

Let's pray for a restoration of showing honor, especially to God, His Word and those who will help fulfill our destiny.

Love and blessings forever,

Pastor

Part 25: Feel the Passion!

Texts:

Ecclesiastes 9:7 (The Message) - "Seize life!"

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV) - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

[15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

[16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Ephesians 6:2-3 (NKJV) - "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: [3] "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

The Key of Giving Honor!

A. We have been teaching about extraordinary keys that bring extraordinary breakthroughs. Our topic today is: "Your future is determined by those whom you choose to honor."

1. Every promotion you will receive in life is determined by your ability to give or to receive honor.

- a. Paradoxically, honor never comes to those who seek honor for themselves. Conversely, failure is the direct result of failing to honor those in your life you were meant to honor.
 - b. Failure is also the result of honoring individuals or things that should never have been admired. For example, if a youth exalts a celebrity whose life represents all that scripture opposes, they will begin to imitate that celebrity.
 - c. Embracing wrong ideals will inevitably cause a young person to fail.
2. Definition of "honor": to give great weight to; to ascribe weightiness to (from the Hebrew word 'Cabod').
3. Honor is an interesting concept. Seek it, and it will be withheld from you; give it away, and you will receive it.
 - a. The life of Joseph demonstrates the rewards of showing honor. Even though his brothers had betrayed and sold him into slavery, he chose to honor Potiphar, his slave master.
 - b. Though wrongfully imprisoned, Joseph still honored the jailer. When Pharaoh sent for Joseph, he honored the ruler by washing, changing his garments, and shaving.
 - c. An Egyptian custom was for men to be clean shaven; however, Hebrew men always wore a beard. Though Joseph was Hebrew, he shaved his beard before coming into the presence of Pharaoh.
4. The art of giving honor will not only determine the level of an earthly promotion, but also your position in the Kingdom of God.
5. To effectively give honor requires spiritual discernment. You must be able to discern the God-given office of those He places in your life. Jesus said, if you receive a prophet who truly has that office, you will receive a prophet's reward. But if you fail to discern his office and only recognize him as a righteous man, you will only receive a righteous man's reward.

6. In today's culture, many have never been taught to show honor. In fact, they believe that to be elevated above others, you must tear down those who stand taller than you.
7. But even those who refuse to honor others want to be honored themselves. While they show no respect for others, they are still sensitive as to whether you give them honor.

8. **Joke:** New Location

Because Pierre was opening a new business location, one of his friends decided to call Boudreaux the Florist and send flowers for the occasion.

When the flowers arrived, Pierre read the card: "Rest in Peace." This made him so angry, he called Boudreaux the Florist to complain.

Boudreaux the Florist replied, "Sha, I'm really sorry for dah mistake, but radder than gitting angry, you should imagine dis: somewhere dere is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers wid a note saying, "Congratulations on yo new location."

B. The world's failure to honor the church has, for the most part, intimidated Christians into becoming silent and ineffective.

1. The world has said that believers are out of touch and irrelevant—and we listened to them. The outcome? Who could doubt the many serious problems our world is facing, some which no law or legislation could ever repair.
2. Last week, I referred to the barbaric videos of beheadings which are being posted on YouTube. If you want to see the condition of our world, watch one of those videos.
3. Legislation alone could never address the powers of darkness behind such atrocities—nor will bombs and guns. We need God! The world has forgotten that prayer can change things—if we honor God and His Word!
4. A few years ago, Andrew and I used some mileage points I had earned to travel to Norway and Sweden. My dad's ancestors were Norsemen from

Scandinavia. Like Alex Haley's story, *Roots*, most of us have a compelling desire to know where we came from, and I wanted Andrew to know about my father's side of the family.

- a. Today, Scandinavians are considered some of the most peaceful people on earth. The Nobel Peace Prize, which originated in Norway, is an annual ceremony in Oslo, Norway. The Nobel Prizes for various sciences are given in Stockholm, Sweden.
 - b. However, Scandinavians weren't always so peaceful. The Vikings were some of the most violent warriors who ever lived. Other nations coined the word "berserkers" to describe how savage they were on the battlefield when they went berserk!
 - c. Most of you are acquainted with the practice of using some type drink to offer a 'toast.' If you are in Great Britain, you would say, 'Cheers'; in Italy, 'Saluté'; in Spain, 'Salud' and in France, 'Santé'-- all of which means: to your health. But in Scandinavia, they say 'Skål,' which means 'skull.' This refers to their ancient custom of drinking from the skull of a conquered foe. These were bad dudes!
 - d. But in just one generation, the Scandinavians were transformed into a peace-loving people. Do you know what happened? Missionaries came to preach the Gospel to these barbarians. When revival broke out, they were converted and transformed!
5. God and His Word are no longer honored as they should be. Historians say that Europe is now in its 'post-Christian' era. Except for immigrant congregations, the churches in Europe are virtually empty.
- a. While America has some very large churches, it is said that we are fast approaching the same 'post-Christian' era. Secularists boast that in the U.S., Christianity is on its way out.
 - b. In our modern churches, many sermons resemble motivational speeches. God is mentioned almost as an afterthought. Or worse,

He is portrayed not as our Supreme and Sovereign Lord, but as One who only exists to meet our needs.

- c. Some churches have actually instructed their staff not to name any specific sins, or use the words: *sin, devil, repent, or hell*. Speaking words that are offensive to some may hurt church attendance!
 - d. That would be like a medical school professor instructing a group of oncologists never to mention words like: *cancer, radiation, surgery, metastasis, or chemotherapy*. It may upset their patients!
6. Recently, Dr. Michael Brown at the Pensacola Revival Center wrote an open letter to the pastor of the largest church in America to call him out.
- a. I'm not for airing dirty laundry in public, but this was the result of a statement by the pastor's wife on international television: "When we worship, we aren't doing it for God, we're doing it for ourselves. The reason we worship," she said, "is because when we worship, it makes us happy and God wants us to be happy. We don't worship for God, but for us."
 - b. I want to believe that she didn't think it through before making such a statement or that she was naive—but it created a firestorm! I'm praying for them.
 - c. In Michael Brown's letter, he warned that the pastor has long been teaching a message that isn't truly biblical, and that in an effort to build a crowd, the effect could be morphing Christianity into a false religion that is foreign to biblical teaching.
 - d. Now, I'm all for churches becoming more caring and loving, and I'm all for crowds of people. Yes, there should be more than a dry program when they arrive—but that is not what we're addressing here. Our concern is: what is the church world teaching?
7. You may ask, "Does it matter what the church teaches?" Yes, it does, since the church is the world's last hope. If the church doesn't preach the whole counsel of God, where else can it be heard?

- a. Where can people learn to live properly or raise a family? Where will they learn about integrity, honesty, or a godly lifestyle? Who else will teach them to be faithful in their marriage or love their neighbor—if the church is silent?
- b. Will our schools or universities? . . . our government? You must be kidding me! They are largely responsible for the mess we're in.
- c. Christianity must rediscover what it means to be an authentic Christian in our day.
- d. I'm reminded of the story of Alexander the Great confronting a soldier who had acted disgracefully. When he demanded to know the man's name, his reply was "Alexander." Alexander the Great shouted, "Either change your behavior or change your name!"

C. Honor must be learned early in life—and the best place is in the home.

1. Earlier in this series, we spoke about Abraham moving God by offering an extraordinary sacrifice. He could do this because of the extraordinary **values** he had imparted to his family and the honor they gave him for doing so.
2. **Genesis 18:17-19 (NKJV)** - "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; [18] Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? [19] For I know him, that he will COMMAND his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."
3. Why did God say that Israel would become a great and mighty nation? He knew that Abraham would ensure that the next generation of his descendants would not abandon their values or faith. Because Abraham taught them to honor and obey God, his family, in turn, honored him.

4. Unless our values are effectively passed to the next generation, nations, corporations, families, individuals—and even ministries, can lose their greatness.
5. Abraham commanded his children and his household to keep the ways of the Lord after his departure. He didn't merely *suggest*, he **commanded** them to do so. We should never forget this important role of a parent.

D. Abraham's persistence about his children serving God was the reason God would not hide from His friend the intention to destroy the cities of the plain.

1. His commitment to teach godly values to his family and to honor God actually determined the degree of revelation that was transmitted to Abraham.
2. Churches, ministries and individuals also reveal their level of revelation by not only honoring the Word He has given, but finding an effective way to communicate truth to future generations. This is why it's so essential to have effective ministries for children and youth.

E. Joshua is another example of elevation for not giving his children the option of refusing to serve God.

1. **Joshua 24:15 (NKJV)** - "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."
2. At the time of this statement, Joshua's children were likely near 40 years of age. Even as adults, they honored him by following his example.
3. Obviously, neither Abraham nor Joshua had read Dr. Spock's parenting book. If that name is unfamiliar, Dr. Benjamin Spock wrote a book in 1946 that completely changed the way parents in America and the West

raised their children. Its introduction also became the perfect timing for rearing the baby boomer generation.

a. *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* sold over 50 million copies, not including the countless spin-offs written by other so-called experts.

b. For a description of his book, click one time on this web address:
http://images.search.yahoo.com/images/view;_ylt=AwrTcYJkciZUDzUAIbyJzbf;_ylu=X3oDMTIyOGgwZ2ljBHNIYwNzcgRzbGsDaW1nBG9pZANmMzQyOTgxMTkwMTNjODliMTkxNjE0OWJkMmE2Y2Y1ZQRncG9zAzgEaXQDYmluZw--?back=http%3A%2F%2Fimages.search.yahoo.com%2Fsearch%2Fimages%3Fp%3DThe%2BCommon%2BSense%2BBook%2Bof%2BBaby%2Band%2BChild%2BCare.%26fr%3Diphone%26fr2%3Dpiv-web%26tab%3Dorganic%26ri%3D8&w=170&h=280&imgurl=media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com%2F736x%2Fc9%2F9b%2Fe4%2Fc99be42b384757b10be74e8f374fe060.jpg&rurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fpin%2F397653842067891097%2F&size=13.1KB&name=...+%3Cb%3EChild%3C%2Fb%3E+%3Cb%3ECare%3C%2Fb%3E+-+Originally%2C+%3Cb%3EThe%3C%2Fb%3E&p=The+Common+Sense+Book+of+Baby+and+Child+Care.&oid=f34298119013c89b1916149bd2a6cf5e&fr2=piv-web&fr=iphone&tt=...+%3Cb%3EChild%3C%2Fb%3E+%3Cb%3ECare%3C%2Fb%3E+-+Originally%2C+%3Cb%3EThe%3C%2Fb%3E&b=0&ni=21&no=8&ts=&tab=organic&sigr=11g3o6drm&sigb=143tmtq28&sigi=12dqinqv&sigt=11l0gl6qe&sign=11l0gl6qe&.crumb=hfntSop4pzV&fr=iphone&fr2=piv-web

4. The indisputable fact is that in the last 50 years, our nation has taken a moral nosedive.

- a. Since 1960, the rate of violent crimes has more than tripled. Every day we read news reports of heinous crimes in America, unheard of a generation ago.
 - b. Children murder their playmates, their teachers and their parents. Teenage mothers abandon their newborn babies in dumpsters, and every year students commit carnage upon their classmates. Our culture has sunk so low, children are no longer safe.
 - c. The sexual revolution that began in the '60s continues, with many casualties. Promiscuity has become so rampant, one of every four teenage girls now has a sexually transmitted infection.
 - d. In the last five decades, people have become so promiscuous, the number of distinct STDs has risen from 5 to more than 50, a sudden increase of 1,000 percent. Obsession with sexual violence has produced a 318 percent increase in sexual assault.
 - e. During this time, the divorce rate soared from 20 percent to over 50 percent of marriages. But that's not the whole story, because many now choose to live together without being married. That number has increased more than 1,500 percent.
5. Our nation is in severe moral decline, with nothing to slow our descent. Yet, the root cause is not that difficult to trace. The members of an out-of-control society have elevated self-indulgence above self-control. It really is that simple!
- a. In the last 50 years, human nature has not changed. At birth, we are still equipped with selfishness, lust, covetousness and every other evil passion and desire of the human heart. Only those who are taught to say "NO" to physical drives can keep their passions in check.
 - b. Self-control, coupled with the power of the Holy Spirit, helps us overcome temptations of the flesh and prevents us from stealing, being unfaithful and committing murder.

- c. Only parents can instill this important attribute of self-control in the next generation. History—and common sense—proves that any society that fails to teach children to control their passions is destined to become morally depraved.
 6. In America, the reason for baby boomers and their children having less mastery over passions than previous generations dates back to the '40s. That's when a new voice of authority on parenting rose to prominence. Parents of the '50s and '60s began to raise children differently than their ancestors.
 7. Rather than stressing the importance of self-denial and respect for authority, Spock discouraged directive training and emphasized accommodating children's feelings and catering to their preferences. No longer did children learn to endure Brussels sprouts and suffer through daily chores.
- F. Using Spock's approach, parents began feeding their children self-indulgence rather than instilling self-control. Homes became 'child-centered' instead of 'Christ-centered.'
 1. As parents elevated their children's 'freedom of expression' and natural cravings, youngsters became more outspoken, defiant and demanding of gratification. In fact, they came to view gratification as their 'right.'
 2. The guiding principle of that era was, "If it feels good, do it!" Of course, that meant the Bible was no longer relevant. How could it be if it contained the Ten Commandments? 'Ten Suggestions' would have been acceptable, . . . but Ten **Commandments**?
 - a. The result of being taught this doctrine was a movement that declared: 'Anything goes!' and 'No moral absolutes!'
 - b. The goal, among other things, was to remove God, prayer, and the Bible from our schools.

c. Of course, with no absolutes, moral laws went out the window. So, something had to be done about all those unwanted babies being born out of wedlock. The only answer for that predicament was to legalize abortion.

3. Look at where we are now:

- a. 57,210,000 abortions have been committed in the U.S. since Roe versus Wade, with 1.35 billion abortions worldwide.
- b. Kids carry guns to schools and kill their classmates.
- c. Terrorists behead those they disagree with, and then post their videos on YouTube.
- d. The world has never been in such great danger as it is now!

G. Abraham and Joshua **required** their families to live by the teachings of God's Word! Their children were never given an option of choosing whether to obey or disobey!

- 1. While Abraham and Joshua both made mistakes and had personal failures, they taught their families the blessing of obeying God's Word and the consequences for disobedience. God's laws are in place for a reason and we will always benefit by obeying them.
- 2. Both Abraham and Joshua were honored by their families for demonstrating how to serve God.
- 3. What is the result of parents failing to teach values and self-control? Do their children love and honor them more? No! In fact, the very opposite of what the parents expected has come true.
- 4. Children are more appreciative when their parents exercise control. They feel both safe and loved.
- 5. The story is told of a psychology experiment many years ago when experts began to fear that children in inner city schools felt as if their schools were mini-prisons. Fences which had been erected to protect the students seemed to resemble a prison. As the children stood with their

fingers in the chain link fences, they appeared to be incarcerated. So, the fences were removed. And guess what? No longer feeling safe, the students began to huddle in the center of the school grounds away from the area where the fences had been removed. They were afraid.

H. While it's easy to honor some parents, for others, it seems almost impossible. How do you honor a parent who seemingly deserves no honor? Or worse, . . . someone who has hurt or abused you?

1. First: Honor the office of parenthood, even if someone in your life abused their role.
 - a. This is especially true for parents themselves. If you fail to honor the office, your dysfunction will surely be passed to your own children.
2. Second: Remember that hurting people 'hurt' people.
 - a. This could not only help you understand why a parent hurt you, but also help you obey the commandment to honor them.
3. Third: Forgive those who have wronged you.
 - a. Unforgiveness keeps you connected to all the wrong and hurt you have suffered, while forgiveness breaks those chains and sets you free!
 - b. Whether or not the other person deserves forgiveness is not the issue. **You** deserve to be free.
 - c. One of Rome's worst forms of execution was to tie a dead person's body to the back of a criminal who was supposed to be executed—and then let him go. As the dead body began to decay, bloat, and finally to burst, the acids from the decaying body also destroyed the criminal's body. Then he, too, would begin to decay and die.
 - d. In Romans, chapter 8, Paul was referring to this type execution when he asked, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Then he thanked God for delivering him.

- e. When you allow unforgiveness to linger in your heart, it's like carrying a decaying body on your back until your own flesh begins to rot.
 - f. Forgiving those who have wronged you will set you free—so you can really begin to live!
 - g. If you have been wronged by someone you depended upon and trusted, you may wonder how I could dare ask you to forgive that person. It's because I had to do this myself. I am one who was abandoned by their mother at the age of 4.
4. Fourth: Give thanks—in spite of everything!
- a. **1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)** - "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
 - b. Why give thanks? Because when you do, God reprocesses all you've been through that was meant to harm, and turns it to your good!