**Honouring One Another**

***Senior Pastor Dr Daniel Ho***

(Romans 12:10; Luke 15:11-24)

# Introduction

It is often heard that when a Chinese believes in Christ, he or she will no longer honour their father and mother (due to certain belief and practices). As we explore the teachings in the Bible, it is proven that this is a myth that is entirely inaccurate.

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)

Jesus continued: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So he divided his property between them.

‘Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

‘When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.” So he got up and went to his father. ‘But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms round him and kissed him. ‘The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” ‘But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate. (Luke 15:11-24)

# The meaning of “honour”:

Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. (Exodus 20:12)

In Exodus 20:12, the fifth of the Ten Commandments tells us to honour our father and mother. The word translated for “honour” is the Hebrew “kabad”, derives from a root word meaning “weighty” is often used to refer to the glory of God.

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)

Here, the Greek word for “honour” refers to “time” (*tee-may*), which means “value”. We are:

* To give weight, value or to esteem such a person
* To act respectfully towards such a person who is honoured

In other words, we have to act respectfully towards someone out of a sincere and genuine heart. Where do people get the idea of honouring people? It comes from God Himself!

In the parable of the prodigal son, the son (representing us sinners) came to his right senses, knowing that he had done wrong and willing to repent. Despite what he had done, the father (representing God) was waiting, ran to him, embraced him, kissed him on his cheeks and called for a banquet in his honour. During the first century, Middle Eastern wealthy men never run. If he were to run, he would have to hitch up his tunic so that he would not trip and by doing so, his bare legs would be seen. In that culture, it was humiliating and shameful for any man to show his bare legs. So, for this father to run towards his son despite of the unacceptable norm, shows how much our God is showing honour to all His beloved children.

# The model of honour (Luke 15:11-24):

The father (representing God) honoured his prodigal son by (v22):

* Putting on him the best robe
* Putting a ring on his finger
* Providing a pair of sandals for his feet (Slaves do not wear sandals during those days)

‘But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. (Luke 11:22)

God our Father likewise clothes us with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, gives us authority as His children and makes us walk as sons and daughters and not slaves of the living God. God gives us authority and He honours us. Because God honours us like this, that is why we must honour one another likewise too.

# Two pre-requisites needed in honouring one another:

## https://i.ytimg.com/vi/oJlwS3ClCWw/hqdefault.jpgIt depends on one’s view of oneself (Romans 12:3)

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. (Romans 12:3)

Do not think highly of ourselves. If we think highly of ourselves, the danger and tendency is that we will not honour other people.

## It depends on one’s view of the nature of man (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 10:17,18)

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. (Deuteronomy 10:17-18)

All humans are created in God’s image. Irrespective of everything (skin colour, socioeconomic background, etc.), everyone must be treated with respects and dignity. One thing that should put many of us to shame is how some of us might have mistreated the foreign workers in our country. These migrant workers and refugees have come to seek shelter, protection and a better future but instead some are treated like slaves instead. We should treat everyone with dignity, value and honour.

# The methodology to honour one another

## Showing simple courtesy and respect for one another (1 Peter 2:17)

Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king. (1 Peter 2:17)

## Giving time and attention to one another (Romans 12:10a)

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. (Romans 12:10a)

It is as simple as willingness to give time and full attention to one another. One good example would be providing undivided attention to another party and ensuring the least possible interruption, such as phone calls.

##  Affirming one another (Hebrews 10:25)

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

Encouraging others continuously is a way to affirm and lift up others. Everyone needs encouragement and affirmation. Pastor Daniel shared of his positive experience of being affirmed of his “best teacher” award by one of his students.

## Protecting one another’s honour (Psalm 84:11)

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose way of life is blameless. (Psalm 84:11)

Do not speak badly of other people unnecessarily. Protect one another’s honour.

# Application

Perhaps it is time to start a revolution of honour and respect within our own community. We can start with talking properly to everyone, speak gently, use kind words and words of affirmation, etc. It can also be things that we do, such as when we are driving. Are we gracious enough to let go the parking space in front of us? Letting other cars go ahead of us?

Pastor Daniel shared an example from the United States about the impact of giving honour to all people, even to those who are seemingly the least and the last. The testimony comes from Dr Ravi Zacharias, recorded in one of his latest books when he visited the Angola prison in Louisiana:

*Some months ago, a friend of mine arranged for me to have the privilege of visiting and speaking to prisoners at the infamous Angola prison in Louisiana, once known as the most dangerous prison in America. There are about five thousand inmates in Angola, more than 85 percent of whom are serving life without parole and forty-five of whom are on death row. Not very many years ago when a prisoner was processed into Angola he was given a knife to protect himself. It was not uncommon to see bloodstains on the floors and walls. These are among the toughest and meanest criminals you could meet. Entering that prison for life without parole was to say good-bye to civility, with no possibility of freedom. Things have changed at Angola. I couldn’t help but wonder, as I met some of the prisoners and was able to talk with them one-on-one, what crimes they had committed and what had caused this apparently calm and mild-mannered person to do whatever he had done that landed him here. I spoke in the prison seminary, in which about ninety prisoners are enrolled at a time. Afterward, I was chatting with a handful of men and one of them told me a little bit about his past and how he ended up in Angola for life without parole. I asked him, “How do you handle the prospect that you will never get out of here, and that this is where your life will now be spent?” He looked to me to be a man no older than his mid-thirties. He answered, “You know, sir, if you knew the kind of person I was before I came here, and what I have now become because of the freedom Jesus Christ has brought to my soul, I can only say that if this is what it took to bring me to my senses, I am happy to spend the rest of my life here.” Then he paused and said, “Please pray for my parents. They think they are free, but they are in a prison of their own darkness without God.” That evening it was all I could do to fight back the tears as I watched this same man leading more than seven hundred prisoners in worship before I spoke. It was one of the most sobering experiences I have ever had. A hardcore criminal who has experienced redemption conveys a powerful story of how deep the human malady is, and that often one must be brought very low before acquiring the ability to understand what lies beneath evil.*

*(From “Why Suffering?: Finding Meaning and Comfort When Life Hurts” by Dr. Ravi Zacharias)*

# Conclusion

The word “Honour”, in both Hebrew and Greek, means weightage and time. We learn about honouring other through God Himself as exemplified in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-24). There are two pre-requisites in honouring other people: 1) A person should not think too highly of himself; and 2) A person should acknowledge equality in all human beings and practice no partiality based on ethnic and social background.

On the other hand, there are four methodology to honour other people: 1) Courtesy and respect; 2) Time and attention; 3) Affirmation; and 4) Protecting one another’s honour. It is important for each and every one of us to honour one another, and to start applying them in our daily lives.

Questions for discussion:

Why should this culture of honour be an important aspect of Christian and church life? What have we not done right in this culture of honour for ourselves, our family, our church and the Malaysian society?

How can we begin this revolution of honour and respect for one another? Suggest ways and means where we can continue to uphold and improve this culture of honour and respect in DUMC and beyond.



*Sermon notes prepared by Chrisandra Wong.*

*Prayer pointers prepared by Michelle Wong.*



SERMON: HOW TO HONOUR GOD: Honour one another

**Pray:**

* People of God will repent in areas where they have not shown honour to one another.
* We have the conviction in our hearts to show courtesy and respect to anyone irrespective of race, religion or social economy status.
* We will have the boldness to speak up when someone dishonours another by way of speech or action.
* We will affirm and respect each other as a way of honouring one another.

***Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.***

***(Romans 12: 10)***

**MINISTRIES & EVENTS: COMMISSIONING OF SENIOR PASTOR - COMBINED CHURCH SERVICES (8 MAY 2016)**

**Pray:**

* People of God will work together in unity and respect for each other in all aspects of preparation for the combined church service for the commissioning of Senior Pastor Chris Kam.
* God will make a way for all the plans and events to be carried out well and timely.
* All the audio and visual equipment will be in perfect working order throughout the service.
* All Pastors, Elders, church workers and the congregation will be able to come and pray for this event.

***And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8: 28)***

MALAYSIA MY NATION: SARAWAK STATE ELECTIONS

***7 MAY 2016***

**Pray:**

* Fear of God to be upon all people involved with the Election Commission to do their work with transparency and honesty for the future good of the people.
* God’s people will step up in prayer in repentance and urgency for their freedom of religion and worship.
* God will raise up God fearing leaders with integrity and sense of responsibility for the marginalised group to be in the new government.
* God will prevent the nomination and election of extremists of any kind who will incite hatred or mischief including all forms of racial and religious divide.

***But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. (Nehemiah 4:9)***

***Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us! (Nehemiah 4:20)***

* **A TRANSFORMED WORLD: IRAQ & MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES**

***ISIS***

**Pray:**

* Protection of the soldiers who are fighting the ISIS in the Middle East, especially Iraq.
* The Australian and New Zealand military teams to have wisdom to guide the Iraqi soldiers to protect the people in these countries.
* The Iraqi soldiers to honour and work in unity with the military teams to uncover the land mines placed in Iraq.
* For the fear of God to convict the hearts of those in ISIS to come forth to reveal the plans of destruction.

***For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. (Romans 12: 3)***