

Respect
Trinity Baptist Church Discipleship Training
(April, 2007)

Introduction:

The topic chosen for this study is “Respecting Your Elders.” What is our duty to honor those who are advanced in years? As we examine this topic it is necessary to understand the issue of respect in general. God has made all men equal as human beings – all of us are created in the image of God. Within the scope of humanity, however, God has placed certain individuals in positions of honor.

Romans 13:7 – “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

This study will examine the various places of honor that God has ordained and how we must render the necessary respect.

I. The Honor of Authority

A. God has ordained that all men be under authority – God gives us the command of obedience. This is a place where respect is honoring to God

1. Of families God commands us:

Ephesians 5:22-24 – “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in every thing.

Ephesians 6:1 – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”

2. Of civil authorities God commands us:

Romans 13:1 – “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

1 Peter 2:13-15 – “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:”

3. Of ecclesiastical or pastoral authority God commands us:

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.”

4. Of occupational authority God commands:
Ephesians 6:5-8 – “Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; ⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; ⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: ⁸ Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.”
- B. God is honored by our humble submission to authority
1. You may disagree with the conclusions of your leaders but God demands your obedience and honor as long as it isn't in conflict with His law.
Luke 20:25 – “And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.”
 2. Besides obedience, you owe them prayer
1 Timothy 2:1-3 – “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; ² For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. ³ For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;”

II. The Honor of Gender

- A. The man has been given headship and dominion upon the earth
1. We must give recognition and respect to this dominion
 - a. The husband/father has rule over the home
Ephesians 5:22-24 – “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.
 - b. The church is limited to masculine leadership
 - c. Most of the positions of authority in society should be restricted to men.
 2. This is why modern feminism is unbiblical – it fails to recognize the God-given distinction between the sexes.
 - a. Women should receive the strength and leadership of men – this is true femininity
 - b. John Piper – “At the heart of mature femininity is a free disposition to affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships.”
- B. The woman has been elevated to a place of honor and respect
1. As the weaker of the two sexes men owe them their protection
1 Peter 3:7 – “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

2. It is good when men approach women with chivalrous behavior
 - a. It is good for men to open the door for women or give up their seat on a crowded bus.
 - b. It is good for a man to seat his wife at the table
 - c. It is good for a husband to sacrificially honor and provide for the needs of his wife
Ephesians 5:25 – “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”
3. A godly woman will always express herself in appropriate ways
 - a. She should respond to a man in such a way as to signal endorsement of his masculinity – not sexual suggestiveness but respect.
 - b. A glad acceptance of His gentlemanly courtesies and a recognition of his leadership

III. The Honor of Children for Parents

- A. Children are commanded to respect their parents
 1. Because God commands it
Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.
Ephesians 6:1-3 – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ² Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) ³ That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”
Proverbs 1:8-9 – “My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: ⁹ For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.”
 2. Because parents are the instruments of their being
Proverbs 23:22 – “Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.”
 3. Because of the love demonstrated by the parent - the love of a parent for his or her child cannot be matched
 - a. Parents make great sacrifice for their children
 - b. Children owe it to their parents to return the love, to respect, to honor, to obey
 4. Because it provides harmony in the human relation - God instituted the family as the foundation of social order. When the family fails the society fails
Isaiah 3:12 – “As for my people, children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. . .”
 5. Because it provides a picture of our submission to God's authority
 - a. The child/parent relationship points to our relationship to God
 - b. It was demonstrated by Christ
John 6:38 – “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”
Philippians 2:8 – “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

- B. What about adult children – are we to respect our parents when we are no longer under their care?
1. Although the relationship changes we must still honor our parents. They still deserve our respect.
 2. We must provide for them when we are able
Mark 7:10-13 – “For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: ¹¹ But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.* ¹² And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; ¹³ Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.”
1 Timothy 5:8 – “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”
- C. What about lost parents?
1. Clearly a wise son will treasure and profit from the teachings of a wise and Godly father.
Proverbs 4:10-13 – “Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. ¹¹ I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. ¹² When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. ¹³ Take fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life.”
 2. Children, however, owe honor and respect to their lost parents. The injunctions in Ephesians 5-6 are unilateral – independent of the other party’s behavior.
 - a. Wives are to submit to even lost husbands
 - b. Husbands are to sacrificially love lost wives
 - c. Slaves are to honor and to submit to lost masters
 - d. Children are to honor and obey lost parents
 3. Children must obey as long as the parent does not ask the child to break the law of God - and then only with great sorrow

IV. The Honor of Age

- A. God has ordained that honor be given to those who advanced in age
Leviticus 19:32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.
1. Certain honor and respect is owed to our elders simply because of the advanced years. With age sometimes comes weakness that must be granted patience and kindness
 2. God demands that we recognize the differences that come with age
1 Timothy 5:1-2 – “Rebuke not an elder, but intreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren; ² The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.”

- B. There is great value placed upon the wisdom of the aged.
1. Age doesn't bring the guarantee of wisdom
Job 32:9 – “Great men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.”
 2. Maturity and wisdom can sometimes come early in life.
1 Timothy 4:12 – “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
 3. Age, however, often brings with it wisdom and maturity
 - a. We must place particular value upon the wisdom and maturity that comes through experience.
 - b. We are to place value upon wisdom
Proverbs 3:13-14 – “Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding. ¹⁴ For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.”
 - c. This is why a pastor must not be new to the faith or a novice to life's experience
 4. The older men and women in our church should be of great value
Titus 2:1-5 – “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: ² That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. ³ The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; ⁴ That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.”
 5. We must place particular value upon those who have matured spiritually—those who have spent a lifetime in communion with Christ—years of study and prayer.
Proverbs 16:31 – “The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.”

IV. The Use of Titles

- A. Titles should never be a means of puffing up an individual
Matthew 23:9-10 – “And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. ¹⁰ Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.
1. The context of this passage involved those whose position created great pride and arrogance – the Pharisees sought the praise and recognition of men. They loved places of honor and respect and they loved titles of honor and respect.
Matthew 23:5-7 - But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, ⁶ And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷ And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.”

2. God always hates pride
 3. Our Lord was not prohibiting the use of titles. He was condemning those who would rob God of the honor due only to Him.
Paul referred to himself as the father of his converts
1 Corinthians 4:15 – “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have* ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”
 4. We should not seek titles of honor and recognition
- B. We should use titles as expressions of honor and respect
Romans 13:7 – “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”
1. It is good to teach our children to use “Mr.” and “Mrs. and to say “yes sir” and “yes ma’am.”
I use these titles often even though I’m over 50. I often speak to even younger ladies as “Miss ----.” These are titles of respect.
 2. The use of the title “pastor” is a title of respect for the office.
 3. It is good to call a policeman, “officer.”
 4. We address civil judges as “your honor”
 5. We should address our president as, “Mr. President.” He should be spoken of as President Bush.
 6. In the military the names of officers are always preceded by their rank – “Captain Jones,” etc.