

## Honor in a Dishonorable World - 1 Peter 2:9–17

### Introduction

Today, we are going to bring our series on **HONOR** to a close. When we began this series, we learned that honor is not a widely used word. We learned that honor is not used often because of what it brings with it. In terms of Christianity, honor is based on God's covenant calling. Moses reminded us that, Honor must be a way of life for God's people, and this I believe was the intention behind this series: to remind us that Honor must be a part of who we are as followers of Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate and honor fathers on this day, we return to that calling, not to repeat what we said weeks ago, but to build on it. If you recall from Deuteronomy 5:16, "*Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you.*" If the first message in this series taught us who we should honor and why, then this message will teach us how to live honorably in a world that very often is not honorable. Let's begin by looking at **1 Peter 2:1-17**. As I read this passage, pay special attention to verses 9-17 as they will be where we focus our attention.

When we consider the context of today's passage, Peter writes to believers scattered across a culture that didn't share their values, didn't respect their faith, and didn't honor their God. And into that world, he says:

*"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable..."* (1 Peter 2:12)

This is why it is important to understand that Honor is not just something we give, it is something we live. And personally, I believe this is a lesson much needed in today's churches. It's a message for fathers, for mothers, for families, for every follower of Jesus. We must learn to live lives of dignity and of honor. It is a message which echoes much better when we read this verse from the NIV translation. **Read 1 Peter 2:12 (NIV)**. It says, "*Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*"

**Honor Begins with Identity (vv. 9-11)** – The first thing Peter does is speak about identity. Look at his language beginning with verse 9. "*You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.*" Verse 10: "*Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people*". Verse 11: "*sojourners and exiles.*"

He's reminding all believers: Because you belong to Jesus, **you don't belong to the world's value system. You belong to God!** This is important because honor begins with identity, not circumstances or placement in this world. We don't honor people simply because the world honors them. We honor because *we* are God's children. We don't live honorably because culture rewards it. We live honorably because Christ redeemed us and loves us.

Fathers, grandfathers, mentors: your influence begins with who you *are*, not what you *do*. Children may not remember every lesson you teach, but they will remember the life you lived. It shapes your influence. And for those who didn't have a father in their life who modeled this, Peter's words help

us remember - **Our identity is not defined by our past. Our identity is defined by our Father in heaven.** Honor begins with knowing who you are in Christ!

**Honor is a Countercultural Witness (vv. 12–15)** – In verses 12-15, Peter says: *“Live such good lives among the pagans...”* Not *away* from them. Not *against* them. But among them. This means - honor is not retreat. It is not isolation. It is not hostility. Instead, how we honor others stands as a testimony of the honor bestowed to us through Christ Jesus. Honor becomes a witness. Peter says, *“...that they may see your good deeds and glorify God...”*

When we view HONOR in this light, it becomes part of our evangelistic work in this world. Not the kind that is preached, but the kind you live. Fathers, your greatest sermon is not the one you vocalize, but is instead, the one you live out each day. How you live your life communicates to others: how you manage pressure, how you treat people, how you respond to conflict, how you carry yourself when life is unfair, how you love your family, how you walk with God. When you live a life of honor, your life is a constant witness that either points towards Jesus or points away from Jesus.

**Honor is Strength, Not Agreement (vv. 16–17)** – Peter includes in this lesson a list that feels impossible: *“Honor everyone”, “Love the church family”, “Fear God”, and Honor the emperor.”*

Honor the emperor? Do you realize who the emperor was at this time? Nero, the emperor was Nero. He was cruel, unstable, violent, hostile to Christians. But Peter informed these early Christians to even honor him. Why? What Peter was communicating was Honor through strength under control. Under the control of Christ. Under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Peter was not saying: agree with everyone, approve of everything, ignore sin, or pretend everything is fine. No! He was teaching that honor is choosing Christlike character when the world chooses otherwise. Honor is responding with grace when others respond with anger. Honor is living differently because you belong to a different kingdom and fall under a different authority.

Fathers, your strength is not measured by volume, dominance, or control. It is measured by your humility, your patience, your integrity, your compassion, and your faithfulness. Honor is not weakness. **Honor is Christlike strength!** And as you go and spend the rest of the day honoring fathers, remember, it is your gratitude, your forgiveness, your prayers; these are acts of honor that reflect the heart of God.

### **Honor Shapes Generations**

I believe it is Peter’s final words that echo the heart of this entire series: Honor is not an event. Honor is not a moment. Honor is not a holiday. **Honor is a way of life.** Honor shapes families. Honor shapes communities. Honor shapes churches. Honor shapes generations.

And on Father’s Day 2026, we need to remember: As followers of Jesus, some of us are continuing a legacy of honor. Some of us are beginning one. But all of us are called to live one.

Honor is the lifestyle of God’s people.

### **Conclusion and Invitation**

Here is the cry we need today - Lord, make me a person of honor in a world that desperately needs Your presence.

Whether you are a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a mentor, or just simply a follower of Christ, the call is the same: Live honorably. Live differently. Live as God's people. Live in a way that points others to Jesus.

Whether you need salvation, renewal, healing, forgiveness, or courage, Jesus stands ready to meet you in this moment. Will you come to Him? Will you trust Him? Will you let Him shape your life with honor?

### **Closing Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank You for the people who have shaped our lives. Thank you for our earthly fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, mentors, and spiritual leaders. May you continue strengthening those who lead, comfort those who grieve, heal those who hurt, and empower all of us to live lives of honor. Make us people who reflect Your heart in a world that desperately needs Your presence. In Jesus' name, Amen."