

Peter Pan, a Man of Honor???

My extended family came together for the funeral of my uncle and aunt who were killed in a car accident. The two were getting up in years and, down deep, we all knew that it was better this way; they went together.

The funeral director gathered the family in a side room and then led us to the auditorium of the church building in single file (to facilitate the seating of about 100 family members).

The doors of the auditorium were opened and I was overcome by the sight: The entire congregation of over 200 people *standing* as we entered.

We sit to relax, to get comfortable, to rest.

There are different reasons to stand, but on that day, the people stood to show honor to my uncle and aunt and all the family. What a kind and moving gesture of *honor* it was.

In a courtroom people gather; they seat themselves; people chat. Court officials and lawyers shuffle papers. Then...“All rise for the honorable Judge Hayes.” *Honor*.

Military funerals can be especially moving: A 21-gun salute; “Taps” on a mournful bugle; the careful and precise folding of the American flag and its presentation to the family...all to *honor* a fellow serviceman.

The New Testament word ‘honor’ comes from a Greek term that was originally reserved for the Greek gods. ‘Honor’ described *sacred* things, heaven and its order. The Jews used it to describe the temple. It was later used for the visible or outward *magnificence* of things such as the *majesty* of a royal throne, the *splendor* of clothing, the *loftiness* of speech.

Honor was associated with *nobility*, *dignity* and *seriousness*. Charm and wit, though highly val-

ued among the Greeks, were never described with the word *honorable*.

On one occasion, to escape King Saul, David went to the Philistines and pretended to be insane so they would not think him to be a threat. That was clever, but not honorable. (1 Samuel 21.)

The Apostle Paul drew a contrast between childhood and adulthood:

When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. (1 Corinthians 13:11 NASB)

It is not honorable for adults to act like children. Go ahead and play with your kids and grandkids for a moment, but a ‘Peter Pan *never-grow-up*’ mindset has nothing to do with honor.

Bathroom humor, crude jokes, childish silliness, ‘letting your hair down’ and the like can be really funny, but these are not honorable. Criticism and humiliation of those in authority is no way to show honor. Misplaced humor (i.e. comedy in the pulpit) may ‘bring them in’ in droves, but it is without honor. Rock concerts passed off as worship lack honor toward God.

- Are you always acting like a kid, angling for the next laugh, planning another sarcastic dig at someone in a position of authority?
- Is the worship assembly more for your pleasure or God’s honor?
- What is it that captivates your mind?

Finally, brethren, whatever is...honorable... dwell on these things. (Philippians 4:8 NASB)

There is a time for fun and games, but there is a time to grow up and put away silliness, vulgarity, and criticism. Think about honorable things. Show honor. Be honorable.