

WHY ARE WE RESPECTFUL?

Presented by

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Have you ever had someone make you mad? And I mean **really, really** mad? For example, have you ever had someone cheat you out of some money that they owed you? Or, have you ever had someone promise that they would do something for you, but then they went back on their promise and did not do it? Or, have you ever had someone lie to you? When those types of things happen, they hurt, don't they? Sure they do!

No one likes to be cheated. No one likes to be deceived. And **no one** likes to be lied to. We do not like people who treat us badly or who disrespect us. We view such traits as cheating, deceiving, lying, and disrespecting others as **very** bad behavior. So, how do you think other people view **us** when **we** do things like those? If we do not like it when others treat us shoddily, how do you think they like it when we treat them the same way? They probably are not very happy, are they?

Neither is God! And that is why I have chosen as the topic for my sermon today—**respect!** There are several things I want to stress in this sermon. First, I want to make sure that we all understand what respect means because it is so very important to all of us on a daily basis. Respect is basically thoughtfulness, consideration, and esteem toward others. If we have respect for other people, we will act kindly toward them, exhibit thoughtfulness for them, and be courteous to them. For example, if one of you were to ask me today, "Justin, did you have a good week at school?" I **could** say, "Yeah, I had a good week." But if I wanted to show respect toward you, I would more likely say, "Yes sir, or yes ma'am, I had a **great** week." By my language, I have shown you respect. Or, if we were walking out of the building today, and one of you dropped your Bible and your purse, I could reach down, pick them up, and hand them back to you in order to help you. By doing this, I would not only be acting in a polite and courteous manner, but I also would be extending respect to you.

Second, it is important for us to understand that being respectful is not an option for us as Christians. Rather, it is something that God has **commanded** us to do. We are to respect God most of all, of course, because He is our Creator and our heavenly Father. Moses wrote in Exodus 20:3, "I am the Lord your God.... You shall have no other gods before Me." No one can **ever** come before God. He, above all, deserves our respect because of Who He is and because of what He has done for us.

But we also are to respect others. Paul told Timothy, "I urge that prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men...so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way" (1 Timothy 2:2). And, children are to respect their parents. Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Our parents are people whom we should look

up to, follow, and mind. They are not our **friends**; they are our **parents**. God put them in charge because He knew that it would be best for us in the long run. So, yes, we as Christians must respect God, other humans, and those in positions of authority because this is what God expects of us.

Third, we must always be respectful of God and others because if we do not, there will be serious consequences. We may experience some of those consequences **now**. For example, we are commanded to respect and obey the laws of the land. Paul wrote in Romans 13:1, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God." If we break the law, we can end up in jail or prison.

But some of the consequences we experience if we disrespect God and others may follow us into eternity. John wrote in Revelation 21:8, "The cowardly, the unbelieving, the murderers, the sexually immoral, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Jesus Himself spoke of those people who did not obey and respect God and His commandments when He said in Matthew 25:46, "And these will go away into everlasting punishment." Disrespecting God and His Word is not something we should **ever** want to do.

In Daniel 7:26, Daniel said, "Here is the end of the matter." I would like to borrow that phrase to tell you "the end of the matter" regarding respect. Or, as we might say today, "Here's the bottom line." As God's children, we absolutely **must** respect Him, His Son, and His Word. As Jesus Himself put it, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). And, we must respect others because they have been created "in the image and likeness of God" (Genesis 1:26-27). Plus, God has established certain chains of authority that must be respected and obeyed. Governments have been set in place by God to keep the peace. Leaders of the church have been set in place by God to help keep the church pure. The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls" (Hebrews 13:17). Parents have been set in place by God to bring up their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

In other words, God expects us to be thoughtful, considerate, and respectful toward Him and toward others. In God's eyes, respect is a **very** important commodity. If **He** thinks it is so important, then shouldn't **we** think it is important, too?