

## Fire Pit Topic: Dignity

September 2017

Definition: the quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed/ high rank, office, or position/ a legal title of nobility or honor/ a way of appearing or behaving that suggests seriousness and self-control

Genesis 49:1-3 And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days: "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father. "Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.

How do we recognize or acknowledge dignity in another?

Who exhibits dignity in your life?

The image of God in which man was and is made has been variously explained in detail. Although scholars may differ on the nuances of the phrase, there is general agreement that it has to do with dignity, destiny, and freedom.

The assertion that man is made in God's image shows each man his true dignity and worth. As God's image-bearer, he merits infinite respect. God's claims on us must be taken with total seriousness. No human being should ever be thought of as simply a cog in a machine, or mere means to an end.

The assertion points also to each man's true destiny. Our Maker so designed us that our nature finds final satisfaction and fulfillment only in a relationship of responsive Godlikeness—which means, precisely, that state of correspondence between our acts and God's will which we call obedience. Living that is obedient will thus be teleological—progressively realizing our telos (Greek for "end" or "goal").

Also the assertion confirms the genuineness of each man's freedom. Experience tells us that we are free, in the sense that we make real choices between alternatives and could have chosen differently, and theology agrees. Self-determining freedom of choice is what sets God and his rational creatures apart from, say, birds and bees, as moral beings.

Describe an example of dignity that you noticed in someone when you were young.

Can we teach others to live in a dignified way?