

Are You Respected?

By Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

What would be among the greatest needs that men may have? I have always wanted to know, because I am confident that the word of God is able to address and meet every need.

In considering the many needs of man, the first thing that came to my mind was food, shelter, money and other needs essential for the survival of man. However, as I sought the Lord, the Holy Spirit began to impress on my heart that one of the greatest needs of man is RESPECT. Man needs to be respected.

The Ten Commandments can be summed up in one word “respect”. Respect for God and God’s creation. While it is possible to remain happy despite sicknesses, a lack of wealth, authority or status, man will lose the joy of living without self-respect. He will not be able to lead a meaningful existence without respect. I will go so far as to say that without self-respect, man loses the purpose of being.

Loss Of Respect Is Destructive – No Punishment Is As Great As Taking Away One’s Respect

Marriages break up when husbands and wives lose their respect for one another. Businesses fail when partners fail to respect each other’s opinions, goals and abilities. People commit suicide when they have scant respect for themselves. A loss of respect can be painful enough to make death a welcome relief.

The pain and the shame that a broken relationship or failed business brings is what makes it unbearable. And this shame comes about when respect is lost.

The World Offers Many Ways To Gain Respect

Knowing the importance of respect and man’s need of it, the world offers several ways by which we can gain respect. One of them is wealth. We are though to think that when we are wealthy, we can command the respect of others. Money then becomes the goal of our life. But what happens when we do become wealthy? We only succeed becoming a wealthy sinners – nothing more.

Another way we can try to gain respect is through education. We pursue education in order to attain a certain standard of respect, but again we only become an educated sinners or a knowledgeable ones.

Satan tries to deceive us with materialism. We say to ourselves that if we have a bigger car, a bigger house or if we wear designer clothes, we will be respected. However, we will be only disappointed, because we will find ourselves to be nothing more than a well-dressed sinners.

All of the world’s solution for man’s need for respect is merely vain imaginations. Man’s need for respect can only be met in God’s way.

Jesus: The Answer To Man's Need For Respect

The Bible tells us in Psalms 8:5, "*You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor*". If we have been crowned with glory and honour, what has robbed us of them?

The Bible tells us that it is sin that has robbed us of the glory of God. Romans 3:23 says, "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*". We have become slaves to the sinful nature and this sinful nature destroys our self-respect. We try in vain to find a way to restore the glory which we lost.

However, we rejoice that the Bible has the answer! Romans 5:8 says, "*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" This is God's way.

You were originally created in His image. Sin has distorted that image. God saw your need and commended His love to you and sent Jesus to die for you. He provided a way for us to be restored while we were still sinners!

JESUS is God's way for us to have our greatest needs met. Matthew 1:21 says that He has come to save people from their sin.

In Jesus our sins can be forgiven and cleansed!

In Jesus we can be changed!

In Jesus we can have power to live a righteous life!

He delivered us from being slaves to Satan and gave us POWER TO BECOME THE CHILDREN OF GOD!

You can find true success, peace and harmony only if you will let God through Jesus Christ restore to you the glory and honour. You can be what God originally intended you to become and do His will successfully.

Jesus Understands What It Means To Lose Respect and Feel Shame

Sometimes we ask, "Does Jesus know what I am going through? Does He know that sometimes I feel so small and insignificant? Does Jesus understand how it feels to be humiliated and put down?"

Friends, I have good news for you. He knows how we feel. The Bible says, "*He is touched by our infirmities*" (Hebrews 4:15).

Jesus went through it all. He came to forgive and cleanse us from our sins. When He bore our sins on the cross He knew what shame was. He died a criminal's death, wore the crown of thorns, was mocked and spat on. Yes, He knows what it is to face shame. Isaiah 53 describes to us what He went through to bring you back into relationship with God. If there is anyone who knows what shame is, that person is Jesus. He bore your shame that you might have respect for yourself.

Sin took the glory away. Sin cut you off from your relationship with God, but today God says to us, "I can restore the glory to you."

You can find respect only in Jesus Christ.

A Man's Respect Restored by Jesus

I would like to conclude with the story of the man called Legion (Luke 8:27-39). Sin had control over this man's life and he had no respect for himself. Satan tormented him and stripped him of his self-respect and self-worth. He wore no clothes and lived at the cemetery.

Jesus came to the opposite. Jesus said, "*The Thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full*" (John 10:10). Jesus changed his life. This man received the Word of God and was set free. He regained respect for himself. The effect was immediately evident: he was properly clothed and was in the right mind – "*When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus feet, dressed and in his right mind*" (Luke 8:35).

Here was a man who lost respect of himself and consequently no one else respected him. BUT as Jesus restored him; he became a whole and respected person. The Bible says, "*... so the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus has done for him and now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him*" (Luke 8:39-40). Obviously he was someone who was respected by the town as he was able to draw the people to welcome Jesus by his testimony.

Friend, if you want to be respected, you need Jesus. Only He can restore to you your respect and give you a meaningful life. Let him come into your life and change you like He did for the man who lived in the tombs. He has come to give you life and life abundantly!

(All the Bible quotations are from the New International Version).

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