

# Gone for Good?

*Live With Respect for Everyone*

With a family of educators, I constantly hear horror stories about the disrespectful ways our little ones talk. And sadly, it's not a surprise given how some adults speak to each other these days. Are honor, respect, and basic courtesy gone for good?

We're modeling our servanthood after Jesus' servanthood, as we continue our [Cross Training](#) journey. Servanthood includes seeing with new eyes, humility, sacrificial love, and honor. So why does a disciple stick out like a sore thumb when they lift others in honor?

## What You Need to Know

As servants of King Jesus, we lower ourselves before him, honoring his rule over us (Phil. 2:9-11). We follow his counter-cultural example, prioritizing God and others (Matt. 22:37-40). Rather than jockeying for position, we value others and act as the "slave of all" (Mark 10:44). In the friendliest of competitions, we "outdo one another in showing honor" (Rom. 12:10). While the world disrespects and disregards the poor and the marginalized, we're busy serving and honoring them as if they were our King (Matt. 25:37-40). As Jesus says, "*as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me*" (Matt. 25:40).

The Bible's command to honor people forces us to examine how we *think* about people and how we *treat* them. Who do you deem worthy of respect? Who do you value and hold in high regard? Not everyone's actions seem worthy of honor, so why does Scripture say to "*honor everyone*" (1 Peter 2:17)? We show *everyone* honor out of reverence for our Lord who died for them (Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:11). Each person's value comes from their "*Maker*" (Prov. 14:31). What gives you or me the right to dishonor "*people who are made in the likeness of God*" (James 3:9)? Every mature disciple can find guidance by returning to the golden rule we teach children — to do to others "*whatever you wish that others would do to you*" (Matt. 7:12). When I look down on others, I need to remember that it's "*by the grace of God I am what I am*" (1 Cor. 15:10).

Peter said to "*honor the emperor*" (1 Peter 2:17) even as he prepared Christians for persecution (1 Peter 3:15). Though we're citizens of a heavenly kingdom (Phil. 3:20), we're not rabble-rousers. We pay taxes (Mark 12:13-17), obey the government (1 Peter 2:13-17), give our best to our employers (1 Peter 2:18-25; Col. 3:23), and pray for leaders (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

We should have been training for this our whole lives — in our homes! "*Honor your father and mother ... that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land*" (Eph. 6:2-3) isn't just something parents tell their kids. It's a directive from God! And as we learn to honor our parents, "*Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?*" (Heb. 12:9).

## What You Need to Do

They say, "Familiarity breeds contempt," but be careful not to dismiss or discount someone just because you've known them for a while. Rather than being a hometown "hero," Jesus' message was largely ignored by his friends and family from Nazareth (Mark 6:4-6). Honoring everyone means honoring strangers as well as those closest to you.

Keep an eye on your heart for feelings of bitterness or anger toward others — especially those in leadership roles. You may think you can hide your distaste for someone, but eventually, it's going to come out and reveal your thoughts (Matt. 15:18). Ask God to help you see others the way he does.

We all have moments of weakness, so be ready to apologize if you catch yourself acting disrespectfully. Don't leave someone with a bad taste in their mouth because of something you said or did without thinking. Like Paul, when he unintentionally criticized the High Priest, we need to admit our mistake and move on (Acts 23:1-5).

### Through the Week

- **Read** — Luke 4:16-30; Rom. 12:9-13; 1 Peter 2:13-3:7; Eph. 6:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:12-26
- **Reflect** — Ask yourself, *"Is my respect reserved only for those I view as 'worthy'?"*
- **Request** — Pray, *"Lord, help me honor everyone made in your image"* (cf. Prov. 14:31; Gen. 1:26).
- **Respond** — Find a way to honor your parents today.
- **Reach Out** — Ask someone, *"When does showing honor come easy? When is it a challenge?"*