

THE GATEWAY TO INTIMACY

How The Practice of Honor Opens The Heart

THESIS: A marriage relationship is, by very definition, a journey into deeper and yet deeper layers of intimacy. Only those interested in making such a journey should take an interest in marriage, and only those who give prior evidence that they are willing to make this journey should be considered eligible for marriage. Within the male-female dynamic, the single most important relational principle is what the Bible calls “honor.” This is the gateway to intimacy, the point of ready access into the heart, the door that leads into mature love. Honor is the one attitude the presence of which will nurture a deepening love, and the absence of which will crush love out of existence. Honor is paramount!

A Principle-governed Affair

Proverbs 24:3-4—3Through wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; 4by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

Proverbs 4:7-19—7Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. 8Exalt her, and she will promote you; she will bring you honor, when you embrace her... 12When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble. 13Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life. 14Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. 15Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on... 18But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. 19The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

Deuteronomy 5:29—Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me (love Me with awe) and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

Deuteronomy 29:9 Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

2 Chronicles 20:20—Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.

2 Chronicles 24:20—Thus says God: “Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper?”

Jeremiah 20:11—They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.

NOTE: Life is a principle-governed experience. Luck and chance has nothing to do with outcomes. The implementation of right principles produces good results, and the implementation of wrong principles produces negatives results.

Giving Weighty Status

1 Peter 3:7—Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

Honor: From the Greek word *time* (pronounced tee-may), which means, “estimate, valuing, rating” (Strong’s). In Greek culture the word carried the connotation of high value, preciousness, weightiness, heaviness, significance. In a relationship, honor is manifested by giving the other person priority status, weighty influence in your estimation. It is the communication in word, attitude and deed that “what you think, feel and say matters immensely to me; you count big time; I highly value your perspective; when you speak, I listen.”

Romans 12:9-10—**9**Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. **10**Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.

Song of Songs 2:4—*Shulamite*: He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Seven Honoring Actions and Attitudes

1. Listening with undivided attention and a sincere desire to understand.
2. Expressing, vocalizing love and appreciation.
3. Apologizing when you are wrong, and even if you think you are right.
4. Asking instead of telling.
5. Helping relieve the burden of household duties, without being asked.
6. Affectionate touching.
7. Gift giving.

Six Dishonoring Actions and Attitudes

1. Placing work, hobbies and other people in first place.
2. Demeaning humor.
3. Giving orders.
4. Mentioning weaknesses or mistakes in the company of others.
5. Ignoring.
6. Criticizing or reminding of past failures.

NOTE: This verse indicates that a woman is especially blessed when her man makes his love for her obvious in public, in the eyes of their social circle.

NOTE: Add to the list—

- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

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- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

“Behold Your God”—Isaiah 40:9