

QUALITY
OF
LIFE
BIBLE
STUDY



Respect[©]

COMPILED BY
S.MCRAE

RESPECT

Quality of Life Series

LEADER: "R-E-S-P-E-C-T... find out what it means to me"

Aretha Franklin, queen of soul made that line famous. We're gonna find out what it means to us today:

I. RESPECTING OTHERS

READER: "A Lesson From My Father"

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon1/alesson.htm>

We come by business naturally in our family. Each of the seven children in our family worked in our father's store, "Our Own Hardware-Furniture Store," in Mott, North Dakota, a small town on the prairies. We started working by doing odd jobs like dusting, arranging shelves and wrapping, and later graduated to serving customers. As we worked and watched, we learned that work was about more than survival and making a sale.

One lesson stands out in my mind. It was shortly before Christmas. I was in the eighth grade and was working evenings, straightening the toy section. A little boy, five or six years old, came in. He was wearing a brown tattered coat with dirty worn cuffs. His hair was straggly, except for a cowlick that stood straight up from the crown of his head. His shoes were scuffed and his one shoelace was torn. The little boy looked poor to me--too poor to afford to buy anything. He looked around the toy section, picked up this item and that, and carefully put them back in their place. Dad came down the stairs and walked over to the boy. His steel blue eyes smiled and the dimple in his cheek stood out as he asked the boy what he could do for him. The boy said he was looking for a Christmas present to buy his brother. I was impressed that Dad treated him with the same respect as any adult. Dad told him to take his time and look around. He did.

After about 20 minutes, the little boy carefully picked up a toy plane, walked up to my dad and said, "How much for this, Mister?"

"How much you got?" Dad asked.

The little boy held out his hand and opened it. His hand was creased with wet lines of dirt from clutching his money. In his hand lay two dimes, a nickel and two pennies-- 27 cents. The price on the toy plane he'd picked out was \$3.98.

"That'll just about do it," Dad said as he closed the sale. Dad's reply still rings in my ears. I thought about what I'd seen as I wrapped the present. When the little boy walked out of the store, I didn't notice the dirty, worn coat, the straggly hair, or the single torn shoelace. What I saw was a radiant child with a treasure.

READER: "A Christmas Story" By Laura Young

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/christmas_story.htm

A WORD OF KINDNESS
A word of kindness lasts all day
To light another's heart and way,
And if we add a caring smile,
It adds a joy to traveled miles.
A simple word of kindly care
Or just a smile to ease despair,
It means so much to those who cry
For loves and joys their life denies.
It costs us nothing to be kind
And calm another's grieves of mind
Or to add charity of heart
That Christian love and care impart...
For Jesus preached in days on earth
That we respect each other's birth
And love each other, in His name,
Who live and pray and die the same.

--Michael Dubina

As I read this poem I thought of my dad and one of the many times I saw him show respect and compassion.

My parents owned a Variety Store in a small town. The Christmas season was always a busy one. Part of my job was to help get the dolls out of the boxes and straighten their hair and dresses so they could be put on display. Daddy would set up a little place in the back of the store and assemble the wagons and tricycles. I always enjoyed helping him and my brother put together these toys. This was a service that daddy provided and it kept him very busy.

Christmas time was a mixture of happiness and sadness when watching parents shop for their children's Christmas presents. Happiness at knowing that some children would wake on Christmas morning and have the gifts they wanted from Santa Claus. Sadness at knowing that some would wake on Christmas morning with little under the tree and be disappointed.

One Christmas season a little girl came into the store looking at the dolls on display. After looking at the dolls, she told us that there was one special doll that she wanted Santa to bring her. Her dad, a farmer, came into the store just before Christmas to shop for Christmas presents. He picked out some socks and underwear for his daughter. My dad told him that his daughter had been looking at one particular doll asked him if he wanted to see it. The man said that it had been a bad year for the crops and money was scarce. He could not afford to buy any toys. Even though this was in the 1950's and toys were not very expensive, it was still expensive for him. Daddy told him that it was near Christmas and he did not want to keep any toys in his inventory so several of the dolls were on sale. He told the father that this doll was on sale for one dollar. The father said he could afford that and bought the doll.

A couple of days after Christmas the little girl came into the store carrying her doll. Beaming with joy, she told Daddy that Santa Claus had brought her the doll that she wanted. With tears in his eyes, he told her that he was happy that Santa had been so good to her. This really made the true meaning of Christmas, which is giving, come alive for my dad. He had turned what could have been a sad time for that little girl into a happy one.

I was about 10 or 11 years old when this happened but this event has stayed with me all my life. The compassion and respect that my dad showed to this man had a profound impact on me. He knew that my dad was not offering him outright charity but, by allowing him to pay something for the doll, he knew that my dad was giving him respect as a person. And as one father to another, he knew that my dad cared about families.

By example, my dad showed me what it meant to have compassion and respect for others. Through the years, I learned that this was very much a part of my father's life. His respect for others earned him respect in return. This was taught to him by his parents and he (Continued) to live what he had learned from them and pass it on to his children. Isn't this what we are supposed to do as parents? Our lives are enriched when we show compassion and respect for our fellow man. This is what God expects of each of us. When we show compassion and respect, we are spreading God's love and witnessing to that love in our lives. This respect is returned to us many times over. My hope is that I have (Continued) in the tradition of my dad and taught my children compassion and respect for others and they will then teach their children.

READER: "I Know you won't Let me Down" Neil Eskelin

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon7/i_know_you_won.htm

Nancy Androetti teaches ninth grade social studies at a high school in Brooklyn. It is not paradise. Teachers and students have been mugged and even raped in that building. Armed guards are on duty and the faculty turnover is high.

But Nancy, a twenty-eight-year-old, has not one been threatened or harassed. In fact, the students would fight for her if it ever came to that. In a workshop for teachers on discipline, she stated: "During the first week of every semester, I don't teach. Instead, I sit down with each student individually and ask them about their families, their friends, their interests, and their hopes for the future."

Then she tells each one, "I have great expectations of you this semester and I know you won't let me down."

They don't. Nancy communicates total respect, concern and love for her students. She doesn't 'demand' a positive teaching environment, she just expects it, and it happens.

People respond to respect – and they do not want to disappoint your expectations. When you demonstrate a positive belief, you'll see positive behavior.

READER: QUOTE #1

Source ~ <http://www.entwagon.com/cgi-bin/quotes/quotes.pl?cat=Respectability>

“A child who is allowed to be disrespectful to his parents will not have true respect for anyone.” - Billy Graham 1918-, American Evangelist

READER: QUOTE #2

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

“If we try to teach our children respect without respecting them in the process, our teaching will have little effect.” - Billy Graham 1918-, American Evangelist

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #1 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

If we try to teach our children respect without respecting them in the process, our teaching will have little effect.

Treating children with respect starts with our view of them. If we see them as incomplete or inferior beings, we’re likely to give the impression that they have little value. We need to see our children as God does: little human beings created in his image and worthy of respect.

LEADER: You could replace the word “children” with “others”. Read again saying “others”:

Treating others with respect starts with our view of them. If we see them as incomplete or inferior beings, we’re likely to give the impression that they have little value. We need to see others as God does: human beings created in his image and worthy of respect.

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #2 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

If someone is angry (like your child coming home angry because the teacher assigned too much homework or a friend is angry because the boss moved up the deadline on an already cramped-for-time project, let him/her express his/her feelings, then suggest ways it might be worked out for an effective solution...that negative feelings are something that can be handled—without lashing out at others. Then you can pray with or for that person for God’s healing and wisdom?

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #3 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

Do you give honest compliments...do you remember to praise?

We can easily fall into the trap of looking for things that are wrong. And forget about all the things done right! There are lots of opportunities to praise.

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #4 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

Do you discipline or correct your child, a friend, a co-worker, an employee with respect. Correction is most effective when it’s done in love and with respect and not in the presence of others. What about the tone of your voice? Others are more likely to listen and, in turn, respect you if your tone is even and calm

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #5 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

Are you listening? We need to really listen when another is speaking... shut out distractions, have eye contact, and really focus on what he or she is saying. If in the middle of something that can’t wait, you can say “I really want to hear about your new project or fun experience, but I have a commitment/appointment/obligation/deadline/meal on the stove... Can we set up at time to talk?”

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #6 by Elsie Brunk (Excerpts)

Source ~ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/cpt/2000/002/3.30.html>

Are your remarks kind or unkind? Words are vital to relationship development. Positive words nourish and sustain growth. Negative remarks wound and destroy.

In the middle of a confrontation it is wise to stop and pray silently asking God to keep your lips from speaking hurtful words.

READER: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” #7

Do you apologize when you are wrong?...when you've spoken hastily...when you've spoken in the wrong tone of voice...when you've not given the other party a chance to speak...when you've assumed the worst...do you apologize from your heart...do you ask the Lord's forgiveness and help in not repeating the offense?

READER: “Timely Behavior” By Jim O’Connell

Source ~ <http://netministries.org/see/devotion.exe/dd00321>

Respect is an important part of living at peace with all people. When we fail to show honor or respect for our family members we create tension. Lack of respect on the job or at school is often the cause of friction and the breakdown of communication. Respect is like oil in your auto engine; you don't see the direct results but you know the heat to working things out won't cause a meltdown. Timely behavior, that is behavior which reflects the glory of God and anticipates his eminent return, means that we need to work in unity and harmony for the glory of God. Respect, esteem, patience and seeking to do good for one another are the behaviors of a mature Christian.

READER: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.

READER: QUOTE #3

Source ~ <http://www.entwagon.com/cgi-bin/quotes/quotes.pl?cat=Respectability>

“If you have some respect for people as they are, you can be more effective in helping them to become better than they are.” - John W. Gardner 1912-, American Educator, Social Activist

READER: Hebrews 13:2

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

READER: “I Was That Boy” By Adlai Albert

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/i_was_that_boy.htm

A successful businessman, addressing the commercial club of his city, told a story in his after-dinner speech. It was the story of a boy named Jim, who was an orphan and the laughing stock of the whole town. He was twelve years old, slim and undersized. He never remembered having a kind word spoken to him in his whole life. He was accustomed to harsh words, suspicion, and rebuffs, and as a result became a shrinking, pitiful little figure, dodging people. And the more he dodged people, the more suspicious they became.

The only earthly possession of which Jim could boast was a dog that cringed and shrank almost as much as his master and was as much hated. Jim was not cruel to his dog except in words - and that is really the worst form of cruelty, even to a dog. A harsh, unkind word can cause more misery, heartache, and anguish than actual physical cruelty. A cruel, unkind tongue cuts like a sword.

One day as Jim walked down the street, he saw a bundle slip from the overloaded arms of a little lady just in front of him. As she stooped to pick it up, the others rolled down. Jim sprang to her assistance, gathering up the bundles and replacing them in her arms. “Thank you, dear; you are a nice little boy,” she said kindly, and went on her way after giving him a bright smile.

Jim was amazed; a queer choky feeling passed over him. These were the first kind words he had ever heard in his whole twelve years of existence. He stood and stared after her. He knew that she was the busy little dressmaker who lived in a small cottage on the outskirts of town. He watched her until she was out of sight, then he whistled to Tige and made straight for the woods and a stream that wound around the town.

He sat down on the bank of the stream and did some thinking. “Thank you, dear; you are a nice little boy,” he pondered.

"Come here, Tige," he commanded, and Tige slunk to his feet. Then Jim lowered his voice in imitation of the little faded lady and said, "You are a nice little dog." The effect on Tige was electrical. He pricked up his ears, and if a dog could stand at attention, Tige did. "Uhum! Even a dog likes it," said Jim. "Well, Tige, I don't blame you; it is nice. I won't holler at you anymore." Tige wagged his tail joyously.

The boy (Continued) to think, and the dog sat and watched him. Finally the boy pulled from the odds and ends in his pockets a piece of broken mirror and looked at himself. He saw nothing but grime and dirt, the accumulation of many days. He went down to the water's edge and scrubbed it off carefully, almost painfully. Then he looked again. He scarcely recognized himself. He was surprised. He stood erect and looked up instead of down for the first time since he could remember. He distinctly liked the sensation. A feeling of self-respect awoke within his being. Ambition sprang full-grown into life. At that moment the course of his life was changed; a determination to be worthy of the kind words spoken to him by the little dressmaker, and to pass them on, took possession of his soul.

After telling this story of Jim, the orphan boy, the speaker paused; and then he electrified the audience by saying, "Gentlemen, I was that boy. This city--your city, my city--was that little town of forty years ago. Our plant stands upon the spot where that gentle woman stood when she implanted in my life the first seed of kindness. She sleeps out yonder in what was then the cemetery of a country church. As a tribute to her memory I have told you this story."

Oh, that all of us would learn the lesson: "Be ye kind." What transforming power it has!

READER: QUOTE #4

Source ~ <http://www.entwagon.com/cgi-bin/quotes/quotes.pl?cat=Respectability>

"Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect for others guides our manners." [Laurence Sterne 1713-1768, British Author

LEADER: II. RESPECTING YOURSELF

READER: QUOTE #5

Source ~ http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_selfrespect.html

"The capacity for getting along with our neighbor depends to a large extent on the capacity for getting along with ourselves. The self-respecting individual will try to be as tolerant of his neighbor's shortcomings as he is of his own." - Eric Hoffer 1902-1983 Author

LEADER: "Christian Integrity" (Excerpts) By Wil Pounds

Source ~ <http://www.abideinchrist.com/devotion/nov26.html>

One day we will all stand before God and explain to whom we have given allegiance. Here are a list by Chuck Swindoll of five traps in the ministry....which can also be applied to other lines of work.

READER: "Christian Integrity" (Continued):

Source ~ <http://www.abideinchrist.com/devotion/nov26.html>

LEADER CALLS OUT NUMBERS:

1. "Authoritarianism" is the lack of a servant's heart. Don't suppress God's people. Respect them and encourage them to be all God wants them to be. Don't abuse God's people. Christ is Lord, not the pastor or anyone else in His church.
2. "Exclusiveness" is the "I (or we) alone are all right." God has blessed me, or our group as the elite Christians. The truth is in God's grace there are no favorites. God does not play favorites with anyone. We are saved by grace alone. There are no second-class citizens in the Kingdom of God.
3. "Greed" is the money crazy theme. How much do you harp on money? What is your motive? Even building yourself a name for a church with a big budget falls prey to this abuse. As a pastor I don't handle money. Let someone else do it. The church assigns a group of people to count the money, the treasurer writes the checks and an audit committee checks the books. Don't even find out who gives the most or how frequently they give in your church. How do you handle money that people hand to you and say use it were the greatest need is? Do you continue asking for money after you know you have all the funds you need for a certain project?

4. "Rationalization" is the effort to justify wrong with a defensive spirit. Are you quick to gloss over personal sin, make excuses or lie about it? Are you over emphasizing or underemphasizing some area of purity? What areas and why?

5. "Sensuality" is how I handle sex. Treat the opposite sex with all purity. Stay away from any compromise or even the smell of smoke. Stay away from all appearance of evil. Live a pure life.

6. "Unaccountability" Beware of the secretive, "I am accountable only to God and I answer to no one else." No one is above accountability. Receive the confrontation of friends and mentors and remind yourself that only observed behavior changes.

READER: "ST." By H. M. S. Richards,

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2c/ST.htm> (WE'VE USED BEFORE)

Two brothers were convicted of stealing sheep in the old days in England. In accordance with the brutal punishment of those times, they were branded in the forehead with the letters ST--Sheep Thief. One brother, unable to bear the stigma, fled to a foreign country where he tried to hide himself. He wandered from land to land and at last died full of bitterness, and was buried in a forgotten grave. The other brother repented of his misdeed and did not try to run away from home. He said, "I can't get away from the fact that I once stole sheep, but I will remain here until I win back the respect of my neighbors and my own self-respect.

The years passed, and he gradually established a reputation for respectability and integrity, honesty and worth. At last a stranger in town saw an old man hobbling along with the letters ST branded on his forehead and asked a native what they signified. After thinking for a while, the villager said, "It all happened a long time ago, and I have forgotten the particulars. But I think the letters are an abbreviation for Saint."

There it is--the wonderful grace of God in the penitent, believing heart can change and transform the character and turn the very scars of sin into a badge of honor and beauty.

READER: Philippians 2:5-11

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

LEADER: "Christian Integrity" (Excerpts) By Wil Pounds (Continued):

Source ~ <http://www.abideinchrist.com/devotion/nov26.html>

The apostle in Philippians 2:5-11 is stressing the remedy to spiritual abuse in modern society. His emphasis is on the character of God that is seen in selfless service and obedience to Christ and others. Jesus Christ is our perfect example of obedient service. His attitude runs counter to the human tendency to dominate and control others for personal gain. "Think in this way," Paul says, "just as Jesus Christ thought in this way." That is the best safeguard we can have in the way we handle life. Follow the example of Christ's selflessness, humility and obedience.

Every one of us will one day stand before God and give an account of how we have used our personal power. My prayer is that we will be found in humble obedience to Him and will hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." When Jesus returned to heaven after being obedient to the Father's will He was honored with a Name above all names. The Father said to Him, in the presence of witnesses on three occasions while He was here on the earth, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name - Philippians 2:9

READER: Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

READER: Romans 15:3-9

For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL ON ME."

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, " THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."

READER: Romans 6:1-14

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

READER: Galatians 5:16-2

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

LEADER: III. RESPECTING GOD

LEADER: Created by a Loving God - Rabi Jacob Karmenetzky

Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2c/rabi_jacob_karmenetzky.htm

PBS film critic and columnist Michael Medved has shared this anecdote out of his Jewish heritage:

A few years ago, Rabbi Jacob Karmenetzky made a trip to Israel accompanied by his teenage grandson. Ironically, these two deeply religious people were seated in the airplane next to a prominent Israeli socialist leader and outspoken atheist.

On the flight, the cynical atheist traveler couldn't help noticing the way the teenage boy attended to the needs of his aged, bearded grandfather. He got up to get the old man a glass of water, helped him remove his shoes and put on some slippers, and otherwise demonstrated that the rabbi's comfort represented his primary concern.

At one point, as the boy got up for yet another errand on behalf of the old man, the atheist could contain himself no longer.

"Tell me something," he asked the rabbi. "Why does your grandson treat you like some kind of a king? I have a grandson, too, but he wouldn't give me the time of day."

"It's very simple," the old man replied. "My grandson and I both believe in a God who rules the universe and created all things, including the first man. That means that in the boy's eyes, I'm two generations closer to the hand of God Himself. But in the eyes of your grandson, you're just two generations closer to a monkey."

What you believe about the origin of man really does make a difference, and it will manifest itself in how you act toward others. If we see our origin as a matter of chance from that which is purely physical, then we have no basis on which to assign value to others. On the other hand, if we understand that we were created by a loving God, that gives us all the reason in the world to hold others in high regard, and gives us incentive to treat them with respect.

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.'..." (Genesis 1:26).

READER: "Respecting the Name of God" #1 by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Source ~ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=58758&ContributorID=9610>

Have you ever seen the movie "O God?" George Burns plays God himself, who has come to earth to speak with a grocery manager named Jerry Landers. In one of their conversations, Jerry, without thinking, says to himself, "O God!"

And God says, "Yes, Jerry? What is it?"

And Jerry says, "Huh?? Oh, it's nothing, Lord. It's just an expression. A figure of speech. Nothing more."

And then God says, "Jerry, that's why I'm here. I want people to know that I'm not just a figure of speech. I'm more than just a phrase that people blurt out when they get frustrated. I want you to tell people to take me seriously. That I am the Lord!"

Have you ever made the mistake Jerry did? Have you ever used the name of God in vain without even thinking about what you were saying?

In our Bible lesson, God says, "Don't do that." In Leviticus 24, we read about two men who get into a fight. And one of the guys in his anger takes the Lord's name in vain. And then the Lord tells Moses, "Put him to death. Make an example out of him. Let the whole community know that anyone who takes my name in vain is going to pay! He's going to die! Because when you disrespect my name, you're disrespecting me!"

I remember when I first read this, I was thinking, "Whew! Boy, am I glad that times have changed! Thank God that we live under the grace of the New Testament instead of the harsh judgment of the Old. Thank God for the cross! Thank God that when we confess our sins, he is faithful and just. And will forgive us our sins. And cleanse us from all unrighteousness! Thank God that when we mess up, there's the possibility of getting a second chance!

READER: "Respecting the Name of God" #2 by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Source ~ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=58758&ContributorID=9610>

Even so, this story in Leviticus gives us a good picture of how God feels when you misuse his name. And Matthew 12:36 says that someday, you and I will stand before God. And we'll have to answer to Him for every careless word we have spoken. And if you're one of those people that's in the habit of taking the Lord's name in vain, then you're going to wish that you were somewhere else. Because Jesus is going to say, "Wait a minute! I died for your sins! I went through hell on that cross. So that you could have a chance to go to heaven. And this is how you repay me? You think it's cool to go around flippantly saying "Jesus Christ" every time you feel irritated? I thought you said you were a Christian. You're no Christian."

LEADER: CONT: "Respecting the Name of God" by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Source ~ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=58758&ContributorID=9610>

Usually when we think of misusing the name of God, we think of swearing. And we all know that's wrong. But I can think of a number of other ways people misuse God's name.

- The first way is by using it as an expression of surprise. Like when someone says "I just caught a ten pound fish! O my God!" Or, "Good Lord, I can't believe Suzy is pregnant again." Or "I just split my pants. My God!" When you say stuff like that, what you're really doing is you're reducing God to a level of a "Wow!" or "Far

Out!" You're treating God Almighty like an exclamation point. And Leviticus 22:32 says "Don't do that." "Do not profane the name of the Lord your God." Don't treat God like some common, ordinary catchphrase. Because at the end of the day, he's not going to let you get away with it.

- And sometimes, we use God's name as an excuse to do what we want to do. Rather than what he would want us to do. "Honey, I know I promised to clip the lawn this morning. But I think God wanted me to sleep in a little longer." We use God as a cover for our own behavior so that we can do what we want to do. And that's an insult to the Lord.
- Another way of misusing God's name is by using it as an expression of anger. I think it takes a lot of maturity to watch your language. Especially when you're angry -- you stub your toe. Or you hit your thumb. Or a guy cuts you off in traffic. It takes discipline to not swear. Whatever. If you really need to vent your frustration, my advice would be to find a clean word that works for you. Do what you have to do. But for your own sake, leave God out of it!
- Another way we misuse God's name is by not walking the talk. At church, you say, "Praise the Lord. Hallelujah! God bless you! Isn't he wonderful?" And all week long, you're out there getting trashed. Or cheating on your wife. Or cussing. or whatever. The point is that when you cuss or misuse God's name, you are offending the Creator of the Universe. If you recognize any of this as present or past action...take the time to ask the Lord for forgiveness.

READER: Exodus 20:7

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

READER: Matthew 15:8

"These people honor me with their lips. But their hearts are far from me."

READER: 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

READER: Psalm 29:2

"Give to the Lord the glory due his name."

READER: "Respecting the Name of God" #3 by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Source ~ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=58758&ContributorID=9610>

They had a program on TV last week about the actress Justine Bateman. She was the one who played Mallory Keaton on the TV show "Family Ties." About 10 years ago, she gave her life to Christ. And she got a role on the show "Men Behaving Badly." And right away in the first season, they wanted her to do something that went against her faith. It was either taking the Lord's name in vain or doing something sexual or dressing a certain way. I'm not sure. But she took a stand. She said, "I'm a Christian. And I don't feel like I can do what you're asking. I'm not willing to do anything that's going to hurt my relationship with Jesus Christ."

To make a long story short, she quit the TV show. And went into another line of work. But I respect her. Because she decided that the name of Jesus

Christ was more important to her than the demands of Hollywood. She said, "I'm not going to do anything in my life that would dishonor the name of Jesus Christ." God help us to be more that way. God help us to resist the temptations of the world. And to lift up the banner of Jesus Christ by the way we live our lives.

READER: "Letter to My Child"

Source ~ <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2b/lettertomychild.htm>

I can teach you things	But I cannot make you learn
I can allow you freedom	But I cannot be responsible for it
I can offer you advice	But I cannot decide for you
I can teach you to share	But I cannot make you unselfish
I can advise you about the facts of life	But I cannot build your reputation

I can tell you about drink and drugs	But I cannot say no for you
I can teach you kindness	But I cannot make you gracious
I can model values for you	But I cannot make you moral
I can teach you respect	But I cannot make you honorable
I can give you love	But I cannot make you beautiful inside
I can give you life	But I cannot live it for you

LEADER: The Lord gives us life and gives us all the tools to make the right decisions. We still have choices to make. Through Him we have the ability to choose “respect” for others...for ourselves...for Him?

COMMENTS IF TIME:

**SCHEDULE TEN MINUTES BEFORE CLOSING FOR
PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES:**

COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR YOUR READERS:

READERS

"A Lesson From My Father"

We come by business naturally in our family. Each of the seven children in our family worked in our father's store, "Our Own Hardware-Furniture Store," in Mott, North Dakota, a small town on the prairies. We started working by doing odd jobs like dusting, arranging shelves and wrapping, and later graduated to serving customers. As we worked and watched, we learned that work was about more than survival and making a sale.

One lesson stands out in my mind. It was shortly before Christmas. I was in the eighth grade and was working evenings, straightening the toy section. A little boy, five or six years old, came in. He was wearing a brown tattered coat with dirty worn cuffs. His hair was straggly, except for a cowlick that stood straight up from the crown of his head. His shoes were scuffed and his one shoelace was torn. The little boy looked poor to me--too poor to afford to buy anything. He looked around the toy section, picked up this item and that, and carefully put them back in their place. Dad came down the stairs and walked over to the boy. His steel blue eyes smiled and the dimple in his cheek stood out as he asked the boy what he could do for him. The boy said he was looking for a Christmas present to buy his brother. I was impressed that Dad treated him with the same respect as any adult. Dad told him to take his time and look around. He did.

After about 20 minutes, the little boy carefully picked up a toy plane, walked up to my dad and said, "How much for this, Mister?"

"How much you got?" Dad asked.

The little boy held out his hand and opened it. His hand was creased with wet lines of dirt from clutching his money. In his hand lay two dimes, a nickel and two pennies-- 27 cents. The price on the toy plane he'd picked out was \$3.98.

"That'll just about do it," Dad said as he closed the sale. Dad's reply still rings in my ears. I thought about what I'd seen as I wrapped the present. When the little boy walked out of the store, I didn't notice the dirty, worn coat, the straggly hair, or the single torn shoelace. What I saw was a radiant child with a treasure.

"A Christmas Story"

A WORD OF KINDNESS
A word of kindness lasts all day
To light another's heart and way,
And if we add a caring smile,
It adds a joy to traveled miles.
A simple word of kindly care
Or just a smile to ease despair,
It means so much to those who cry
For loves and joys their life denies.
It costs us nothing to be kind
And calm another's grieves of mind
Or to add charity of heart
That Christian love and care impart...
For Jesus preached in days on earth
That we respect each other's birth
And love each other, in His name,
Who live and pray and die the same.

--Michael Dubina

As I read this poem I thought of my dad and one of the many times I saw him show respect and compassion.

My parents owned a Variety Store in a small town. The Christmas season was always a busy one. Part of my job was to help get the dolls out of the boxes and straighten their hair and dresses so they could be put on display. Daddy would set up a little place in the back of the store and assemble the wagons and tricycles. I always enjoyed helping him and my brother put together these toys. This was a service that daddy provided and it kept him very busy.

Christmas time was a mixture of happiness and sadness when watching parents shop for their children's Christmas presents. Happiness at knowing that some children would wake on Christmas morning and have the gifts they wanted from Santa Claus. Sadness at knowing that some would wake on Christmas morning with little under the tree and be disappointed.

One Christmas season a little girl came into the store looking at the dolls on display. After looking at the dolls, she told us that there was one special doll that she wanted Santa to bring her. Her dad, a farmer, came into the store just before Christmas to shop for Christmas presents. He picked out some socks and underwear for his daughter. My dad told him that his daughter had been looking at one particular doll asked him if he wanted to see it. The man said that it had been a bad year for the crops and money was scarce. He could not afford to buy any toys. Even though this was in the 1950's and toys were not very expensive, it was still expensive for him. Daddy told him that it was near Christmas and he did not want to keep any toys in his inventory so several of the dolls were on sale. He told the father that this doll was on sale for one dollar. The father said he could afford that and bought the doll.

A couple of days after Christmas the little girl came into the store carrying her doll. Beaming with joy, she told Daddy that Santa Claus had brought her the doll that she wanted. With tears in his eyes, he told her that he was happy that Santa had been so good to her. This really made the true meaning of Christmas, which is giving, come alive for my dad. He had turned what could have been a sad time for that little girl into a happy one.

I was about 10 or 11 years old when this happened but this event has stayed with me all my life. The compassion and respect that my dad showed to this man had a profound impact on me. He knew that my dad was not offering him outright charity but, by allowing him to pay something for the doll, he knew that my dad was giving him respect as a person. And as one father to another, he knew that my dad cared about families.

By example, my dad showed me what it meant to have compassion and respect for others. Through the years, I learned that this was very much a part of my father's life. His respect for others earned him respect in return. This was taught to him by his parents and he (Continued) to live what he had learned from them and pass it on to his children. Isn't this what we are supposed to do as parents? Our lives are enriched when we show compassion and respect for our fellow man. This is what God expects of each of us. When we show compassion and respect, we are spreading God's love and witnessing to that love in our lives. This respect is returned to us many times over. My hope is that I have (Continued) in the tradition of my dad and taught my children compassion and respect for others and they will then teach their children.

"I Know you won't Let me Down"

Nancy Andrott teaches ninth grade social studies at a high school in Brooklyn. It is not paradise. Teachers and students have been mugged and even raped in that building. Armed guards are on duty and the faculty turnover is high.

But Nancy, a twenty-eight-year-old, has not one been threatened or harassed. In fact, the students would fight for her if it ever came to that. In a workshop for teachers on discipline, she stated: "During the first week of every semester, I don't teach. Instead, I sit down with each student individually and ask them about their families, their friends, their interests, and their hopes for the future."

Then she tells each one, "I have great expectations of you this semester and I know you won't let me down."

They don't. Nancy communicates total respect, concern and love for her students. She doesn't 'demand' a positive teaching environment, she just expects it, and it happens.

People respond to respect – and they do not want to disappoint your expectations. When you demonstrate a positive belief, you'll see positive behavior.

QUOTE #1

"A child who is allowed to be disrespectful to his parents will not have true respect for anyone." - Billy Graham
1918-, American Evangelist

QUOTE #2

"If we try to teach our children respect without respecting them in the process, our teaching will have little effect." - Billy Graham 1918-, American Evangelist

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #1

If we try to teach our children respect without respecting them in the process, our teaching will have little effect.

Treating children with respect starts with our view of them. If we see them as incomplete or inferior beings, we're likely to give the impression that they have little value. We need to see our children as God does: little human beings created in his image and worthy of respect.

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #2

If someone is angry (like your child coming home angry because the teacher assigned too much homework or a friend is angry because the boss moved up the deadline on an already cramped-for-time project, let him/her express his/her feelings, then suggest ways it might be worked out for an effective solution...that negative feelings are something that can be handled—without lashing out at others. Then you can pray with or for that person for God's healing and wisdom?

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #3

Do you give honest compliments...do you remember to praise?

We can easily fall into the trap of looking for things that are wrong. And forget about all the things done right! There are lots of opportunities to praise.

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #4

Do you discipline or correct your child, a friend, a co-worker, an employee with respect. Correction is most effective when it's done in love and with respect and not in the presence of others. What about the tone of your voice? Others are more likely to listen and, in turn, respect you if your tone is even and calm

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #5

Are you listening? We need to really listen when another is speaking... shut out distractions, have eye contact, and really focus on what he or she is saying. If in the middle of something that can't wait, you can say "I really want to hear about your new project or fun experience, but I have a commitment/appointment/obligation/deadline/meal on the stove... Can we set up at time to talk?"

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #6

Are your remarks kind or unkind? Words are vital to relationship development. Positive words nourish and sustain growth. Negative remarks wound and destroy.

In the middle of a confrontation it is wise to stop and pray silently asking God to keep your lips from speaking hurtful words.

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" #7

Do you apologize when you are wrong?...when you've spoken hastily...when you've spoken in the wrong tone of voice...when you've not given the other party a chance to speak...when you've assumed the worst... do you apologize from your heart...do you ask the Lord's forgiveness and help in not repeating the offense?

"Timely Behavior"

Respect is an important part of living at peace with all people. When we fail to show honor or respect for our family members we create tension. Lack of respect on the job or at school is often the cause of friction and the breakdown of communication. Respect is like oil in your auto engine; you don't see the direct results but you know the heat to working things out won't cause a meltdown. Timely behavior, that is behavior which reflects the glory of God and anticipates his eminent return, means that we need to work in unity and harmony for the glory of God. Respect, esteem, patience and seeking to do good for one another are the behaviors of a mature Christian.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

QUOTE #3

"If you have some respect for people as they are, you can be more effective in helping them to become better than they are." - John W. Gardner 1912-, American Educator, Social Activist

Hebrews 13:2

"I Was That Boy"

A successful businessman, addressing the commercial club of his city, told a story in his after-dinner speech. It was the story of a boy named Jim, who was an orphan and the laughing stock of the whole town. He was twelve years old, slim and undersized. He never remembered having a kind word spoken to him in his whole life. He was accustomed to harsh words, suspicion, and rebuffs, and as a result became a shrinking, pitiful little figure, dodging people. And the more he dodged people, the more suspicious they became.

The only earthly possession of which Jim could boast was a dog that cringed and shrank almost as much as his master and was as much hated. Jim was not cruel to his dog except in words - and that is really the worst form of cruelty, even to a dog. A harsh, unkind word can cause more misery, heartache, and anguish than actual physical cruelty. A cruel, unkind tongue cuts like a sword.

One day as Jim walked down the street, he saw a bundle slip from the overloaded arms of a little lady just in front of him. As she stooped to pick it up, the others rolled down. Jim sprang to her assistance, gathering up the bundles and replacing them in her arms. "Thank you, dear; you are a nice little boy," she said kindly, and went on her way after giving him a bright smile.

Jim was amazed; a queer choky feeling passed over him. These were the first kind words he had ever heard in his whole twelve years of existence. He stood and stared after her. He knew that she was the busy little dressmaker who lived in a small cottage on the outskirts of town. He watched her until she was out of sight, then he whistled to Tige and made straight for the woods and a stream that wound around the town.

He sat down on the bank of the stream and did some thinking. "Thank you, dear; you are a nice little boy," he pondered.

"Come here, Tige," he commanded, and Tige slunk to his feet. Then Jim lowered his voice in imitation of the little faded lady and said, "You are a nice little dog." The effect on Tige was electrical. He pricked up his ears, and if a dog could stand at attention, Tige did. "Uhum! Even a dog likes it," said Jim. "Well, Tige, I don't blame you; it is nice. I won't holler at you anymore." Tige wagged his tail joyously.

The boy (Continued) to think, and the dog sat and watched him. Finally the boy pulled from the odds and ends in his pockets a piece of broken mirror and looked at himself. He saw nothing but grime and dirt, the accumulation of many days. He went down to the water's edge and scrubbed it off carefully, almost painfully. Then he looked again. He scarcely recognized himself. He was surprised. He stood erect and looked up instead of down for the first time since he could remember. He distinctly liked the sensation. A feeling of self-respect awoke within his being. Ambition sprang full-grown into life. At that moment the course of his life was changed; a determination to be worthy of the kind words spoken to him by the little dressmaker, and to pass them on, took possession of his soul.

After telling this story of Jim, the orphan boy, the speaker paused; and then he electrified the audience by saying, "Gentlemen, I was that boy. This city--your city, my city--was that little town of forty years ago. Our plant stands upon the spot where that gentle woman stood when she implanted in my life the first seed of kindness. She sleeps out yonder in what was then the cemetery of a country church. As a tribute to her memory I have told you this story."

Oh, that all of us would learn the lesson: "Be ye kind." What transforming power it has!

QUOTE #4

"Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect for others guides our manners." [Laurence Sterne 1713-1768, British Author]

QUOTE #5

"The capacity for getting along with our neighbor depends to a large extent on the capacity for getting along with ourselves. The self-respecting individual will try to be as tolerant of his neighbor's shortcomings as he is of his own." - Eric Hoffer 1902-1983 Author

"Christian Integrity"

LEADER CALLS OUT NUMBERS:

1. "Authoritarianism" is the lack of a servant's heart. Don't suppress God's people. Respect them and encourage them to be all God wants them to be. Don't abuse God's people. Christ is Lord, not the pastor or anyone else in His church.
 2. "Exclusiveness" is the "I (or we) alone are all right." God has blessed me, or our group as the elite Christians. The truth is in God's grace there are no favorites. God does not play favorites with anyone. We are saved by grace alone. There are no second-class citizens in the Kingdom of God.
 3. "Greed" is the money crazy theme. How much do you harp on money? What is your motive? Even building yourself a name for a church with a big budget falls prey to this abuse. As a pastor I don't handle money. Let someone else do it. The church assigns a group of people to count the money, the treasurer writes the checks and an audit committee checks the books. Don't even find out who gives the most or how frequently they give in your church. How do you handle money that people hand to you and say use it were the greatest need is? Do you continue asking for money after you know you have all the funds you need for a certain project?
 4. "Rationalization" is the effort to justify wrong with a defensive spirit. Are you quick to gloss over personal sin, make excuses or lie about it? Are you over emphasizing or underemphasizing some area of purity? What areas and why?
 5. "Sensuality" is how I handle sex. Treat the opposite sex with all purity. Stay away from any compromise or even the smell of smoke. Stay away from all appearance of evil. Live a pure life.
 6. "Unaccountability" Beware of the secretive, "I am accountable only to God and I answer to no one else." No one is above accountability. Receive the confrontation of friends and mentors and remind yourself that only observed behavior changes.
-

"ST."

Two brothers were convicted of stealing sheep in the old days in England. In accordance with the brutal punishment of those times, they were branded in the forehead with the letters ST--Sheep Thief. One brother, unable to bear the stigma, fled to a foreign country where he tried to hide himself. He wandered from land to land and at last died full of bitterness, and was buried in a forgotten grave. The other brother repented of his misdeed and did not try to run away from home. He said, "I can't get away from the fact that I once stole sheep, but I will remain here until I win back the respect of my neighbors and my own self-respect.

The years passed, and he gradually established a reputation for respectability and integrity, honesty and worth. At last a stranger in town saw an old man hobbling along with the letters ST branded on his forehead and asked a native what they signified. After thinking for a while, the villager said, "It all happened a long time ago, and I have forgotten the particulars. But I think the letters are an abbreviation for Saint."

There it is--the wonderful grace of God in the penitent, believing heart can change and transform the character and turn the very scars of sin into a badge of honor and beauty.

_____ • _____
Philippians 2:5-11

_____ • _____
Ephesians 5:1-2

_____ • _____
Romans 15:3-9

_____ • _____
Romans 6:1-14

_____ • _____
Galatians 5:16-2

"Respecting the Name of God" #1 by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Source ~ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=58758&ContributorID=9610>

Have you ever seen the movie "O God?" George Burns plays God himself, who has come to earth to speak with a grocery manager named Jerry Landers. In one of their conversations, Jerry, without thinking, says to himself, "O God!"

And God says, "Yes, Jerry? What is it?"

And Jerry says, "Huh?? Oh, it's nothing, Lord. It's just an expression. A figure of speech. Nothing more."

And then God says, "Jerry, that's why I'm here. I want people to know that I'm not just a figure of speech. I'm more than just a phrase that people blurt out when they get frustrated. I want you to tell people to take me seriously. That I am the Lord!"

Have you ever made the mistake Jerry did? Have you ever used the name of God in vain without even thinking about what you were saying?

In our Bible lesson, God says, "Don't do that." In Leviticus 24, we read about two men who get into a fight. And one of the guys in his anger takes the Lord's name in vain. And then the Lord tells Moses, "Put him to death. Make an example out of him. Let the whole community know that anyone who takes my name in vain is going to pay! He's going to die! Because when you disrespect my name, you're disrespecting me!"

I remember when I first read this, I was thinking, "Whew! Boy, am I glad that times have changed! Thank God that we live under the grace of the New Testament instead of the harsh judgment of the Old. Thank God for the cross! Thank God that when we confess our sins, he is faithful and just. And will forgive us our sins. And cleanse us from all unrighteousness! Thank God that when we mess up, there's the possibility of getting a second chance!"

READER: “Respecting the Name of God”#2 by Marc Axelrod (Excerpt)

Even so, this story in Leviticus gives us a good picture of how God feels when you misuse his name. And Matthew 12:36 says that someday, you and I will stand before God. And we'll have to answer to Him for every careless word we have spoken. And if you're one of those people that's in the habit of taking the Lord's name in vain, then you're going to wish that you were somewhere else. Because Jesus is going to say, "Wait a minute! I died for your sins! I went through hell on that cross. So that you could have a chance to go to heaven. And this is how you repay me? You think it's cool to go around flippantly saying "Jesus Christ" every time you feel irritated? I thought you said you were a Christian. You're no Christian."

Exodus 20:7

Matthew 15:8

1 John 1:9

Psalm 29:2

“Respecting the Name of God”#3

They had a program on TV last week about the actress Justine Bateman. She was the one who played Mallory Keaton on the TV show “Family Ties.” About 10 years ago, she gave her life to Christ. And she got a role on the show “Men Behaving Badly.” And right away in the first season, they wanted her to do something that went against her faith. It was either taking the Lord's name in vain or doing something sexual or dressing a certain way. I'm not sure. But she took a stand. She said, “I'm a Christian. And I don't feel like I can do what you're asking. I'm not willing to do anything that's going to hurt my relationship with Jesus Christ.”

To make a long story short, she quit the TV show. And went into another line of work. But I respect her. Because she decided that the name of Jesus

Christ was more important to her than the demands of Hollywood. She said, “I'm not going to do anything in my life that would dishonor the name of Jesus Christ.” God help us to be more that way. God help us to resist the temptations of the world. And to lift up the banner of Jesus Christ by the way we live our lives.

“Letter to My Child”

I can teach you things	But I cannot make you learn
I can allow you freedom	But I cannot be responsible for it
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I can model values for you	But I cannot make you moral
I can teach you respect	But I cannot make you honorable
I can give you love	But I cannot make you beautiful inside
I can give you life	But I cannot live it for you
