

# HONORING FATHERS +++

**PASTOR GREG GRIFFITH**

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Good morning, church. I am honored to be with you today and to be able to share this message. I pray that you are honored to be in King of Kings and here in worship and at the very throne room of God and to be honored that you have been called to sit at His throne room. And I know that God is honored today to be with you and to have called and claimed and named you as His own.

As we continue this honor code series, is it not lost? And reminded to us how important this series is. I mean, after all that we've been through and all that we see, how much does our culture need to know to honor? Honor is so important because it is not something that our culture values in this day. I think it's something that everyone talks about. Everyone says we need that. But are we doing that? And I'll say this for me and maybe for you—I carry the weight of the responsibility of ensuring that honor is in our culture. And so when the culture is a dishonor culture, I have to look and say, Greg, what have I done to contribute to that? And I think that's a good question for each and every one of us as Jesus people this day.

Because we live in such a dishonor culture. And today we're going to be talking about how we honor those who are near to us. I thought Zach did a tremendous job last week of talking about honoring those who are far from us and the honor culture and those who are an authority over us, those that we may never know or may never meet. But we cannot honor those who are far if we do not honor those who are near. And so on this day, we're going to be talking about how to honor those in our closest proximities. And especially on this Father's Day. Happy Father's Day as well, everybody.

So when we think about honor, first I think we have to biblically define honor. And I want to share with you, because honor is a biblical word, I want to share with you what does it mean—not in Webster's definition, I want you to know what did God mean when he gave the word honor of Exodus 20 verse 12: "Honor your father and your mother."

Honor—so what did the Jews and the Israelites say that honor meant? How did they look at it? It meant, and it's from the word "kevet," and it meant to carry heavy, to give weight of responsibility, to value due to position. So what they really meant when the Hebrew word comes out, kevet, is to value a person's role in your life as significant and weighty. To treat them with respect and obedience and care because they've earned it, not because they've earned it or perfect, but because it's their God-given position. That's important.

So we honor, in the biblical term honor, it's because of their position, not because of what they've done. And I think in our culture, in our world, honor comes with, well, have you earned it? And that's not what God meant when he said "Honor your father and your mother." Honor those in authority—it's because of their position. Support them practically, emotionally, and spiritually. And I think one, for me, a conviction: speak well of them, guarding their dignity even when you disagree or see their flaws. To honor means to speak well of someone, guarding their dignity even when you see flaws or disagree with them.

And our culture does not, if we look at that whole list of four things, that's not anything that our culture does on a regular basis. We live in a dishonor culture. So honor is not based on performance, but it's based on position. And this is what we as Christians believe. Amen? Amen. So we believe that. Now when you say you believe something, it means you reject something. And so here's what we as Christians reject.

We reject the dishonor culture, specifically the culture that puts down those around us and that we see in a small way that then leads from a dishonor of those near to us that then grows far to us. So we reject things like Homer Simpson and the dishonor that Bart Simpson shows to his father. We reject things like Jay Pritchett and Phil Dunphy and the two dads that just are kind of curiosity clumsy and aloof and like kind of successful but just kind of boneheads throughout the world. We reject the Frank Barone who just needs a strong woman to tell him what to do. And the Ray Romano who is just outliving his best life but really has neuro cares in the world.

We reject even the nursery stories that I read to my kids and that were read to me, the Bernstein bears, where the dad is this angry off the handle, figure things out, needs mama bear and brother bear and sister bear to teach him the right ways. We reject the dopey dad culture and that fathers just are there. And if you don't think these things have influenced our culture, let me tell you about when I was 13 years old and I was at my uncle and aunt's house for a 4th of July party.

And as one of my cousins walked across the living room, his dad from the kitchen said, "Hey, will you go out and get me this, this and this?" And as the kid walked by, he flipped his father off the entire length of the room for all to see. And as he got outside, my uncle just said, "What am I going to do? He doesn't like his dad very much." Dishonor didn't matter.

And that's the culture we live in because in our human fallen nature, it is easy for us to dishonor through shame or guilt our fathers, because we know their failures, we know who they are. It's easy for us to dishonor other people because we can look and we can say where they're wrong or we disagree. It's easy to dishonor other people and those who are nearest to us because we can sit there and say we can say anything to them. And it doesn't mean I don't love them, but I'm going to dishonor them.

And when we dishonor within ourselves and within our immediate circle, it is not going to be possible for us to honor anyone else. And so today I want us to begin over time. We didn't get to this dishonor culture quickly or overnight. We got here through allowing the dishonor culture to pervade us as godly people who've been entrusted to steward this earth and all that is in it that includes the culture around us through us giving and yielding the culture to itself. For us to take this back and to change us, it will take time and it will take each and every one of us intentionally bringing honor back to our homes, to our workplaces, to our communities and to our world. And it is our responsibility.

So today I want to bring three things. First, I want us to remember that honor covers. Second, that honor builds. And third, that honor reclaims.

So first, honor covers, doesn't expose. And when we talk about covering, it just means that we continue to protect the dignity and the care of other people. It doesn't mean we cover and whitewash sin. It doesn't mean we say, "Oh, that's no big deal." That's actually dishonoring. What it does mean is that we still find ways to speak well, to value, to hear and to give dignity to everyone and everyone. We

don't expose. We don't look and say, "Let me shine a light." We don't run around and say, "If you only knew, well, let me tell you the real story about that person." We are not in an expose career. That's not our call. Instead, we cover.

Meaning this: we bring dignity and value because we see every single life as valuable and dignified. Every person, rich to poor, young to old, all.

And we see this in the story of Noah. Now, by a show of hands, how many of you would say Noah was a righteous man? Go ahead. Raise your hand if you'd believe that. Yeah. So Noah is a righteous man. The word of God actually says that. So we have to believe it because it's in the word of God. So he was righteous, but he also was human. And so we're going to discover today how there is honor in Noah from his sons, at least two thirds of them.

So from Genesis nine, and when you see it in a different color, I want you to read it along with me from Genesis nine. The word of God says this: The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. And these are the three sons of Noah. And from them came the people who were scattered all over the whole earth.

Noah was a man of the soil. So kind of like a farmer. And he proceeded to plant a vineyard. And when he drank some of its wine, he laid uncovered naked inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took the garment and they laid it across their shoulders and they walked in backward and covered their father's naked bodies. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

Now, from all intents and purposes, we might read that story and think, okay, nothing big here, but actually something very big has happened.

Noah, a righteous man, was given a great responsibility to build the ark. And over 120 years took that time to build the ark. Worked every day. And in over 40 days and 40 nights, shut up inside of that ark with all of the animals and the species that were called to the ark and with his family and with the responsibility to then restart creation throughout the world.

I don't know about you, but I know for me, all of that sounds exhausting, especially since craftsmanship is my last spiritual gift. So if I was to build the ark, it would have sunk. So then Noah, maybe just needing a break, deciding to recreate all the things, says, I also know how to farm. And so he is going to plant a vineyard. And he plants grapes and they become wine. And then one night, he just decides, I'm going to let it go. I'm going to relax. And he drinks too much. And inside of his tent, not even out for all to see, inside of his tent, he just lays naked.

And then his youngest son, Ham, who maybe was a little bit of a ham. That was so bad, but it's Father's Day. So it's a good, bad dad joke. So then there's Ham. And he comes in and instead of seeing his father naked and saying, "Oh, dad's had a little bit too much to drink. I'm just going to cover him up and get out and not tell anyone and talk to dad about this later," he comes out and he goes, "Hey, hey, Shem, Japheth, guess what? Guess what I saw? You know what I saw? Dad naked in the tent. He's so drunk. He's passed out. He didn't even know I got in there."

That's our father. I don't think that Ham didn't love his dad. I think Ham loved his dad greatly. But I also think Ham didn't have as much honor and respect for his dad as he could. And he dishonored him. And he probably saw this flaw and this failure and had the moment of thought of like, who are you? And maybe even the thought of who are you, old man? Why should I listen to you now? Look what you've done. And remember, God gives honor not because of what they've done, but because of the position they're in.

And so, so here he is now dishonoring, not speaking well of his dad, this righteous man who has fallen and who's pointing out his dad's failure and his sin, not so that he would get better. And this is a matter that we need to know. It's not because he's trying to help his father. He's trying to disgrace his father even further.

Now, honor does something different. Honor doesn't expose our disgrace and try to further the whole of shame. Instead, honor covers it and wants to put the best on it. It wants to say, how do we uplift the person so that when they come out, we haven't added to their shame? And that's what Shem and Japheth do in Genesis 9, 23, right? So, but Shem and Japheth, they take a garment and they walk into the tent, right? They don't even walk in, but they see the tent. They know where their dad is. And they both turn around. Their dad's feet now are closest to them. His head is farther away. And they take a garment. And then they walk in backwards with their dad in the middle and their faces turned away from their dad.

And as they get to the end, they drop it so he is fully covered and they never saw his nakedness. When Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders, then they walk backward and their father's naked body. They covered him. They wanted their father to have honor. They loved their dad as much as Ham did, but they also brought honor and grace to their father. They didn't need to expose him any farther.

You see, when we love deeply, it covers a multitude of sins and failures. When we love deeply, it covers a multitude of sins and failures.

I have to admit to you, as a father, I have failed my children and my family multiple times. I know the wrongs that I have done. I can think about the times where I've lost my temper and my cool. I can think about the times where I knew my kids and my wife wanted to do something, but I didn't. And so I found a reason not to. And I can remember all those things. But because of the deep love that my kids have for me, that my wife has for me, it covers a multitude of sins. Anyone else would have walked away from me. But their love is so deep and their care is that it covers it.

And that's what Peter's talking about. He says that love covers a multitude of sins. And we do that in the shadow of the Lord. The great love of Jesus Christ. Because we are reminded that deep love for one another ensures that together we're covered. Together we're covered.

And that's important for us to continue to live out in a culture that wants to uncover our wrongdoings, our sins, our faults, our shames. To say, no, because of deep love, we're not going to disgrace one another. We're not going to pile on. We're not going to continue to share the story. We're not going to TMZ every single thing of every single person's life. We don't need to expose and disgrace and shame.

When I think about why is the culture the way it is, where it does want to shame, it's because we don't walk around and have a honor culture, even in our own lives. I'm encouraged right now for me to think about how do I talk at my home, especially when mistakes or failures are made? How do I talk in front of my children when I do something wrong or when something's done wrong to me? Am I dishonoring? How do I talk about my wife? Do I present her to my kids as, "Oh, there she goes again talking about this"? How are they talking about me? "Oh, dad doesn't know. He's just off in his own little world." How are we talking at home about our neighbors, our co-workers, our bosses, our authorities, our friends? How are we talking about people we don't agree with? It's so important for us to think about that.

I was a few months ago heading back home from Orlando, Florida, on a golf trip. And I saw this dishonor culture of how we talk about people right in front of me. So we pulled into the parking garage and we grabbed our golf clubs and we were on to the—from the car rental onto the elevator.

And as we got onto the elevator, there was a family that was at Disney and they had thick as can be New York, Brooklyn accents. And I won't try to mimic it because it will come out probably like a little New York, Irish, maybe some Spanish. I'll mess it up. I'll put all the world accents in there. But they had the thick Brooklyn accents.

Right. And so we say, "Where's the jetway over the bridge into the airport?" And he says, "Oh, the guy told me four." So we hit. So we're on four. We get up to four. We get off the elevator and it's not on level four. Like we get off and it just goes right back to the car area. And so as we're getting back on, we realize it's the wrong floor.

As we get back on, the little girl, seven-year-old girl, says to her father, "Dad, why did we get off on the wrong floor?" And he goes, "Because the jerk downstairs told us it's the wrong floor." And I was like, in my head, I'm thinking, I don't think the guy's a jerk. Like he made a mistake. Maybe you misheard him. But like, why do we have to tell the seven-year-old that he's a jerk right now? I get it. Like, this is the culture of New York and New Yorkers are a little hard. Maybe everyone's just a jerk. You wake up and you're a jerk for the day. I don't know.

But what I do know is by training that to the kid, it just continues to go on and on. And so how are we talking to one another? And more importantly, let me ask you this: How are you talking and honoring yourself? You see, if I cannot honor myself, I'm definitely not going to be able to honor others.

I think this is really important because I think we have a low self-esteem culture. When you make a mistake, do you call yourself, "Oh, you silly, you dummy," you other term, right? Or are we like, do we degrade ourselves? "Anyone can do my job." No, you're perfect in your job. "Oh, my job doesn't matter." No, it does matter. It's a vocation that God has given to you. Like, how are you speaking about yourself? How do you speak about yourself when you see yourself in the mirror?

And the importance of this is, if you cannot honor yourself, you cannot honor your spouse, you cannot honor your children, you cannot honor your parents, and then you cannot honor the culture around you, because if you can't give to yourself honor, you can't give what you don't have to others.

And so it's so important for us as honor covers and doesn't expose—for us to honor ourselves, to honor our parents, to honor our children, to honor our loved ones and to honor our world that God's entrusted to us. That is an honor code.

Because what honor also does is it covers and doesn't expose. It builds unity in our imperfect homes. You and I know Noah was a righteous man. The word of God tells us this, but he also had faults and failures. And it's a reminder for you and for me that every single one of us, there's not a person in any of our campuses or any of the world that doesn't have a skeleton in our closet, right? We all do. We all have things that we're ashamed of, things that we're guilty of, skeletons that we don't want other people to know about. You and I know this, right?

These are the times when we're at a party and we say something and we tell a story that's funny about our spouse, and in the car ride home, there's a silence and there's a, "Hey, what's wrong? Why would you tell that story?" "What do you mean? I thought it was a funny story." "It wasn't funny. I didn't like it." That's a skeleton you have in your closet, and we don't want people to know about them.

But here's the truth. Your family knows all your skeletons. Your loved ones know your deepest and darkest secrets. And here's what the reality is, that every skeleton in our closet reminds us—even a skeleton that was in Noah's closet, even when he knew that he was drunk one time—that Jesus's victory is for every one, for every father, every child, every home. His death and resurrection is honor for you.

And if, please hear me right now, if you don't hear anything else in this message, please hear this because one of you needs to know this today: The death and resurrection of Jesus is even for you, no matter what skeleton you carry, no matter what guilt or shame you carry. And I want you to know today that that voice that says Jesus's love is not for you is not from God. That's from hell. And it's from Satan. And send it back where it belongs. And say, "Get behind me, Satan. Jesus redeemed me."

That's what this story tells us. Because if Noah, who was righteous and called righteous by God, can fail and falter and God can redeem him, God will for you.

And the importance for us to know that in the unity that has, is that we can't allow dishonor culture to permeate our lives. Because when it starts to permeate our lives, it will permeate our faith. And this is why God wanted to protect, protect the people of God from a dishonor culture.

So when Noah woke in Genesis 9, 24 and 25 from his wine, maybe his head a little bit foggy, but he found out what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be you, Canaan." Now you might think, "Well, that sounds pretty harsh. Why would he curse him for dishonoring him? Why wouldn't he just say, 'Oh, son, I can't believe you did that. You know, that's wrong. Here's why.'"

Do like your brothers. This is God's way of protecting. God was saying, "We are not going to let a dishonor culture come into the new creation, into the new world, into the world where I've redeemed it, where I've restored it and where I've protected it." And so he cursed him and he separated him from that world.

And it's a reminder for us that a dishonor—and why is that important? Because if we have a dishonor culture in how we speak physically, we will have a dishonor culture in how we speak spiritually. And we

will look at other people's faults and failures, and we in a dishonor culture will say they are not able to be in the kingdom of God.

And how do we know this happens? Because the Pharisees did it. The Sadducees did it. And by the way, the modern American church still does it. And it's why a dishonor culture is not a part of the kingdom of God.

We have to fight hard against the dishonor culture. We have to raise up honor within our homes, within our communities, within our neighborhoods, within our workplaces, everywhere we go.

It's why Paul wrote in Ephesians 6, and he said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor," and it's the Hebrew word honor, the value, the respect, the listening, the obedience, the speaking well of them, the giving them honor, not because of what they've done, but because of the position they're in. Your father and mother is the first commandment, and it's a promise. So that it will go well with you, and you would enjoy long life on earth. Honor.

And so how do we, so as we look at how honor unifies, and it's a reminder, right? So we can sit next to each other.

Honor unites us because we're reminded all of us have the skeletons. But we don't have to disparage one another. We don't have to destroy one another. We don't have to demean one another. We're united in that the grace and the love and the mercy of Christ has joined us, forgiven us, and redeemed us.

So then how do we go about reclaiming honor in our world? As we've looked now to say we're going to cover one another, we're going to have honor building that unity with one another, and how we speak, now how do we honor that reclaims? Because honor reclaims what the culture dismisses.

Honor reclaims the home where my cousin walks by his father giving him the middle finger. Honor reclaims the tragedy of Bart Simpson saying, "Don't have a cow, man," and "Eat my shorts." Honor reclaims the dad, "You're just dopey, you don't really get it." Honor reclaims the thoughts of the dismissal or the parent that's too old or aged.

Honor reclaims the ability to listen to one another because of their position, not because they understand. Honor reclaims the statements that say, "You're too old, you just don't get the world today." Those are all dishonoring things of our culture. We're going to reclaim them.

How do we do it? Well, Paul writes about it in Romans 12:10: "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."

I actually love another piece of this because as a competition kind of guy, Paul writes and says, "Outdoing one another in brotherly affection." So it's like, how am I honoring you? Let me outdo this.

So what does your home look like if you're outdoing one another in honor and affection? "Oh, honey, this is the best dinner I've ever had." "Well, what do you mean? You had one last night." "Yeah, and this one's amazing. Can you imagine that?" "Oh, honey, I'm so thankful and grateful for you today. Thank you so much for waking up. Dad, thank you so much for being my dad. Thank you for choosing the hard



things to say to me sometimes. How do we outdo one another? Thank you so much for showing up today. Thank you so much for forgiving your all. Thank you so much for bringing your best."

How do we honor and let go? And that's where Paul invites us to reclaim a culture.

Can you imagine if you had friends over and the entire time you just honored one another? You just honored each other. They would leave and go, "That's the most different house I've ever been in." And they go, "Why are you so different?" Because you know that when you honor one, you honor the Father. Because this is a child of God.

And so how do we do that? We reclaim the culture by honoring our one Father, by honoring each other.

And I want to invite you to speak up, speak a movement of honor into your home. I want to invite you to speak a movement of honor into your home by honoring each other.

And I want to invite you today to speak life into your home, to speak life into those you love, to speak life into those who you want to honor, meaning this: How do you do that?

Well, on this Father's Day, what would you say to your dad that you'd say at his funeral? Don't wait for them to hear it in the next life. Let them hear it in this day. Tell them what they mean to you, not just today, but all the time. Honor your spouse, honor your children. Say what you love about them. And they might say, "That sounds weird." It is because it's counterculture. We need to reclaim the culture.

So let's not make it weird. Let's make it normal. It's what God has called us to do. Second, build one another up, encourage them and thank them. And lastly, it's fine to leave the skeletons in our closet. But let's bring out from the closet what we know, which is the cross of Christ and the honor that God gives to us through his death and resurrection for us.

And so let's let the cross go with us everywhere we go. And that cross brings the love and the honor that we have for all people, no matter who they are, where they've been, or what they've done. And let us encounter and encourage every single person in the good news of Jesus Christ for them and give them a great honor today, tomorrow and forevermore. And let them see the honor code from your home, from your heart, to your home, to everywhere you go.

And right now at all campuses, I want to honor our fathers. Dads, I want you to stand up at all campuses right now. Go ahead, dad, stand up.

First thing I want to do is say, say to you, thank you for coming and bringing and showing your children what it is to know and to love Jesus. We honor you. And second, I want each and every one of us to pray for all of our fathers. Pray that they all would honor Jesus for those fathers who've gone to be with Jesus. We thank Jesus for them in our lives, not always because of what they did, but because of the position they were given.

So what I want you to do right now is if you have a man standing next to you who is a father or spouse to you, I just want you to lay your hands upon them. We're going to pray over them. If you're like me where your dad's not here, I just want you to lift your hands up and we're going to pray over them.



Father God, we thank you and praise you for the fathers you've entrusted to us. We're grateful for who they are in the position that they have. We thank you, O Lord, that through their fatherhood, we also know that there's forgiveness. We thank you, O Lord, for the love and the peace that you've given to each and every one of us through them.

And Lord God, we pray that we honor them and then that honor, it's a casting of a shadow of the light of honor we have for you as our one heavenly Father who has always honored us so that we can be with you for all time through the gift of your Son.

We love you and we're loved by you and all of God's people at all campuses said, Amen.