

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Spring Cleaning Series, Lesson 56

Lesson Title: Dump the Disrespect

Take Home Point: Dump the disrespect – honor God and others.

Warm-Up:

What does it mean to respect someone? The *Random House Dictionary* offers two key definitions for respect: "esteem for or a sense of worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or trait," and "deference to a right, privilege, privileged position, or to someone having certain rights or privileges." Those are good words. Respect is both personal and positional. We respect a person because of their worth or their position of authority. We esteem them, we value them, we hold them in high regard. We recognize the responsibilities, powers, and rights that accompany a position of authority, so we show due deference to the people in those positions. Sometimes positional respect is hard because in our opinion a person is not qualified, and it's easy to confuse personal respect with positional respect. But both are important to consider.

Read: 1 Peter 2:13-24

Observation (What happened?):

For whose sake do we submit to the authority instituted by men?

Since we have died to our sins, what do we get to live for?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Since we are to be submissive and respectful of others, what does Paul mean when he says to "live as free men?"

Why do you think it is commendable before God to suffer for doing good?

Insight:

Do you know anyone who doesn't desire the respect of those around them? In that way, respect is closely related to love. Everyone, whether they admit it or not, desires to be loved. To be loved gives a sense of worth and value. Respect has the same effect, just to a lesser degree. To treat someone with respect is to demonstrate that we believe they are worthy of our esteem and deference. As Christians, we know that every single human being has intrinsic worth because God created each one in his image. He loves every person so much that he paid the price to redeem them from eternal death. That is why Peter tells us to show proper respect, because God's perspective should be ours as well. Too often those who do not follow Christ demonstrate a respect that is false as a way to ingratiate for personal gain. Christians can live above that and show everyone the esteem the God of the universe has for them.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

To whom do you need to be more respectful? How will you do it?

Pray for the children in your small group to overcome our cultural tendencies to be disrespectful of authorities and elders.