

THE Source

September 2018

- *Honour - A Spiritual Principle*
Shane Dowinton
- *God Healed my Heart*
Kathryn McConnochie

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Please Join Us!

Men's Bush Breakfast
at 'Exciting Times' (Joan Baber's)
Shane: 074 430 2827

Wednesday Night Bible Study:
at Craig and Trish's, dinner at 18h00
Trish: 083 690 0061

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Honour: A Spiritual Principle

Shane Dowinton

“Honour your Father and Mother so that you may have a long life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

Exodus 20:12

Honour is a spiritual principle that undergirds the kingdom of God.

There are physical laws that we are aware of that govern life. We can agree or disagree with the fact of them but reality asserts that it is fact. We can argue the principle of gravity but challenging it by jumping off a ten storey building would prove you wrong.

Likewise, there are spiritual principles that are just as real as physical laws and our grasping of them would be to our advantage. Honour is one of those principles.

Throughout the Bible we find references to honour in various lives and incidents in the Old Testament and in descriptions of the character of God. You can also find it in Hebrew wisdom and poetry in Psalms and Proverbs.

But honour really finds its perfect fulfilment in the life of Jesus, His death on the cross and His resurrection.

You will find it as a common God-spun



thread running throughout history from Eden to eternity.

Honour is a value that we would bestow on a person that acknowledges our respect for his or her position, authority or power. It's not a word in common usage so we rarely talk about honour for each other.

In worldly terms we tend to give honour to people whom we think are worthy of it and it tends to become something shown to people in some leadership capacity. But the Bible gives us a much broader and more inclusive definition. A look through it and you'll find, as usual, a greater depth.

God takes honour to a whole other level, He puts a value on the individual human being far above anything we could imagine. He puts a worth on us that if we could grasp just a jot of it we would be pulled thoroughly into our Father's arms.

Honour from God's perspective is about applying the correct weight of

glory to another person. It says: "You are valued because my Father values you." It says: "This is who you are in God's eyes." Honour recognises the glory that God puts in and on a person.

I want you to look at honour through the lens of Jesus. Grasp how high and how deep His love is for us, the value on your life that He gives, the honour He places upon you - so that you can in turn see others as He sees them.

I also want to work through some ideas concerning honour in various relationships so we can adopt it as a foundation in how we relate to each other.

In the Beginning...

Genesis 1 verse 26 tells us that God chose to make man in His image. In fact, it says, "*in Our image*". Before the world even kicked off, there was relationship in the Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And God chose to elevate us above all other created things and form in us the image of Himself.

Without getting into complex theology, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one triune God, perfect and equal together. Before anything came to be, there was a perfect honour within the Godhead and in the creation of man that same image of perfect relationship was established. We know this because God looked at what He created and said, "It is good."

We have this tantalising picture of Eden where for a few brief moments we walked in relationship with God and each other in complete honour. Until we damaged that relationship at the fall.

Succumbing to the serpent we believed

a lie about our relationship with the Father, that somehow, He couldn't be trusted and that we might need something else in order to be like Him when He had already assured us that we are. It broke our relationship, and sin and its consequences entered the world.

As we follow that through the Old Testament we are constantly made aware of our inability to remain sinless. The law became a reminder of our need for salvation and its sacrifices a never-ending process of restoration.

Until Jesus.

Jesus came to restore our relationship with God as sons and daughters. He came to take our sin and the power of it over us and reconcile us to a loving Father. In Christ we are no longer sinners but sons.

How did Jesus do that? By honouring His Father at the cross.

Proverbs 18:12 tells us that, "*humility comes before honour*." Christ chose to take upon Himself every loathsome sin on our behalf. In doing so He honoured His Father and us. He basically said: "I choose to humble myself in order to bring you the honour."

"While we were still sinners Christ died for us." Rom 5:8

God has never stopped seeing His image in us and that honour is now fully perfected in Christ.

It's an amazing thought that God has never stopped seeing the glory in us. The redemptive story of Christ is woven into each one of us. Before Christ we all have sinned and fallen short of God's

glory but there is a tension within us that seeks for the truth that we are loved and valued by God, and it's only truly resolved in Christ.

At the cross we are given the emphatic truth that God loves us, values us, desires and pursues us, to a place of reconciliation. We may have run far from the Father in our sin. We may be covered in the pig swill of our poor life choices. But the Father runs to us when He sees our change of heart.

He demonstrates that He never has stopped seeing us as His children. He embraces us in our filth and restores us fully to our position in the family. His honour for us has not been diminished because of our choices, and His honour for us brings us new life.

When we grasp this, we are altered forever. We didn't earn this honour, we don't deserve it, our worth is not defined by what we do, but by who God says we are. God placed glory inside of us and honours that glory because of who He is. He honours us by grace and fills us with grace to honour each other.

Jesus made this clear when He reduced a law, that we can't live by, to two simple and succinct commands: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* And *"Love your neighbour as yourself."* (Matt 22:37-39)

So, what does that look like? Well it might be easier to look at honour from the other side.

Matthew 7:1-5 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged,



and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

I'd like to suggest to you that the opposite of honour is judgement. When we judge others we see our neighbour through the lens of performance. We have an expectation of them that has been disappointed, or they have wronged us or sinned against us, and now that offense stands in the way of meaningful relationship.

We might even have a long fuse and someone has finally, after many wrongdoings, lit that fuse. But in our minds that failure of sin requires punishment, we believe our judgement is fully justified.

But let's stop a moment because Jesus doesn't agree. He says check the log in your own eye. I believe the log that needs sorting out is our own judgement. We withdraw our honour from the person who wronged us and instead we demand justice.

Remember, God honours us for the value that He placed within us, not the good works we may or may not have done. He chose the cross because of the glory placed inside of us; chose to place our sin on His own Son, and reconciliation is by grace through faith

in Jesus. And therefore, by faith we honour our neighbour.

The log that needs to go on the fire is our judgement and the lens that we must see by is honour.

And here's a thing. *Jesus says, "For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged and with the measure you use it will be measured to you."*

Judgement and honour are like two sets of scales. If your inclination is to see the dirt on others, to carry offense at them, to accumulate their errors in your book, then you must know that that will be the measure by which your life will be measured.

Have you ever noticed that gossip attracts gossip? If you gossip, don't think for one moment your club is exclusive. As soon as you leave you will be the subject of the next. When we decide to hold court on someone's offense it is easy to find jurors. Remember Jesus' words, *"...with the measure you use it will be measured to you."*

In contrast, the scale of honour is also the measure by which you will live. If you choose to see others by the glory God has placed in them then you will be measured in like manner.

This is not about final judgement before God, this is about now. If we live in a culture of honour we will be honoured. If we live in a culture of judgement we will live under judgement. As Christ honoured His Father at the cross He was rewarded with life and so when we are honouring God and each other we live in the abundant life that He paid for.

Other applications

Occasionally, I have the privilege of marrying a couple. Normally the word 'honour' is in their vows. Traditionally, 'love, honour and obey'. I have come to realise that honour is a huge part of a successful marriage. When a husband and wife choose to speak about each other honourably or to each other with honour they actually speak life over their covenant.

When a couple first marry it's easy to see the treasure in their partner, the sweetest aspects of their nature. But it doesn't take long before the cap gets left off the toothpaste or the clothes just get dropped on the floor, and before long each spouse speaks of the other in terms of their negative qualities. "He's so untidy", "She's always nagging me", and so on.

When we choose to define the identity of our spouse by their faults and sins sure enough they become that to us and to those around us. But when you choose to speak out the treasure in them, the beauty of their identity in God, then sure enough, that will become the reality you live with.

The other area where I quite often see dishonour is the area of prejudice. Here in South Africa we face the terrible degradation that comes from racism, but actually prejudice comes in many forms of which racism is but one. Prejudice seeps in unnoticed but it's there in so many situations.

I've often joked that the most prejudiced nation I've ever come across is Britain (I am British). The Brits have a stereotype

for the French, the Germans, the Welsh, the Scottish, the Americans, eastern Europeans, in fact they don't even like each other, England is neatly split into North and South!

Prejudice chooses to see the faults and the wrongs of whole cultures, it judges and labels them and puts them into one large box of discrimination. It's a dishonour. It avoids the treasure and the goodness written into every colour, culture and nation and it isolates and discriminates.

In Luke 10 verse 27-37 we read how Jesus deliberately affronted His own nation for their prejudice towards the Samaritans.

Honour welcomes, includes and celebrates our differences, it unites us in diversity. I love the picture of eternity that John's Revelation gives us of every tribe, tongue and nation worshipping God together. I look forward to hearing Eskimos sing and choirs of Fijians and South Sea Islanders honouring Jesus as King.

In Matthew 25 Jesus tackles another area of dishonour—the poor, the hungry, the sick and the prisoner. Jesus continually honoured those in His community who fell below the radar of honour, He was regularly accused of being a friend of sinners.

Jesus says it's much deeper than that. Whatever we do for the least of these—Jesus calls them brothers of His—we are, in effect, doing for God. We are honouring God as well as the marginalised in society when we meet their needs, because they are family.

Honour is love in action. It sees those less fortunate in the family and gives them the honour of our attention.

Conclusion

Honour is a foundation block in the Kingdom of God. The Father placed glory inside each of us at creation and has honoured the glory in us ever since. Sin may have separated us from relationship with God but His honour for us remained.

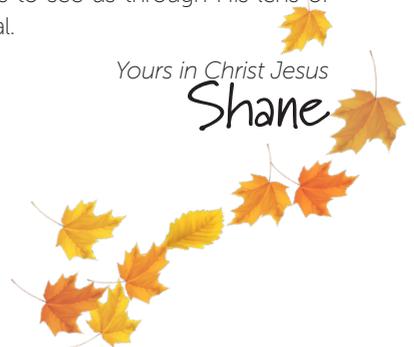
Our worth is measured by the price the Father paid when Christ hung on a cross. We are forgiven and reconciled to Him as sons and daughters, how much greater worth could He show us?

We may say that we don't deserve His forgiveness, and that may be true, but the Father demonstrated His love for us by letting Christ pay for our sin. He said we are worth it. He has honoured the glory that He placed in us.

And so, we carry His Spirit and His grace to love others as He has loved us. We honour our neighbour because He has honoured us. The lens of Jesus sees the glory in every person, and God's desire to reconcile mankind to Himself. When we choose to honour our neighbour we release life over Him and over ourselves.

God has made us in His image and He chooses to see us through His lens of potential.

Yours in Christ Jesus
Shane



BABY BIBLE CLASS



Let the children come to Me...

St John's church started a Baby Bible Class in February 2018. The class ministers to toddlers from two to five years old and takes place next to the Mothers' Room during the morning service.

Candy Farrant, one of the teachers, explains, "Baby Bible Class is all about introducing our little ones to our Lord Jesus Christ and we do this through the use of music. The class is made up of little songs that illustrate all the Lord has given us, creating the beautiful earth for us to live in, giving us our families and many different animals to enjoy."

"The illustrations are big, bright and colourful and every song has an action. One of my favourite songs is God made

Daddies, God made Mommies, God made Brothers, God made Sisters, thank you God for giving me, my loving family," says Candy

Tatum kindly provided material for the classes and trained the teachers to minister to the little ones. The ladies who have volunteered are dedicated to teaching the little ones about the Lord. They are Candy, Charlottle, Emmy and Shawn.

"We are grateful for this opportunity and ask our church to pray for this ministry. We pray it brings great excitement and understanding to the littlest members of our church family," says Candy.



Making noise for the Lord!



The baby ministry team in training

Discipleship Group Equips Believers



The Discipleship Training group was started in 2017 to disciple believers in kingdom life. The group meets regularly at the home of members in Leseding.

"We have moved from basic teachings on baptism in water, baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues and laying on of hands, to ministering in the power of the Spirit for healing and deliverance," says Shane Dowinton. "We have spent some time growing and practising the prophetic. We often go out into town to practice what we preach."

Memory Chipunza, one of the group members, says: "Ever since I started attending Discipleship Training I have learnt a lot. It has taught me how to live in the presence of God. I can hear Him talking to me and I have learnt to trust God in everything I do. I have learnt about forgiveness and fasting and so many other things. I don't want to miss a session and I am really enjoying it."



***If you would like to join the group, please contact:
Group Leader, Summe Kamupambe: 074 436 9146***

A LIVING TESTIMONY

Alex Stockbridge



I have always had a mustard seed of faith within my heart, a ray of light that penetrated in and I often had something stirred within me by a strong wind. Though what this 'feeling' was lacked clarity, was confusing and was without a strong foundation.

So my testimony began here at St John's with Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them".

I experienced the real presence of Christ at St John's, a presence of love, hope, and joy. Once I experienced the living person of Christ in the community, Christ became impossible to deny.

Stepping across the bridge onto the path with the Lord I had so many questions to ask, yet as St Augustine of Hippo said: "Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand."

Eight years later the path has not been straight, but it has been the best commitment I have ever made – a relationship that has led to a more intimate, yet mystical, relationship with Christ. I have a new foundation of Christ at the centre of my life, but the battle of the heart has not yet been won. Amen.

**Do you have a testimony that you want to share?
Please contact:**

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GOD HEALED MY HEART

Kathryn McConnochie



Around five years ago I developed an irregular heartbeat after a stretch of illness. While it wasn't life threatening, it was debilitating and at times very difficult to live with. I was told it was incurable with anything other than a difficult and risky surgery, which was not guaranteed to work. I'd accepted that it was something I was going to have to live with by the time someone explained to me that God has the power to heal all things - including my heart problem.

Because I had been told so many times that the problem couldn't be resolved, I wasn't hugely optimistic. And in all honesty, the first time anyone prayed for it to be healed nothing happened. But afterwards I was filled with new faith and an incredible sense of hope that in time God would in fact restore my heart to how it should be.

Sometime after that I was at a growth group organised through the church I was attending. Whilst I was there, during a time of prayer, I had an overwhelming sense that in that moment I should pray for my heart.



I heard His words in my mind "Pray for it now. This is the time." So I very quietly put my hand over my heart and prayed that it would be healed.

It was a pretty basic prayer, but as soon as I said it, I could feel the irregular heartbeats becoming less and less. Within minutes they had gone completely. God had done what I thought was impossible. He had healed me. My heart was beating strongly on its own - no surgery, no medicine.

In that moment He showed me that with Him there is always hope. Even when things aren't perfect and it seems like it's impossible that anything will change - He is always there for us. He always loves us. And there is nothing too great for him.



In June Son Safari had a group of people involved at the Fold. They took on a huge project building a large addition to the playground fence. They also bought some new bikes and put them together.



Our friend Michael Calamia from A World Aware helped our older children learn how to be mentors to our younger children. They worked together to make a program and then spent time with the smaller children with an event that they all enjoyed. They will be involved in future projects as well.

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LETHABO

kid's club

It has been a blessing to have Jody here in South Africa helping Marilyn and the ministry. She is currently keeping an eye on the day-to-day running of Kid's Club and Kholofelo as Marilyn is restricted in her movements.

Waiting for Kid's Club to start



Kholofelo

We're very happy with our students - many achieving distinctions in their results. Our three tourism students have completed their courses and are now looking for places to do their practicals. Our Child Care student has also completed and is now teaching.

Enjoying fresh milk and a peanut butter and jam sandwich



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The Kholofelo Association Acc. # 626 55988 0374
St Johns Soup Kitchen (Kids Club) Acc. # 620 999 298 15