

I Will Defend My Honor!

Honor one another – Romans 12:10

Do you have an honor code?

Many colleges and universities have codes of honor. It is a statement that outlines the standard of the community. If an individual does not live by the code then they are disciplined and eventually cast from the community.

The idea of an honor code has been passed down through the ages. Medieval knights would have to give mercy if their opponent yields to them in battle. A samurai could not use stealth to attack his opponent. He was bound by honor to announce his presence.

How would you define honor?

Describe a time when you may have had to defend your honor?

Alexander Hamilton, who played a key role in the early formation of the American government died for honor. Alexander believed Aaron Burr was unfit for government leadership and through his influence caused Burr's defeat. Burr challenged him to a duel. They met on July 11, 1804. Tradition has it that Hamilton intentionally missed, which gave Burr the opportunity to cause a mortal wound. Hamilton died the next day.

For some reason that just seems chivalrous and honorable. I would also add that I would not have found myself in that same place if it were because I lost an election.

What things in your life would you defend in your life?

At the top of my list would be my wife and then my children. In many cases, when honor is mentioned it is fighting for one's own honor. Honor can be a very self-serving characteristic. Think about it. If I said, "I will fight for my honor" what in that statement is not self-serving? I am making the assumption that I am right and that I am more important than you. Honor boiled down is high reputation, respect, or esteem.

How would you describe an honorable person?

Here is another way that honor can be very self-centered. We honor people or consider them honorable because we hold them in high esteem. We hold them in high esteem because of the values and character that they possess, but these values and character are based on our own biased opinion. Consider

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves."

Romans 12:10

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”
Philippians 2:3-8

those involved in radical religious movements. They will honor their fallen comrades, who may have died while setting off a bomb in a local mall. Others will honor political figures that brought a country together through dictatorship. Still some would honor scientists who give their lives to the study of stem cell research. Yet, many Christians would not honor any of these people. We honor people based on our own convictions.

In Romans 12:10, Paul calls us to honor one another. The word “honor” means to respect or value, but there needs to be a standard. I value the pictures that my son draws for me. I am not sure there are too many people outside my family that would value them. We need a standard.

Paul provides that standard in Philippians 2:3-8. We are not to be self-centered or conceited, but with humility, honor others. We are not to look out for ourselves only, but we are to consider the community.

In what ways would your community change if everyone honored each other?

My community would be radically different. We would not fight each other for the closer parking space, and there would probably be fewer horns in traffic. We may even start smiling at each other.

Paul continues by giving a standard. Notice it is not our own understanding or virtues that define honor, it is Christ. Paul tells us to have the same attitude as Christ.

Jesus was God. He knew that all heaven and earth existed to bring praise and glory to Him because He is God. Yet, he chose to set that praise and worship aside to serve us. He set aside his right to be praised to fulfill his responsibility to serve even to death. He gave up his rights and chose to wash feet.

Sit and meditate on Philippians 2:3-8. Write what you are feeling or thinking.

We are called to honor one another. We are called to set aside our rights to fulfill our responsibilities towards one another. It may be my right to disagree with that person, but it is my responsibility to love him and show kindness to him. It is my right to rule my family, but it's my responsibility to raise them to love God.

Christians have a hard time with honor when they are hung up on rights.

What rights have you found yourself demanding from others?

What responsibilities have you neglected because of your demands for your rights?

Maybe we need an attitude check. Do you have the same attitude as Christ? Honor one another.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

