



Links Players

Living God's Principles

Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17, NASB)

My wife, Kristin, and I were invited by a family friend and new PGA tour member, Tom Whitney, to attend the PGA Tour Life Bible study last month while the players were in La Quinta for the American Express Tournament.

Tour Chaplain Brad Payne travels the country and leads this fellowship where players and wives can find a place for gathering, fellowship, and worship.

The room was alive with the Holy Spirit when we arrived, and conversations were buzzing. Some faces were familiar to me, and some were not, but everyone in the room honored one another with a kind hello, look in the eye, handshake, hug, or knuckle bump.

Clearly, this group of brothers and sisters loved and honored each other with a common purpose: to learn more about Jesus.

As we found our place on the couch, Kristin noticed that to her right was a young guy in a hoodie sweatshirt with a fire department logo sitting in a tiny chair. It appeared that he was trying to be as close as possible to the leader of the fellowship.

Kristin had no idea who she was addressing, but out of respect (and fear that the chair could break), she leaned over and offered him a seat. She was living the example Peter describes in our opening verse.

How should a citizen of heaven live on earth?

These four simple principles from 1 Peter summarize what God wants from us as we interact with human authorities, neighbors, and other believers.

First, "honor everyone." Wow! Everyone? This is a broad and challenging statement, but it makes life very simple for believers.

Instead of picking and choosing who is worthy of our respect, God's will for us is to give respect to every single person.

Will everyone deserve such treatment? Obviously not. But Christians are supposed to be known as people who give respect to others because of our obedience to Christ. Period.

Second, “love the brotherhood.” Peter does not say, “like each other.” He describes an act of the will to give love to every other Christian. Jesus said, “...that the world around us would know we are His disciples by our love for each other” (John 13:35).

Third, “fear God.” The word fear in reference to God is not a command to live in shrinking terror, afraid that at any time He may decide to crush us. After all, He already demonstrated His love for us when we were far from deserving of mercy, grace, and honor. Peter's command reminds us to continue to hold His power, majesty, and sovereignty in awe and wonder.

Finally, “honor the emperor or king.” The emperor or king may not be an honorable person. The emperor at the time Peter wrote this was probably Nero, a ruthless and evil leader who persecuted the people of God. Still, the command stands. As Paul wrote, “...there is no authority not established by God.” (Romans 13:1). We honor and respect the earthly king as heavenly citizens answerable to the authority who allowed the king to come to that throne.

Scottie Scheffler, the number one ranked player on the PGA Tour, didn't take the seat on the couch. However, He saved the chair and moved farther back into the room. The following day, Kristin realized she had offered the king of the PGA tour a better seat than a little chair.

Prayer: Lord, remind us to live out our lives to honor you and everyone we meet. Thank you for your patience and mercy.

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Chris Hermann

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