

HONOR, HUMILITY, AND THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Based on the message by Paul Johnson

OVERVIEW

In this message, Paul Johnson teaches from **Proverbs 15:33** and lays out a Kingdom progression:

the fear of the Lord → wisdom → humility → honor.

He describes the fear of the Lord as the “locomotive” that pulls the rest of a believer’s life forward. When people rightly fear God, they become teachable. Teachability leads to wisdom. Wisdom produces humility. And humility prepares the way for honor.

This message is both a call to personal alignment and a biblical explanation of why honor matters in the life of the Church.

Paul reminds us that the fear of the Lord is not about terror without relationship. It is reverence, awe, surrender, and the recognition that God is holy, God is in authority, and we will give an account to Him. The fear of the Lord causes believers to stop playing games with God, return to the Word, hate evil without hating people, and live with holy seriousness.

From there, the sermon moves into the importance of wisdom and humility. A teachable heart is essential for spiritual growth. Pride blinds people to their own flaws and magnifies the failures of others, but humility helps us see ourselves rightly before God.

Finally, Paul shows that **honor is not something to chase**. Honor is not self-exaltation, attention-seeking, or the desire to be noticed. True honor is the fruit of a life that fears God, walks in wisdom, and lives in humility. To honor someone is to value them for who God made them to be.

Because of this message:

- We are called to recover the fear of the Lord.
- We are called to become teachable and wise.
- We are called to reject pride and walk in humility.
- We are called to honor what God values.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Hear → Answer → Act

Each section begins with a focus statement drawn from the sermon. Read the Scripture aloud. Let the Bible answer the questions. The goal is not inspiration alone, but obedience.

Open your Bible. Read slowly. Ask the Lord to expose pride, deepen humility, and teach you how to rightly honor Him and others.

SECTION 1 — THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING

Focus

“The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility.”

The fear of the Lord is the starting place for a life that moves forward in God.

Read

Proverbs 15:33, Proverbs 8:13, Matthew 10:28

Respond

1. According to **Proverbs 15:33**, what comes from the fear of the Lord, and what comes before honor?
2. According to **Proverbs 8:13**, how does Scripture define the fear of the Lord?
3. In **Matthew 10:28**, what does Jesus teach about who we should fear, and how does that correct a man-centered way of living?
4. Paul said the fear of the Lord helps us remember that God is God and we are not. Why is that an important foundation for spiritual maturity?
5. What are some ways people can drift into “playing games with God” instead of walking in reverence and surrender?

Reflect

- Do I live with a real reverence for God, or have I become casual in my walk with Him?
 - Where do I need the fear of the Lord restored in my life?
 - Am I more concerned with pleasing God or pleasing people?
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SECTION 2 — THE FEAR OF THE LORD MAKES US TEACHABLE

Focus

“The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom.”

When we fear God rightly, we become teachable, and teachable people grow in wisdom.

Read

Proverbs 9:10, James 1:5, Psalm 119:9–11

Respond

1. According to **Proverbs 9:10**, what is the beginning of wisdom?
2. According to **James 1:5**, what does God promise to those who ask Him for wisdom?
3. According to **Psalm 119:9–11**, what role does God’s Word play in keeping a life pure and steady?
4. Paul said that teachability means being able to hear truth again without responding with, “I already know that.” Why is that important?
5. He also said, “Pain without God’s presence is poison.” How can bringing pain into God’s presence change what that pain produces in us?

Reflect

- Am I truly teachable, or do I resist correction and repetition?
 - Where might pride be keeping me from learning what God wants to teach me?
 - Have I allowed pain to become poison in my soul, or have I brought it into God’s presence?
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SECTION 3 — HUMILITY SEES CLEARLY

Focus

“As we see God rightly, we see ourselves rightly.”

Humility is the fruit of seeing God as He is and seeing ourselves honestly before Him.

Read

James 4:6, Philippians 2:3–8, Micah 6:8

Respond

1. According to **James 4:6**, how does God respond to the proud and to the humble?
2. In **Philippians 2:3–8**, what do we learn from the humility of Jesus?
3. According to **Micah 6:8**, what does the Lord require of His people?
4. Paul said, “Pride blinds us to our own flaws and magnifies others’ shortcomings. Humility magnifies our own flaws and blinds us to others’ shortcomings.” What does that reveal about the difference between pride and humility?
5. Why is humility necessary if we are going to walk with God, receive correction, and remain healthy in the Body of Christ?

Reflect

- Do I spend more time examining my own heart or criticizing others?
 - Where is God calling me to repent of pride?
 - What would humility look like in my relationships, conversations, and responses this week?
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SECTION 4 — HONOR IS THE RESULT, NOT THE GOAL

Focus

“Before honor comes humility.”

Honor is not something believers are meant to chase. It is the result of a God-fearing, wise, and humble life.

Read

Proverbs 15:33, Romans 12:10, 1 Timothy 5:17, Exodus 20:12

Respond

1. According to **Proverbs 15:33**, what comes before honor?
2. In **Romans 12:10**, how are believers instructed to treat one another?
3. According to **1 Timothy 5:17**, how should those who labor in preaching and teaching be regarded?
4. According to **Exodus 20:12**, what command does God give regarding father and mother, and what promise is attached to it?
5. Paul taught that to honor someone is to value them for who God made them to be. How does that differ from flattery, celebrity culture, or self-promotion?
6. He also said, “What you do not honor, you cannot receive from.” What do you think that means in the life of the Church?

Reflect

- Do I struggle more with giving honor or wanting honor for myself?
 - Who has God placed in my life that I need to value more intentionally?
 - How can I grow in honoring people without exaggeration, favoritism, or fear of man?
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SECTION 5 — HONORING FAITHFUL LEADERSHIP

Focus

“Honor is so healthy for us.”

Biblical honor helps the Church recognize and give thanks for the grace of God at work through faithful leaders.

Read

Hebrews 13:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13, 3 John 1:4

Respond

1. According to **Hebrews 13:7**, how are believers told to respond to leaders who have spoken the Word of God to them?
2. In **1 Thessalonians 5:12–13**, what attitude are believers told to have toward those who labor among them and lead them in the Lord?
3. What does **3 John 1:4** reveal about the joy of spiritual leadership and faithfulness across generations?
4. Why is it spiritually healthy for a church to pause, give thanks, and honor faithful service rather than treat it casually?

Reflect

- Am I thankful for the leaders God has used in my life?
 - Do I recognize faithfulness when I see it?
 - How can I practice biblical honor in a way that strengthens the Church and glorifies God?
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UNIFIED PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

A Path of Formation: From Fear of the Lord to a Life of Honor

This week is not about behavior modification—it is about **alignment with God** and allowing Him to form something deeper in you.

Move through these steps slowly. Let the Holy Spirit lead each one.

Step 1 — Take Inventory With the Lord

Before changing anything, come before the Lord and allow Him to reveal what He is forming in you.

Read:

Proverbs 15:33, Proverbs 8:13

Quiet your heart and ask:

“Lord, what are You doing in me right now?”

“Where are You inviting me to grow in the fear of the Lord?”

“What are You wanting to transform in my life in this season?”

Let the Holy Spirit bring awareness to:

- areas where reverence has been replaced with casualness
- places where pride has resisted humility
- patterns where you’ve been led by self instead of by God

Then ask:

“Lord, what does this look like transformed?”

“What would it look like to walk with You rightly in this area?”

Stay here until you sense clarity.

Step 2 — Submit to the Word (Become Teachable)

The fear of the Lord makes us teachable. Now we respond by coming under His Word.

Read aloud: **Proverbs 15:33, James 4:6 and Psalm 119:9–11**

Ask:

“Lord, where am I resisting what You’ve already said?”

“Where have I said ‘I already know that’ instead of letting Your Word shape me?”

Choose one truth from Scripture this week and return to it daily.

Let it:

- correct your thinking
- shape your responses
- guide your decisions

This is where wisdom begins to form.

Step 3 — Walk in Humility (Respond to What He Shows You)

Humility is not a feeling—it is a response.

As the Lord reveals areas in your heart, choose to respond quickly and honestly.

Ask:

“What would humility look like in this situation today?”

Then take one tangible step:

- apologize without defending yourself
- receive correction without pushing back
- listen instead of speaking first
- choose to go low instead of proving yourself right

Remember:

Humility is seeing yourself rightly before God—and responding accordingly.

Step 4 — Practice Honor (Value What God Values)

Now begin to live outwardly what God is forming inwardly.

Read: **Romans 12:10** and **1 Peter 2:17**

Ask:

“Lord, who have I overlooked, undervalued, or taken for granted?”
“Who have You placed in my life that I need to honor?”

Choose at least one person this week and:

- speak life over them
- thank them specifically
- acknowledge the grace of God in their life

Remember:

Honor is not flattery—it is agreeing with heaven about someone’s value.

And:

What you honor, you position yourself to receive from.

Step 5 — Walk It Out With the Lord

At the end of the week, return to the Lord and reflect on what He has done.

Ask:

“Where did I grow in the fear of the Lord this week?”

“Where did I choose humility over pride?”

“Where did I give honor in a way that reflected Your heart?”

“What are You continuing to form in me?”

Take time to thank Him.

Not for perfection—but for:

- conviction
 - clarity
 - growth
 - and His faithful work in your life
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Final Encouragement

This is not about getting everything right.

It is about becoming a person who:

- fears the Lord
- remains teachable
- walks in humility
- and lives a life that naturally produces honor

Because:

Honor is not something you pursue — it is something that follows a life aligned with God.