

Larry Tomczak Says We Must Recover Honor as Hate Ruins America

Turning into McDonald's, a well-dressed, 40-something year-old woman slid her car in front of me as I slammed the brakes. Pulling next to her, I rolled down my window and said politely, "Ma'am, please be careful when you pull in here, OK?"

She snarled an expletive as she slammed her door and proceeded into the restaurant.

Hours later, I heard how House Speaker Pelosi labeled Donald Trump "deranged" and uncensored news commentators said, "Trump leads these terrorists ... He's worse than Nixon—he surpassed his tarnished legacy!"

Putting aside the fact that Nixon was convicted for felonies with irrefutable taped evidence ("We can get 1 million to silence them!") contrasted with President Trump being fast tracked to impeachment by hateful opponents ignoring his admonition to "peacefully and patriotically walk to the Capitol," Trump haters ruled the day.

On campuses and in town hall meetings across the land, elected officials and conservative speakers are shouted down. Our president was disparaged, cursed and mocked incessantly, especially on *Saturday Night Live* and late-night TV.

When I was at Cleveland State University during the turbulent Vietnam era, we hosted controversial speakers like Jane Fonda and Ralph Nader. They exercised their freedom of speech without interference. What was present then that is vanishing today?

Christian leader Bill Johnson calls it a “culture of honor” that leads people to show genuine respect versus competition or even contempt toward others. They view each other as co-laborers rather than competitors.

People once demonstrated civility in public debate; masses honored law enforcement, our military, the national anthem and flag; public figures were not incessantly subject to ridicule and contempt.

It’s time that the church declare and demonstrate the forgotten principle of honor to “salt” society once again. This precious and rare jewel was foundational to our forefathers who pledged their “sacred honor” to birth America. It must be recovered before it’s too late.

What Is Honor?

In a court of law, we address the judge as, “Your Honor.” Scouts declare, “On my honor ...” Invitations state, “We request the honor of your presence ...”

Honor refers to manifest respect. It is an attitude expressed in an act. We respect people privately, but we can only honor them publicly.

When artists conclude a magnificent performance, we usually honor them with a standing ovation. When a dignitary enters the room, we rise to our feet.

Today, it’s fashionable to disrespect authority, human life, our nation’s heroes and sacred institutions. This trend is increasing, getting more and more toxic and dangerous.

7 Areas to Show Honor

While the Bible says, “honor is not seemly for a fool” (Prov. 26:1b), God challenges us to “prefer one another in honor” (b. I honor my friend Charles Simpson, who taught me this virtue decades ago.

1. Honor God. In a world blaspheming God, Revelation 5:12 tells us, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive ... honor and glory and blessing!" In addition to this, the Lord says in 1 Samuel 2:30b, "for those who honor Me, I will honor."

We do this through courageously heeding and heralding the gospel and scriptural standards. We also do this through obedience, worship and cheerfully giving our finances. "Honor the Lord with your substance, with the first fruits of all your increase" (Prov. 3:9).

2. Honor governing authorities. While late-night comics and multitudes are mean-spirited, mocking elected officials, God commands us to "Honor all people. ... Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:17). Keep in mind this directive came when the ungodly Nero was ruler! Romans 13:1-7 warns us that dishonoring God's rulers brings judgment.

3. Honor parents. "'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with a promise, 'so that it may go well with you and you may live long on the earth'" (Eph. 6:2-3).

Do you want things to go well in your personal life? Do you desire to live a long life? Don't look first to Botox and holistic foods, but apply this divine directive toward your dad and mom.

4. Honor spouses. Our pop culture revels in contempt for God's Word and the sacred institution of marriage. People casually divorce, fornicate, cohabit, brazenly commit adultery and endorse homosexual unions. Remember when Obama lit up the White House in rainbow colors to celebrate same-sex "marriage."

God tells us in no uncertain terms, "Marriage is to be honored among everyone, and the bed undefiled. But God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers" ().

Scripture teaches us men to lead the way, as husbands “giving honor to the woman ... so that your prayers will not be hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7b).

I know of a man who felt convicted of neglect of his pregnant wife, repented and responded by honoring her with a special getaway. Doctors later discovered a clot that traveled to her brain and took her life. This was a tragedy, but he treasures that memorable time with her before she died.

5. Honor seniors. People watch *Bad Grandpa* starring Robert DeNiro and roar as his grandson treats him like a buffoon. Society endorses euthanasia while some people quickly cart off elderly parents to centers where they languish in loneliness. Seniors abandoned by their children often die of a broken heart.

God tells us to honor the elderly. Leviticus 19:32 instructs, “You shall rise up before a gray head, and honor the face of an old man.”

After my father died, it was an honor to care for my mother in our home for seven years. Only when we could no longer physically meet her needs after a serious fall did we turn to nursing home care. Our visits and calls remained very frequent. She’s now in heaven—but we have many memories, and our children had the example of how to honor a parent in sunset years.

6. Honor church leaders. Scripture tells us, “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor” (1 Tim.5:17a).

We do this as we pray for them, follow their lead, remain loyal and serve them joyfully. Remember, we show our respect for God by the way we treat those who represent Him.

7. Honor one another. Romans 12:10-11 says, “Be devoted to one another with brotherly love; prefer one another in honor.”

All of us have a God-given need to be respected. A soon-to-be-released film entitled *Respect* highlights Aretha Franklin, a pastor's daughter who cried out for "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" in her classic song. Comedian Rodney Dangerfield used to lament, "I don't get no respect!"

Here's the Deal: Against the dark backdrop of a declining culture desperately in need of spiritual awakening, God is raising up a generation to light up the landscape by restoring the principle of honor in homes, churches and public places.

Will you be part of this counterculture movement restoring this forgotten, rare jewel today? {eoa}