

Jubilee - *Your Honour*

May 25th, 2012

Dear Friends

I have been having some interesting conversations with people whose conclusions about family life are probably at odds with mine following a response to our Governments consultation on marriage. An exercise for which winning matters not, rather the determination to bring *honour* in playing the game.



Though I have visited Scotland about fifty times on church business I have never exploited the opportunity to enjoy Edinburgh's charms. On this occasion with a couple of hours to spare, I decided to visit the Royal Yacht Britannia, Her Majesty's erstwhile diplomatic touring vessel. In all, the ship is understated in architecture and taste yet supremely functional. The Queens bedroom for example, is not beyond middle class affordability. However the story of her travels is one of pride, precision and planning in the execution of every detail of life to make the onboard experience legendary. Every thought and action is impeccably intended to *bring honour* to the monarch and her family. While my niggling republican instinct tells me that hierarchy stinks, I have to acknowledge that there is much to be learned from the respect and discipline exercised. I appreciate the dedication of naval ratings who sleep in claustrophobic bunks, who forsake the comfort of private space and work in the laundry, kitchen or engine room to *bring honour* to the Queen. After all, to serve a cause that is greater oneself is the call of the servant leader.

Amy Lyman in her book 'The Trustworthy Leader' identifies *Honour* as one of the prime characteristics of the trustworthy person, which you might think obvious, save having read thirty or so titles on the topic, it is the first time it stands out in my attention. On further enquiry it appears to be a Cinderella value among scholars, with few books on the topic. Most references deem it a medieval concept overtaken by the rule of law. Yet, we sing about honour and glory and praise, the 5th commandment invokes us to *honour* our parents, to exercise *Honour* in the faith with reciprocity, "if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (John 12:26)

Returning to my conversations on family expression, these were arguments were about rights and fairness, equity and equivalence, the roles of religion and state, about acceptance and rejection, permissiveness and consent, about self gratification vs denial, about inclusiveness and bigotry. None of the arguments asked, "what does it mean to bring *honour* into a relationship?" Whatever it is, it is not about minimal compliance to regulation or mere tolerance of behavior. It is about the expression of abounding grace.

Paul Zak, Professor of Neuro-Economy once associated with Loma Linda University, writes in the Sunday Times with a preview of his book to be published this week. (His perspective is ably presented at http://www.ted.com/talks/paul_zak_trust_morality_and_oxytocin.html)

For our purposes, he makes the connection between trust and prosperity, generosity and reciprocity. He demonstrates that wellbeing is derived from mutual acceptance, sometimes the kind given in a simple hug, but more frequently in the assurance of trusting one another. Presumably his theory acknowledges the impoverishing damage caused when we withhold brotherly love from one another.

Cushti – it's wonderful when a bit of Chemistry affirms everything that you have believed during years of intuitive inquiry. Our department has long since held the mantra that our spiritual contribution is 'to build trust', not for the opportunity to exploit, rather to prosper our faith community and the nation of which we are a part.

<http://www.adventistinfo.org.uk/departments/treasurer.php>

There will be all kinds of flag waving and street parties during the next few days of the Diamond Jubilee celebration in the United Kingdom. Whatever the expression, whether royalist or not, there is an opportunity to be alert for the kind of activities that bring *honour*.



Who knows it could become a habit?

With due honour,

Victor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "V".