

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY – Living With Honour

Both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. (1 Chronicles 29:12 NKJV)

Honour delights a person. It is nice to be told that we are appreciated for something special that we have done or achieved. Our desire, even as children, was that our parents, or others charged with our care, would value and honour us for who we were. When our care givers neglected our basic needs or caused harm to us in some way, we lost respect for them. As the years passed, we withdrew emotionally or physically from them and started to seek our worth in someone or something else. We got lost in a desperate search for affirmation and approval. Then, when we were in bondage to our addiction, we seldom did anything that others would consider as honourable.

In the middle of all our life's circumstances, God cares for us and He has declared that, if we will turn to Him, He will bring us the honour our hearts long for. **At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame.** (Zephaniah 3:19 NIV)

To seek respect, worth, dignity, belonging or honour in or from another person is useless. Only when we see ourselves as God sees us can we know true dignity and value. God created us in His own image and He's the amazing creator of the universe. Jesus demonstrated our significance in God's sight by giving up His own life, in our place, on the cross. The Bible tells us that we are precious in God's sight.

You made them [humans] a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor ... But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, so that through God's grace he should die for everyone. We see him now crowned with glory and honor because of the death he suffered ... God says: You are precious to me. You are honored, and I love you.

(Hebrews 2:7 NIV, Hebrews 2:9 GNT, Isaiah 43:4 NLT)

We find it difficult to see value in ourselves because we are flawed persons. However, our flaws are no surprise to God and, just as a skilled artist can restore a valuable old painting to its original lustre, so God can restore our true

beauty and worth. Once restored, we can live filled with honour and be useful to God, our families, and our communities. **Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord ... If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.** (Act 3:19 NIV, 2 Timothy 2:21 NLT)

It's time to live as honourable people. A life of honor begins with choosing to be the people God says we are, in Jesus. This life of honor is built up and strengthened as we live in ways God teaches will increase our experience of honor and respect. (See inset)

We do not have to live any longer in unhealthy co-dependent relationships either anxiously seeking approval and affirmation, or, desperately hiding our worthlessness behind arrogant positions of power and control. We can confidently enter into God's original design for our life -- a life with meaning, honour, purpose, and dignity. This is life at its best. **For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.** (Ephesians 2:10 NIV)

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What have I done so far to recognize and reclaim the honor in which God created me?
2. What impact do my dishonorable flaws have on my life today?
3. In what way(s) can I build a life of honour before God?

HOW TO WELCOME HONOUR INTO MY DAILY LIVING

APPROACH GOD: Moses then said to Aaron, This is what the Lord spoke of when he said: Among **those who approach me** I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored. Leviticus 10:3 NIV

WALK BLAMELESS: For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose **walk is blameless.** Psalm 84:11 NIV

CHOOSE WISDOM: The **wise** inherit honor, but fools get only shame. Proverbs 3:35 NIV

HUMILITY: Wisdom's instruction is **to fear the Lord**, and **humility** comes before honor. Proverbs 15:33 NIV

AVOID STRIFE: It is to one's honor to **avoid strife**, but every fool is quick to quarrel. Proverbs 20:3 NIV

APPLY CORRECTION: Whoever disregards discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever **heeds correction** is honored. Proverbs 13:18 NIV

SHOWING KINDNESS: Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is **kind to the needy** honors God. Proverbs 14:31 NIV

DO THE RIGHT THING WITH LOVE: Whoever **pursues righteousness and love** finds life, prosperity and honor. Proverbs 21:21 NIV

DO GOOD: ... but glory, honor and peace for **everyone who does good:** first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. Romans 2:10 NIV

SERVE JESUS: Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor **the one who serves me.** John 12:26 NIV