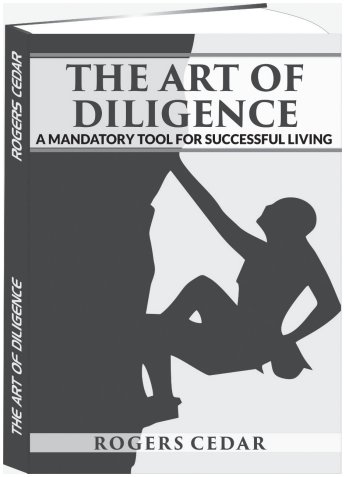


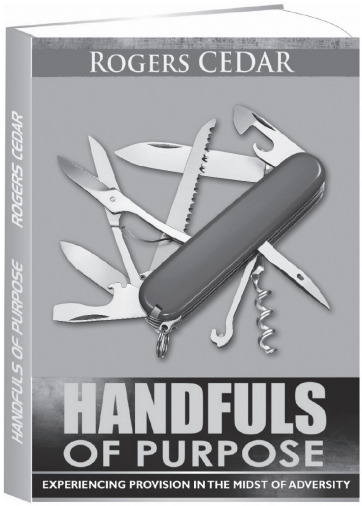
Frenetic Favor

The absence of favor in life impedes progress, causes delays and perpetuates a lifestyle of struggles. However, when you are favored, your struggles are turned into sweat less victories. Favor is heaven's kiss or endorsement. A moment of favor can be more powerful than a lifetime of labor. Favor is not fair.

The Art of Diligence

Mastering the art of diligence in every aspect of your life will set in motion a pattern that will make you successful. Shortcuts, just getting by and breezing through life without diligence will hinder your progress.



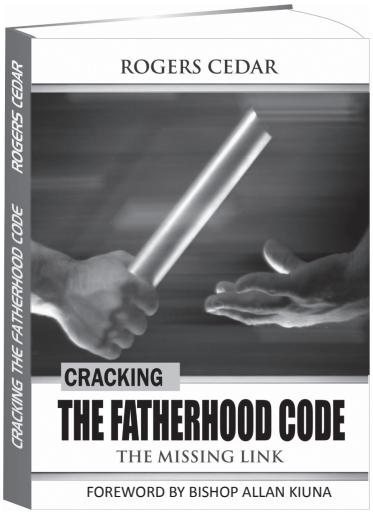


Handfuls of Purpose

Don't be fearful of the future.
God has already made it possible for you through this book *Handfuls of Purpose.*
As you glean up your rows of life, God already has them waiting for you to arrive.

Cracking the Fatherhood Code

Your spiritual father is not attempting to make you someone else but responds to you in ways consistent with his or her discernment of the person God created you to be.



Honor is the software that
cements our bonds with each other

Honour is something we do to others - either God, authorities, parents, or even ourselves. It is an attitude – some sort of software — that cements our relationships.

An understanding and practice of honour will yield in us honesty and morality. The power of honor given in love softens hearts and brings healing to the soul.

For the Christian believer, honor creates a spiritual buffer against the enemy's attacks, which otherwise erode the quality of our lives. The power of honor can break a curse that came from unrighteous judgment as well as result in healing.

In this book, Pastor Rogers Cedar gives us the anatomy of honor, from its perception to its practice. He paints the picture of a life that honours human and divine relations, and the blessing that such a life attracts.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rogers Cedar is the pastor of Jubilee Christian Church, Kisumu. He serves under the leadership of Bishop Allan and Rev. Kathy Kiuna who are his spiritual authorities and covering. He is a prolific author and teacher of the word of God. He is married to Pastor Mercy Cedar who serves and ministers alongside him. They have one son Micah Ade.

9 789966 099570

AURA BOOKS