

## **Giving Honor to Whom it is Due (and overdue!)**

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Romans 13:1-7 (text v. 7)

In this special service we want to extend honor to our civil leaders... military personnel... and our first responders. Although their tasks may vary, they have one thing in common—They serve for our protection and our safety.

- Our **civil leaders** serve to protect us from evil and to praise those who do well (Rom. 13:3; 1 Pet. 2:14). We are more secure because of their service.
- Our **police officers** serve to insure our laws are enforced and obeyed. They protect us from those who would violate those laws. I thank God for our police officers knowing I am made safer by their efforts.
- Our **military** defend the freedoms we enjoy here in America. I feel safer knowing we have a strong military presence in the world.
- A **first responder** is one who shows up in an emergency situation to help those who cannot help themselves. No matter what the disaster— hurricane, earthquake, terrorist attack—they are there to help. They're there when you dial 911—when there's a fire... when there's a break-in...when there's a shooting. Thank God for first responders!

➡It behooves us as a church that loves our country and loves our community that we honor these civil servants in a special way..

➡Civil leaders... Police officers... first responders, military personnel, we recognize that you are for us. And we want you to know that Bible Baptist Church is for you. We honor and thank you.

**WHAT IS HONOR?** (based on Webster, 1828):

1. To esteem highly valuable. You honor someone when you treat them as special and extraordinary. When we honor our civil servants, first responders, and military personnel, as extraordinary people whom we esteem very highly.
2. An expression of respect, reverence, or adoration. To honor someone is to believe the best about them and let them know it.
3. To treat with dignity, deference, and courtesy.

Honor is more than words. When God commands us to honor our father and mother, it means more than sending a greeting card. To honor involves action. Honor is *shown* or *demonstrated* in how we treat people.

How we show honor is a reflection of how we see people... how we see ourselves... and how we see God.

**So, we honor our civil servants, for...**

**I. The COMFORT they supply**—The comfort of feeling safe and secure.

➡ We live in scary times (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

- My **first “car seat”** simply hooked over the back of the front seat. There were no straps to secure it. It had a little steering wheel so I could steer the car along with my dad. There was no fear about putting a child in one of these. But now we have elaborate child safety car seats and booster seats for children over 50 lbs. I sometimes feel sorry for Junior Highers who don't meet the weight requirement.
- When I was a kid, I could **ride my bike** from my house on Winifred Street to downtown Wayne, MI (about 3 miles). The only thing my parents required was that I come home “when the street lights come on.” We felt very safe. Today, many parents won't let their kids leave their yard.
- My dad owned a new 1959 Plymouth Fury. It was so cool! It had dual headlights and huge fins on the rear fenders. It had a push button transmission. But it did not have **seat belts**. I remember times when my Dad needed to make a sudden stop and would quickly stick his right arm in front of me to keep me from hitting the dashboard. Then came “lap belts”... shoulder harness... and air bags—All to make us feel safer. But I don't feel any safer today than when I was a kid riding in my Dad's car.
- In the 50's and 60's, our house in Wayne, MI had **asbestos** siding. In my art class in Junior High I remember making asbestos puppets with my bare hands, without any fear of getting cancer.

- All the walls of our house were finished with **lead based paint**. My parents never had to warn me not to lick the walls! We felt safe.
  - There was no fear about playing my the toys as a kid. But today, most of those toys would be banned today as dangerous.
- A. Times are different today. Today, our culture is driven by fear. Now we have ISIS... suicide bombers... terrorists driving trucks into crowds of people... mass shootings. (In 2015 alone, there were 294 mass shootings killing or injuring 1,464 people).
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- USA TODAY* (9/9/16)—The chairman of the 9/11 commission says the threat of terrorism is worse now than in 2001.
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- B. Presidential campaigns capitalize on people’s fears. The news media warn us to be afraid about using anti-bacteria hand cleansers... Traveling to Florida because of mosquitos... I read one article this week that said calcium pills are now linked to dementia. One T.V. ad said, “Your neighborhood may not be as safe as you thought. Tune in to the 5:00 evening news for more details!”
- C. Today we need our policemen, firemen, first responders, and armed forces more than ever to help make us feel safe. I honor them for the measure of comfort they provide in these perilous times.

**We also honor our civil servants, for...**

## **II. Their COURAGE and sacrifice.**

- A. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to face it. First responders run toward what most of us run away from.
- Their acts of bravery and heroism often come at a high price. On 9/11 New York City lost more than 400 of her finest and most courageous first responders.
- B. A CBS report found seven out of ten of the 9/11 first responders have debilitating respiratory illnesses from breathing the toxic dust as they ran toward the fiery World Trade Center towers.

They also suffer from massive migraines, unexplained rashes and aches and pains that defy explanation.

**We also honor our civil servants, for...**

### **III. Their COMPARABILITY to our Savior.**

- A. The mission of our first responders could be compared to the earthly mission of our Lord Jesus. Jesus said, “*For the Son of man is come to **SEEK AND TO SAVE** that which was lost.*” (Luke 19:10). Jesus came to earth on a “search and rescue” mission.

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SAVING LIVES—Put yourself in the boots of the first responders after the Twin Towers were attacked on 9/11/2001. Huge billows of smoke are rising to the sky. Many have already died. And it's raining... raining people—people who were forced to choose between death by fire or death by jumping out of the building a hundred stories up.

The sirens of the fire and police vehicles howl as first responders speed toward the danger ahead. Nothing was more important at that moment than saving the lives of those still trapped in the Twin Towers.

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- This was the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ—He was a “first responder.” When man was lost in the destruction of sin, He responded in love to come to seek and to save that which was lost— Saving souls for eternity.
  - Our brave first responders work to save earthly lives, trapped in the debris of fallen buildings. Jesus and His followers work to save those are trapped in ruins of sin. It's still raining— Raining the souls of men falling into the bottomless pit for all eternity. Jesus came to rescue them as brands from the burning (Jude 23).
- B Someone may say, “But preacher, I don’t believe I need saving. I’m a good person. I’m doing fine without Jesus.” Consider the following scenarios—

- A fireman is called to a house that is on fire. When he gets there, he finds the house is fully engulfed in flames. A man is standing outside with a garden hose, spraying water on the flames. As the fireman approaches the man says, “No problem. I got this. I can put this fire out by myself. You can get back in your truck go back to the station.” You would think— That man is a fool.
  - A paramedic is called to a house where a man has cut himself badly with a chain saw. The paramedic rushes to the man who is bleeding profusely. He is trying to wrap a towel around the gapping wound. It is obvious this person is going to bleed out in a matter of minutes. The bleeding man says, “I’m OK. It’s just a flesh wound. I can bandage it. I don’t need your help. Get back in your ambulance and go back to the hospital.” What would you think? You’d say that guy is a fool.
  - A police officer is called to the Walmart parking lot where an elderly lady is being robbed. He gets out of his squad car to help this lady. She is wrestling with a man twice her size who is trying to steal her purse. She is grasping her purse with one hand and trying to fight off the robber with the other hand. It is clear this woman is no match for the robber. As the officer approaches, she says, “I don’t need any help. I can defend myself. This guy ain’t going to steal my purse. Sorry, you can get back in your squad car and go back to the station.” If you witnessed this, what would you say? You’d say, “Lady, you’re crazy. There is no way you can handle this on your own.”
- ➔ You say, “Those scenarios are pretty far-fetched.” Are they? Are they any more far-fetched as a lost person saying to Jesus, “Jesus I don’t need You. I can take care of my sins without Your help. I can handle death on my own. Just leave me be.” That kind of response to Jesus is even more pathetic than the other scenarios I just mentioned.

- Dear friend, you need Jesus, whether you realize it or not. Without Him, you will be lost for eternity in the lake of fire.
- I beg you—As Jesus responded to your need of salvation on the cross—Please respond to Him by receiving Him as your Lord and Savior (John 1:12).

**SUMMATION:** Lets give honor to whom it is due...

1. Thank someone in uniform this week.
  2. Pray for our country, its leaders, its civil servants.
  3. Submit to God's authority in your life.
  4. Look around you, and reach out and help someone in need.
- ➡ May God Bless our civil leaders... first responders... and military... and may God Bless America.