

PARENTING TIPS

Do We Teach Honor or Respect?

When families think about honor, they often restrict their thinking to respectful behavior, being polite, courteous, and having good manners. This is a rather narrow understanding and is only a small portion of what honor actually is. Respectful behavior, although a subset of honor, is incomplete in and of itself.

Susie learned manners at an early age. “What a nice girl,” people would say. Susie learned acceptable behavior but as she grew older she rebelled against the rules, finding them empty and overly restrictive. Teaching respect is not enough.

Honor comes when you recognize a person’s worth or value. Respect focuses on behavior, doing the appropriate thing, whereas honor comes from the heart. Respect acknowledges a person’s position, while honor attaches worth to that person. Respect teaches manners and proper behavior in the presence of others. Honor teaches something deeper, an appreciation of that person.

Respect can become an outward technique to make a family look good to others, but honor builds the hidden bonds that provide great strength and long-lasting unity. It’s one thing to obey the crossing guard out of respect for his position. It’s yet another to show honor to him because you know him as a friend.

Although we’re making a contrast between respect and honor, don’t assume that honor is good and respect is bad. Both have their place. When children are young, they learn respectful behavior, but as they grow older, they can develop a heart response of honor as well. It’s good to teach respectful behavior but it’s important that you not stop there. Honor adds a deeper dimension to relationships.

Honor deals with meanness in relationships. Honor does a job thoroughly and with a good attitude. Honor looks of what needs to be done before being asked. All children (and adults) need to learn honor. Teaching it makes a big difference in family life.



This parenting tip comes from the book, *Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes In You and Your Kids*, by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN