

Rules of Engagement Rule 4 - Honor

We are continuing on with Our series rules of engagement... we are looking in the scriptures to discover keys to having more healthy, mutually satisfying relationships in our lives,, and let me introduce rule number four by telling you a story...

Back in the days of the great transatlantic ocean liners, A Bishop named Potter. "He was sailing for Europe. When he went on board, he found that another passenger was to share the cabin with him. After going to see the accommodations, he came up to the purser's desk A ship's **purser** is the person on a ship responsible for the handling of money on board.

and inquired if he could leave his gold watch and other valuables in the ship's safe. He explained that ordinarily he never availed himself of that privilege, but he had been to his cabin and had met the man who was to occupy the other berth. Judging from his appearance, he was afraid that he might not be a very honorable, trustworthy person. The purser accepted the responsibility for the valuables and remarked, 'It's all right, Bishop, I'll be very glad to take care of them for you. The other man has been up here and left his for the same reason!'"

Two men, who didn't know one another... began from a viewpoint of dishonor... began with the assumption that the other person was a dishonorable person who couldn't be trusted...

Dishonor does not lead to mutual satisfying, healthy relationships

We live in a culture and age of dishonor. Turn on the radio—or maybe we should not!—and we find the AM band awash with talk shows from all political stripes. Their theme seems to be discussing whose reputation they wish to destroy today. Their vitriol soon infects even your upbeat attitude.

So we try the TV. As we surf the channels, we cannot help catching television's equivalent of the talk show—but this version comes with fights, flying chairs, accusations and bleeped-out epithets hurled by and at participants.

If we are not careful, we can begin to think and talk the same dishonoring way. Nobody is safe from attack or being dishonored. Not the presidency, not members of congress, not school teachers or law enforcement officers, not other church members, and not members of our family.

This is normal,, but we are called to be different... a little weird... we are called to honor others... and reap the benefit in having better relationships

1 Peter 2:17

17 Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. NKJV

What Is Honor?

According to the thesaurus, *honor* has these synonyms: "esteem, respect, pay homage to, assigning value to." The Greek word translated "honor" in our English Bibles, *timao*, means "to prize, i.e. fix a valuation upon; by implication, to revere" (*Strong's Concordance*). Showing honor, then, means treating another respectfully because we value them highly. They were created in the image of God... and therefore worthy of honor...

There were Christians in the early church who dishonored a certain group of people,,, and James the apostle called them out about it... Let's read through chapter 2 of James and then mine out some nuggets to help us honor others as we should.

"My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing

the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment." James 2:1-13 (NKJV)

To honor one another

I. Learn to look beyond outward appearance

a. Don't let someone's economic status affect whether or not you honor them

"Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly." Lev. 19:15 (NIV)

Most Americans tend to believe that a person's socio economic status reveals his true worth. In their judgment, if someone is very poor, it's probably because they waste their time and are too lazy to work. At least that's what John E. Tropman, a University of Michigan professor, found in a study he conducted.

But that might not be true at all. The poor person might work hard 40 or more hours a week at a job that just doesn't pay well. They might work hard but have a large family, a lot of medical bills to pay or any number of issues... whatever their case may be...and the very wealthy might have inherited the wealth... and so

the Scripture says we must not dishonor someone based on his or her financial worth. Rich and poor alike are created in the image of God, Jesus died on a cross for both... so James was saying... Treat all men with honor.

I think God that this church family has not only young and old, but members from all places on the socio economic scale.. because in God's kingdom... that doesn't matter at all,, James is telling us that... Here we are money blind... we honor one another irrespective of income... That's the kingdom of God.. and next honor people if we.....

James specifically addressed money,, but we dishonor people for many other reasons to: whether they believe exactly like we do, whether they have the same political beliefs or ethnicity

b. Don't show partiality based on any criteria

And we have all experienced being dishonored... and None of us likes to be snubbed.

By doing so we create enemies. If we want to promote healthy relationships,,, and I am including in our church... we must challenge whatever prejudices in our hearts that cause us to show partiality.

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi wrote that during his student days he read the Gospels seriously and considered converting to Christianity. He believed that in the teachings of Jesus he could find the solution to the caste system that was dividing the people of India.

So one Sunday he decided to attend services at a nearby church and talk to the minister about becoming a Christian. When he entered the sanctuary, however, the usher refused to give him a seat and suggested that he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left the church and never returned. "If Christians have caste differences also," he said, "I might as well remain a Hindu."

That usher's dishonor because of his own prejudice not only betrayed Jesus but also turned a person away from trusting Him as Savior.

To honor others you must look beyond their outward appearance,,pray that God reveals and changes your heart,,

And you must also learn to

II. Be a "mercy giver" instead of a judge

So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."

- a. when we judge others we then criticize them and when we do that they feel dishonored... and we damage our relationship with them...

Has any one here ever read... **How to Win Friends and Influence People** is one of the first best-selling [self-help](#) books ever published. Written by [Dale Carnegie](#) and first published in 1936, it has sold 15 million copies world-wide.^[1]

and in chapter one he says to "Win Friends" Don't criticize or condemn others... that's what judges do... they condemn others...

we think we would be helping our relationship by criticizing.. or at least we would be helping them by passing on our judgement of them...

but...human nature doesn't allow that to happen, at least not very often... Criticism puts people on the defensive and usually makes him strive to justify himself

In dealing with people, we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion, bristling with prejudices and motivated by the twin sins of pride and vanity.

Psychologists describe a number of defense mechanisms used by people to keep from admitting they have sinned. One text lists 16 different methods of self-deception, which we all employ at times, to avoid dealing honestly with our own evil thoughts and feelings. Rationalization, for instance, occurs when someone assumes that it's all right to cheat on his income tax because "everybody is doing it."

Think about how you feel with criticized and condemned by another... does it motivate you to change?

Does feeling dishonored cause your friendship to grow closer?

I think not...

b. We make terrible judges

We are not fitted to be fair and impartial judges of others...

Scripture is full of examples of mistaken assumptions, such as those of Job's friends who assumed his suffering was caused by his sin. Only God sees the whole picture. With the limited evidence we can see, a faulty verdict is likely.

And our hearts are so proud and sinful and easily deceived

A poll conducted by Family Circle magazine found that most adults in this country think they are better morally than others. The survey questions had to do with how well respondents follow the Ten Commandments and how well they think their fellow citizens do. When asked about each of the commandments one at a time, a much

higher percentage of people said they obeyed it in comparison to the number who thought their neighbors did so.

For example, 81% claimed they followed the first commandment by worshiping only the one true God but said that only 49% of other people did. The percentages for the other commandments were similar: honoring parents (95% vs. 49%), stealing (10% vs 46%), and coveting (24% vs. 77%).

We aren't very at judging..

Now.. does this mean it is wrong to judge others in any way. While it is true that we should not condemn others or judge them unrighteously, we will need to make judgments of ideas, situations, and people throughout our lives.

The Lord has given many commandments that we cannot keep without making judgments. For example, He has said: "Beware of false prophets. ... Ye shall know them by their fruits" ([Matthew 7:15-16](#)) and "We need to make judgments of people in many of our important decisions, such as choosing friends, voting for government leaders, and choosing a spouse.

and so Jesus said in

Now in this life we do have to make some judgements.. "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." John 7:24
(NKJV)

And be sure Look to God's Word that is where we can determine what a righteous judgement is.. when you must make a judgement

but because we are fallen creatures who are making judgements about other fallen creatures we have to be very careful

And we must always be aware that our sinful hearts find pleasure in the search for the sins of others.

And we need to refrain from ever making judgements about the eternal destiny of others... we are to leave that up to Jesus

“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts...” 1 Cor 4:5 (NKJV)

Jesus knows the hidden things we have done, they will all be brought to light...

and we will either be judge for them, or forgiven of them,, depending on what we do with gospel message in this life.

2 Thess 1:8-10

⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹

What is the gospel that we must believe and obey...

God loves you
But he hates sin

All have sinned
We can't save ourselves

Jesus is the son of God.
Jesus lived a perfect life,, and died in our place

So trust him to save you
Receive him this morning. And be saved from the judgement to come.

John 5:24-30

24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Close:

Today's rule of engagement....Honor one another ... let's end with a quiet searching of our hearts...

Who have you dishonored? An individual or a group

Is there a certain outward appearance that cause you to make judgements

Would your family say you were an habitual mercy giver

Will you Learn to see beyond outward appearance?

Will you determine today to treat all men with honor

Will you ask God's help to Become a mercy giver

Let's pray

Prayer in the front.. coffee and fellowship downstairs in the café
Next week we conclude our rules of engagement series... you don't want to miss it.. this morning sign up to be a part of a life group for 5 weeks... put the rules of engagement into practice.. and develop some great friendships

And now... may you honor God by honoring those created in the image of God.. amen.