

# 1 Peter 2:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

## Analysis

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Peter gives four rapid-fire imperatives governing Christian relationships. "Honour all men" (pantas timēsate)—respect every person as God's image-bearer, regardless of status. "Love the brotherhood" (tēn adelphotēta agapate)—special affection for fellow believers, the church family. "Fear God" (ton theon phobeisthe)—reverential awe for the Almighty, not servile terror. "Honour the king" (ton basilea timate)—respect governing authority. These commands create ordered priorities: universal respect, special love for Christians, ultimate fear of God, proper honor for rulers. God alone receives "fear"; humans (even kings) receive "honor."

## Historical Context

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Under Nero's persecution, honoring the emperor seemed impossible. Yet Peter commands it—not worship (reserved for God) but civil respect for office. The distinction between "honor" (king) and "fear" (God) maintains proper hierarchy—God supreme, king subordinate. This protected early church from accusations of sedition while refusing idolatrous emperor worship. Church fathers distinguished: Christians honor emperor as human authority but refuse to worship him as deity. When Rome demanded worship, Christians chose martyrdom over compromise.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## **Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

### **Study Questions**

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1. How do you maintain proper priority between loving Christians, respecting all humans, and fearing God alone?
2. What's the difference between honoring governmental authority and giving ultimate allegiance to God?

### **Interlinear Text**

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πάντας	τιμᾶτε	τὴν	ἀδελφότητα	ἀγαπᾶτε	τὸν	θεόν
<b>all</b>	<b>Honour</b>	G3588	<b>the brotherhood</b>	<b>men Love</b>	G3588	<b>God</b>
G3956	G5091		G81	G25		G2316
φοβεῖσθε	τὸν	βασιλέα	τιμᾶτε			
<b>Fear</b>	G3588	<b>the king</b>	<b>Honour</b>			
G5399		G935	G5091			

### **Additional Cross-References**

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**Proverbs 24:21** (Kingdom): My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change:

**Romans 12:10** (Love): Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

**Romans 13:7** (Parallel theme): Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

**1 Peter 5:5** (References God): Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

**Hebrews 13:1** (Love): Let brotherly love continue.

**Philippians 2:3** (Parallel theme): Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

**Exodus 20:12** (References God): Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

**1 Peter 1:22** (Love): Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

**Ecclesiastes 8:2** (Kingdom): I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.

**2 Corinthians 7:1** (Love): Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.