

Those Who Honor Me

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[0 : 00] Exodus chapter 1, I'll read the entire chapter. These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his family.

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, and Benjamin, Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

The descendants of Jacob numbered 70 in all. Joseph was already in Egypt. Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them.

Then a new king who did not know about Joseph came to power in Egypt. Look, he said to his people, the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them, or they will become even more numerous.

And if war breaks out, we'll join our enemies, fight against us, and leave the country. So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Ramses as store cities for Pharaoh.

[1 : 12] But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread. So the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly.

They made their lives bitter with hard labor and brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields. In all their hard labor, the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shifra and Puah, When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it is a boy, kill him. But if it is a girl, let her live. The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do. They let the boys live.

Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live? The midwives answered Pharaoh, Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women.

[2 : 12] They are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive. So God was kind to the midwives, and the people increased and became even more numerous.

And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own. Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people, Every boy that is born, you must have thrown into the Nile, but let every girl live.

Let's hear God's word preached. Forty years ago, the movie Chariots of Fire was released, highlighting the life of Eric Little and his British teammates as they prepared for and then competed in the 1924 Olympic Summer Games in Paris.

Little was an excellent sprinter in field and track. He was Britain's fastest in the short 100-meter sprint. He was also a Christian, a Scottish Christian, who had been taught the Ten Commandments and honored the Fourth Command that says that we're to set the Lord's Day apart.

And he believed it was to be set apart for the worship of God and not for competition in sport. And that was the conviction that sets up the tension in that film.

[3 : 38] The reality is that six months before the Olympic Games, Little learned that the preliminary heats for his 100-meter race were scheduled to be run on the Lord's Day.

So what would he do? Now, in the movie, it seems like there was a lot of back and forth in his mind and that it only happened as they were on the ship going over.

But in fact, it was six months earlier, and everyone that knew Little knew what he would do. He would honor the Lord's Day, and he would not compete. And so he began training for two longer races, the 200-meter and the 400-meter, which were not scheduled to be run off in their preliminary heats on the Lord's Day.

He took criticism for it, big time, from the press, who said he's just grandstanding, seeking individual attention. But that only caused him to dig in and train all the harder in his two events.

So that July in Paris, on the Lord's Day, when the 100-meter prelims were being run, Little was preaching in a Church of Scotland church there in Paris.

[4 : 56] Later in the week, he qualified for the 200-final and finished third for the bronze. And he also qualified for the 400-meter, but not with the fastest time of the fellows that had qualified.

Earlier that day, when he had left the hotel to go to the track, someone had handed him a piece of paper, all folded up. And now, as he and the others were being called to the starting line for the final, Little opened the paper and read these words.

It says in the old book, He that honors me, I will honor, wishing you the best of success always. He held that piece of paper in his hand, and when the starting gun went off, he took off like a rabbit. He was way out in front, and everybody thought, He's not going to be able to maintain this pace, but he just threw his head up higher and ran all the way to the finish, finishing five meters in front of the rest, breaking the Olympic and world records.

He that honors me, I will honor. Now that's a promise of a God that cannot lie. It's more sure to happen than all of us living to see another day.

[6 : 24] But it doesn't mean that if you honor God, you will win the Olympic gold, or win whatever you're competing for in sport, or in life, that your business will prosper, your work will prosper, that you'll have no health problems or troubles in life.

No, sometimes the honor comes in this life, more often in the next, and even when it comes in this life, the greater part of the honor is reserved for the next.

Indeed, for the believer, it's sometimes shame now and honor later. But one way or another, he that honors me, I will honor, says the Lord.

Now where's that promise found, and what does it mean? Well, turn with me to 1 Samuel 2, 1 Samuel, after the first five books of Moses, and the Joshua and Judges, then 1 Samuel.

And we find these words were spoken by an unnamed prophet of God who came to Eli, the old priest of Israel, who served at the tent of meeting in Shiloh.

[7 : 43] That's the place where the little boy Samuel had been left by his mother. And it's the word of this unnamed man of God bringing the word of God.

And it wasn't a word of good news, but rather a word of judgment upon Eli and his whole family line. The backstory is this. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were also priests along with Eli.

But they were wicked men with no regard for the Lord. They didn't regard his presence. They didn't regard his laws. They didn't regard him.

And slept with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting, treated the Lord's offerings with contempt, doing as they pleased, demanding choice parts of the meat for themselves, even before the fat was burned up, which was for the Lord.

And all Israel knew it and complained to Father Eli about it. And we're told this sin was very great in the Lord's sight. Well, Eli did rebuke his sons, but he failed to restrain them.

[8 : 52] He failed to remove them from their holy office as a priest out of reverence for God and his worship and his holy things.

So blood ran thicker than his fear of the Lord in this issue. And so this man of God, unnamed man of God, comes to Eli with this message from the Lord, verse 29.

When Israel was down in Egypt, he says under Pharaoh, I chose your father's house out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priests. That was Aaron's house. To approach my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod in my presence.

I also gave your father's house all the offerings made with fire by the Israelites. I'm sorry, now verse 29. Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling?

Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel? Verse 30.

[9 : 57] Here's our text. Therefore, the Lord, the God of Israel declares, I promised that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever.

But now, the Lord declares, far be it from me. Those who honor me, I will honor. But those who despise me will be disdained.

In other words, part of God's promise to your father's house that they would be priests was that they would be priests as long as they remain faithful to honor me.

Those who honor me, I will honor. But there's a flip side to the promise. You see that? Those who despise me will be disdained.

And since your family, Eli, has now despised me rather than honored me, you all will be disdained, shamed, dishonored, looked down upon with scorn, and you will be replaced as he goes on to say that both your sons will die on the same day as a sign of my judgment upon your family.

[11:07] And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do what is in my heart and mind. So God's promise, I will honor those who, those who honor me, I will honor.

It's here applied to a very specific situation in Israel concerning who would have the honor of being priests. But it's stated in terms as a general promise, holding true in other situations, indeed in every situation.

Those who honor me, I will honor. It was true 3,000 years ago in Eli's day. It was true yesterday. It is true today. And it will be true tomorrow.

For it describes one of the ways of the Lord. The way that he works. Matthew Henry calls it the settled rule of God's government.

Those who honor me, I will honor. Now let's notice some examples of this. Consider the passage that was read for us in Exodus chapter 1, Shiphrah and Puah.

[12:15] How did they honor the Lord? Well, Pharaoh said, as you're helping the mothers of Israel give birth, you Hebrew midwives, if it's a boy, kill him.

If it's a girl, let him live. If they had done that, half of the crowd this morning would not be here if we were living then. But they didn't obey the Pharaoh King because it ran contrary to God's value on human life, already clearly expressed in the punishment of Cain who murdered his brother with hateful envy.

Already expressed in the flood that came upon the earth because of the violence that had been done on the earth. And God's word spoken after the flood in Genesis 9-6 that if a man takes the life of another, by man his life shall be taken because that is life in my image.

And just this preciousness of life to God was soon to be immortalized in chapter 20 in the sixth commandment, you shall not murder.

So even though Pharaoh commanded them to kill the boys, the text says they, however, feared God and they did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do. They let the boys live.

[13:36] They feared God more than Pharaoh and what he might do to them. They did not honor Pharaoh more than God and they did not even honor their own lives more than God or more than God.

They honored God and because of it God honored them. Now how did God honor them? We've seen how they honored God. How did God honor them?

Well, verse 20 and 21 says, so God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. In other words, God used them to fulfill that promise that he made to Abraham that he would give him numerous descendants.

What a privilege that these two ladies were used to bring to fruition the promise of God to the patriarch Abraham. He was kind to them and caused the number of Israelites to increase even more.

And, that's not the end of his honor, and because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own. The clear implication is up to that point they had no families of their own, whether that was because they were single or whether because they had no children, but God, because of their honoring him, gave them families families of their own.

[15:09] Those who honor me, I will honor. Now, he doesn't tell us when, but he says it will happen. I will honor. And in this case, he honored them during their lifetime and in a way that shows us his delight to honor those who honor him.

Well, may we even be honoring the Lord with our offerings this morning to preserve life and to not kill it. Take the example of Daniel in the lion's den.

The king's command was to not pray to anyone but him or be thrown to the lions. And Daniel honored God by continuing to pray to the Lord three times a day as had been his habit.

asking for help, giving him thanks. And that honored God. God was honored by Daniel.

It showed that God meant more to Daniel than his own life. And God honored Daniel by shutting the mouths of the lions and by moving the king to vindicate Daniel and to praise Daniel's God throughout his whole realm.

[16 : 26] This is first commandment keeping. This is what it means to have no other gods besides Jehovah. It means to actually have him as your God. And what does it mean to have him as your God?

It means when you're in trouble you go to him. And whatever man saying you run to the Lord that's part of what it is to have him as God. What do people do for their gods?

They run for help to their gods and their idols seeking help from them. Daniel runs to his God and God is honored to see his children leaning upon his arm taking refuge in him as our protector and as our provider.

And as the one who cares for us and is able to help us it honors him for his goodness his greatness his power his love. And when help comes we thank him.

When help comes we talk about him and we tell others what the Lord has done for us we acknowledge him and that honors the Lord and he promises to honor us.

[17 : 33] Now it doesn't mean that he'll answer every prayer the way that you want. It doesn't mean that he'll save you from every danger but he did so for Daniel and again it demonstrates for us this principle of how God delights to honor those who honor him.

He lets us see it. It happens in this life so we can see it and know it to be fulfilled. When we trust and obey how delighted he is to honor those who honor him.

Much the same with Shadrach Meshach and Abednego wasn't it? King Nebuchadnezzar made the statue of gold 90 feet high and everyone who was anyone was gathered there for the dedication of that image and was told that when the music began to play there to fall down on the ground and worship it.

Well the music started and all hit the ground except the three young Hebrew men. Picture it thousands of people gathered there in the plain and they hit the ground.

Those three must have stood up like a scarecrow in a melon patch. There they were standing up there so alone in that mass of big shots in the government.

[18 : 54] Well they're called before Nebuchadnezzar maybe you didn't hear maybe you didn't understand. It's this fellas when the music starts to play you hit the ground in worship or you will be thrown into the fire.

And they said we cannot go against our God and they stood up for him and when the music played they remained standing and they were thrown into the fire they honored the Lord and how did the Lord show his honor to them?

Well he came he was the fourth person there in the fiery furnace with them and by his presence he created some shield that did not allow them to be burned Not even their their hair to be singed their clothes to smell like smoke.

God honored them and caused Nebuchadnezzar to honor them and to honor their God they stood when everyone around them went down to do you know how hard that is you talk about peer pressure you know what that is young people you feel it in school if you're in public school to stand up for God in the midst of science class and creation versus evolution or to stand up for God in the conversation of abortion in sex ed in whatever situation you feel the pressure it's hard to stand alone when everyone else is bowing down to the idols of the day the moral majority is fastly becoming the moral minority in our land and in this near future it may cost us more to stay standing for the Lord for his word his commandments for his honor for his worship for what he says about gender sex marriage worship public witness his word about all things it may cost you job may cost you promotion may cost you money ridicule to remain standing faithful to the

Lord and to his word we're living in a culture where many would like us to shut up to stand up or go down when they stand up and go down the Lord might have you in a family right now where you're alone much like Daniel was alone or Shadrach Meshach and Abednego were alone maybe you're the only Christian in that family maybe he's got you in a workplace where you're the only Christian in that part of the business a neighborhood will you stand there and honor the Lord where he's put you where he's got you those who honor me I will honor so stand and be willing to suffer and to do it without a caustic attitude but rather with a humble boldness that honors your Lord well the Bible is full of people that honored the

[22 : 15] Lord and therefore the Lord honored them visit Hebrews 11 that hall of faith where the Lord honors puts them in the hall of fame the hall of honor for the way that they honored the Lord by taking him at his word by faith by faith by faith they honored the Lord and his word above all else and now he honored them in return Abraham Moses Joshua David and so on but let me be clear

honor from the Lord is not always seen in this life some who have honored the Lord have suffered greatly because of it think of Abel how he honored the Lord with his offering it wasn't just the outward offering it was his heart of faith going out to the Lord is that how you're worshiping today more than the external your heart running out in faith to the Lord the Lord was honored by that and honored him by receiving his worship but for his honor of the

Lord he was also murdered by his brother and millions since have been martyred for honoring the Lord for standing up for him church history is replete with all kinds of martyrs who stood for the truth of God's word and were killed the prophets who spoke truthfully in the name of the Lord have been persecuted and killed Jesus said by the very ones who wanted to hear lies instead of the truth Isaiah cut in two Jeremiah thrown in a cistern to die the apostles of Jesus the apostle Paul Stephen honored the Lord by preaching the truth and was stoned for it many have gone to their graves in dishonor so whatever happened to the Lord's promised those who honor me I will honor well of course nothing's happened to it it still stands on the pages of scripture and it is still fulfilled in the pages of history in real life past present or future consider our

Lord Jesus he's the ultimate faithful priest priest that was to replace Eli's family that was to replace the whole Levitical priesthood eventually he's the ultimate faithful priest who does all that the father had in mind and in his heart and his whole life and mission was about honoring the one who sent me the book of John especially highlights that but all the gospels you hear Jesus speaking John 7 18 he who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth and there's nothing false about him and oh how Jesus worked for the honor of the one who sent him he did everything for the honor of the one who sent him he praised him he served him he obeyed him he magnified him he spoke whatever the father gave him to speak and because it the world hated him they didn't honor him they slandered him they said he's demon possessed!

849 Jesus says I'm not demon possessed but I honor my father and you dishonor me and at the end he too was left standing all alone wasn't he his own disciples deserted him and the whole nation cried crucify him he stood alone for you brother and sister father the lord Jesus stood for the honor of his father and was despised and rejected and nailed to a cross of shame where he was further mocked and ridiculed until he died the one who perfectly honored the father died in the greatest dishonor but the story doesn't end there does it those who honor me I will honor and so Paul tells us about it in Philippians 2 how the son of God so humbled himself and became a man and a servant and obeyed his father's will even to the point of obeying the command to go to the cross and die that hellish death therefore

God has highly exalted him to the highest place remember Psalm 110 and verse 1 sit here son and reign until I make all your enemies a footstool for your feet he exalted him to the highest place which is what which is the throne of God you sit here with me on my throne and rule and reign from the lowest humiliation of his death raised to life and raised to the highest place the very throne of God and gave him a name that's above every name that at that name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is God he is Lord he is Jehovah to the glory of God the Father we now see Jesus crowned with glory and honor because he tasted death for every man those who honor me I will honor no one ever honored!

[27 : 54] the Lord more than Jesus Christ and no one was ever honored more for doing so than the Lord Jesus Christ and the Lord's own agenda has become the agenda for his disciples that's why Jesus said if you're following me you're going to need a cross because I'm going to have my life taken from me on a cross so if you've got any big ideas about glory and honor put him aside for now and pick up your cross it's it's the cross now and the honor comes later his his agenda suffering honor is the same basic agenda for his people it's suffering now saints and it's honor later well the

Lord Jesus made that very clear to his men the promise is those who honor me I will honor and that has its twin in the New Testament in the Gospels listen to Matthew 10 verse 32 and see if it's not the twin of 1 Samuel 2 30 it's our Lord speaking to his disciples whoever acknowledges me and it doesn't say whoever honors me but it's the same isn't it that whoever acknowledges me before men I will also acknowledge him before my father in heaven but whoever disowns me before men I will disown him before my father in heaven now the honor he points to here is not in this life is it whoever honors me before men are honoring him is in this life but his honoring us is in the next life when we come to stand before

God the almighty Jesus says I will acknowledge you then and there in his presence! belong to Jesus and I am not afraid to say his name in conversation and I am not afraid to acknowledge him as my Lord by obeying his commandments and when God has been good to me I am not ashamed to own that he is the giver of my blessings that the Lord Jesus has won every blessing for me I acknowledge him so you're at the grocery store you bump into you can answer that in a way that acknowledges the Lord the Lord has been very good to me thank you how have you been you just acknowledged the Lord you you mentioned his name to before men here and now we don't just silently carry on as if we we don't know the Lord we don't deny him as Peter did three times that one evening before he went out and repented weeping bitterly for it that's the opposite he disowned him I don't know the man well what does it mean to acknowledge him it means to own him say I do know this one I do know Jesus he's my savior could I tell you what he's done for me we acknowledge him publicly in the waters of baptism have all of you done that or are you a disciple acknowledging him I'm taking his name upon me I'm no longer my own I'm his well whoever acknowledges me before men I'll acknowledge him before my father so we find in our nation is becoming more costly to honor him to acknowledge him before men what can help us what will open our mouths well Jesus has some help for us it's acknowledge me now before men and I'll acknowledge you then before my father wow that's some motivation to honor him now isn't it that he will acknowledge us before his father in heaven this takes me to the end of the age to the most critical introduction that I will ever have ever when I come before my my

[32 : 58] God and Jesus says I'll be there to acknowledge you father this one mine I bought him I paid my blood for her body and soul she's ours purchased for God with my blood what a privilege in that day that ought to be enough to open our mouths now to tell of that one that he he will not be ashamed to own us as his brothers then let me not be ashamed to own him as my savior and king then will he own my worthless name before the father's face and in the new Jerusalem appoint my soul a place Isaac what sings we ought to be singing that he's going to own my worthless name to the father your name to the father and that honor will more than make up for all the shame we bore for acknowledging Christ here standing up for him not being ashamed of him his name and his word be an honor that will never end when victor's wreaths and monarch's gems will blend in common dust all the honors of this life will look like dust compared to the honor that the

Lord Jesus will give to those who honored him just how precious this honor is seen in the Lord's seven letters to the seven churches and I would just urge you to read what does he say is coming for the overcomer those that didn't capitulate to the world and to sin and to the flesh and to the devil what honors will he pour out upon his overcoming people he doesn't let any church go without stating some of the honors and he says to the church in Sardis a lot of people there have a name that they live but they're dead but you've got a few in Sardis that haven't soiled their clothes they're living a holy life in an unholy world they will walk with me dressed in white for they're worthy he overcomes will like them be dressed in white and I will never blot out his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name before my father and his angels evidently that's to help a people who were headed into stiffer persecution the end of the first century and beyond they're going to see blood shed for

Jesus what will put iron in their back what will give them courage and boldness you stay firm you stand for me and I will acknowledge you before my father and the holy angels hear what we think so little of the angels we don't see them but they run on his errands they're perfect they're sinless and we will be there and see them for the first time and we'll be in awe of this God who commands the angels and in their presence and in the father's presence he will own us what a day what honor how that should encourage us let him who has an hear hear what the spirit says to the churches to us take it and run with it this is the honor that we seek and that we wait for in the Lord's due time he who honors me I will honor we may feel uncomfortable sometimes talking about seeking honor the Bible is not uncomfortable talking about that the

New Testament Proverbs isn't Jesus isn't and so we shouldn't be either three applications and we're done those who honor me I will honor first of all we're meant to seek the honor of our God there's a right way and a wrong way to seek honor it's right to seek it from God it's right to seek it in his way but it's wrong to seek the honor and praise of men above the praise and honor of God John 12 43 talks of some who believe that Jesus was the Messiah but would not confess him they love praise from men more than praise from God well that surely silences our mouths far too often and must be part of our repenting we're to love and seek the praise of God his honor is to mean

everything to us more than the honor of men John 8 in verse 44 Jesus says to those who refuse to come to him to have life how can you believe if you accept praise from one another yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only

God you're so concerned about your friend's honor that they will think of you with honor that that trumps my honor no it's it's not to be that way how will you ever believe on the God it's wrong not to seek the honor and praise of the living God it's right to seek honor and praise and glory from him Romans 2 speaks of God's righteous judgment when God will give to each person according to what he's done and to those who by persistence in doing good seek glory honor and immortality he will give eternal life we are to seek glory and honor and immortality will give it to us but for those who are self seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil there will be wrath and anger trouble and distress for every human being who does evil but glory honor and peace for everyone who does good we are to be seeking that glory and honor from

[38 : 55] God the Lord Jesus holds it out as a motivation to serve him in John 12 26 he me now and my father will honor you it's wrong not to seek that honor from God it's no small reason for the testing of your faith with grief causing sorrows now and trials why do they come first Peter 1 7 so that your faith may be proven genuine and may result in praise glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed over and over the Proverbs tell us that we're to honor so we are to seek honor by walking in wisdom's ways by growing in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom by embracing Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord serving him it's our duty to seek

God's honor those who honor me I will honor secondly this doesn't mean that our honoring therefore earns or deserves God's honor of us no we owe him that honor right out of the gate we're born he made us as we heard we owe him something what do we owe him we owe him honor we owe!

him glory and praise and if we have honored him today we don't go home and say well I deserve a reward I was I honored him today no rather we should say as our Lord teaches us to say in Luke 17 that that even if we did everything we were told to do we should say we are unprofitable unworthy servants we've only done our duty so we don't earn honor from God it's a gracious reward a free reward not an earned one now his honoring us is proportionate to our faithfulness the Bible teaches that the more you honor him the more he will honor you but in another sense his honoring us is way out of proportion to our honoring him isn't it we honor him for a few years here and he honors us for eternity we honor him before men he honors us before angels and his father in heaven we honor him with a word he honors us with a word and with the crown of life everlasting life we honor him so imperfectly so falteringly he honors us perfectly heaping upon us honor upon honor forever we give him deserved honor he he he deserves it we owe it he gives us undeserved honor a free gift of his grace and we learn that even our service of him is purified by the blood of

Jesus it takes out all of its impurities and so he honors his own work in his people no wonder that when he honors those who honor him they counted their highest honor to have a crown to be able to lay at his feet in that final day and say worthy you're the one that's worthy of the praise so our honor is not earned by our serving and honoring him it's a gracious thing and last number three don't forget there's a flip side to the promise those who honor me I will honor but those who despise me will be disdained this is the tragedy of a life who has forfeited the grace that could have been theirs forfeited the honor that could have been theirs forever the father sent his own son into the world as the savior and you despised his indescribable gift don't want it the son himself comes and sacrifices his life and now offers himself to you and his gospel over and over and commands you to come to him and receive him and you have despised him as unworthy of your life unworthy of your all unworthy of your trust there's no greater offense than that according to

Jesus and you can do it by just doing nothing just ignoring and neglecting him you must know that the Lord says those who despise me will be disdained whoever disowns me before men now I will disown before my father in heaven if anyone is ashamed of me and my words the son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the father and of the holy angels and Daniel says multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake at that last day some to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting contempt now I don't know what that's going to look like but you don't want to know you don't want to see that you ever been ashamed embarrassed now multiply that by a trillion and by eternity you'll come from the ground that's not the end of you you'll be raised to everlasting shame and contempt if that's all there was to hell it would make me want to know where's the savior that

[44 : 37] I could be saved by honoring him you know how you honor him you receive him you really believe he's the only way to God you you you trust in his his work of salvation and you say I deserve hell but but have mercy on me father for Jesus sake he's died for sinners you honor him by responding to the gospel so come to him today and you too will know what it is to be honored with everlasting honor by the by God so in 1924 Eric Little honored the Lord and his day and God honored him with a gold medal run the next day he graduated from University of Edinburgh and one year later he was on his way to China to fulfill a life goal that of being a missionary taking the gospel to the Chinese people and he honored the

Lord there for some 20 years of sacrificial service and the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor the Japanese captured the mission compound where he ministered and turned it into a prison a year earlier he had sensed the danger and had sent his wife and his daughters back to her homeland in Canada to be safe there with her family and eventually the hardships of prison life the shortages of food the illnesses that came began to take their toll on Little he suffered severe headaches and extreme nausea and weakness and then a stroke and weeks later he died the autopsy revealed it was a brain tumor so Eric Little who honored his Lord and his word with athletics and then with 20 years of service in China didn't live a long life he died at 43 he died in a Japanese prison camp in China far from his homeland where his name was held in honor of a national hero away from his dear wife and daughters but he died with a promise that he ran with his whole life that he who honors me I will honor and we must learn from his life as well as these texts that not all honors are handed out in this life that indeed the highest honor of all is not to be found here and now but when we see Christ and what was that honor what was the honor of the gold medal and hero status in Scotland compared to the honor that little received when he saw his savior and heard from him well done well done good and faithful servant enter into the joy of your Lord a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of his

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ far better than the heroes welcome that met him when he returned from Paris having won the gold and what will be that honor of the final judgment when the glorified son of God acknowledges us before almighty God blessed is the man who perseveres under trial for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him do you not know that in a race all the runners run but only one gets the prize run in such a way then to get the prize everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training they do it to get a crown that will not last but we do it to get a crown that will last forever the honors that our savior gives those who honor me I will honor you do want to find out what that will be like King Xerxes the king of Persia had exalted Haman to the number two spot under his reign and Haman hated it that the Jew Mordecai refused to bow down when he came walking by and so he was he was home plotting against it and actually building a gallows 75 feet high meanwhile in the palace the king couldn't sleep that night and and and Haman saying in the morning I'm going to go and ask the king for the permission to hang Mordecai on my gallows so the king's in his palace he knows nothing of that and and he can't sleep and he calls for his steward bring me the chronicles the record of my reign now chronicles can be dry and put a man to sleep perhaps that's why he asked for them but as he was having them read to him he he heard about a man named Mordecai who had unearthed a conspiracy of two men to murder him to murder the king and that woke him up and he said well what's been done for Mordecai to honor him and the steward says nothing sir he couldn't go back just early in the morning here's a shuffle in the front of the palace who is it oh it's it's

[50 : 07] Haman let him in so Haman's coming in to ask for Mordecai's head and before he can get his request out the king's got a question for him what should be done for the one that the king delights to honor and Haman's thinking well who would he want to honor more than me number two in the realm let's see let's let's get a robe that the king has worn and and the crest of the royalty on the horse and have him ride on the horse and and have one of the nobles of the land lead the horse throughout the streets crying to the people here's what is done for this is what the king does to those he delights to honor and the king must have shocked him awake that morning when he says that's a great idea Haman you go do that for Mordecai and so he leads Mordecai through the streets this is what will be done for the one the king delights to honor don't you want to know what will be done to the one who delights to honor the king of king whom the king of king delights to honor when he wants to delight someone don't you want to know what that will look like then honor him honor him with your faith trust him alone to save you honor him with your obedience your trust

you're praising him you're standing up for him let's pray Lord we're humbled we're humbled at the way that you stood alone for us and how ashamed we often are to stand up alone for you forgive us and we thank you that there's not only grace to forgive us but there's grace in Jesus to teach us to stand up for him for his word his name and so strengthen us and help us we're poor and needy but you're strong and generous and so we go expecting help from you our king in Jesus name we ask amen you