

American Council of Christian Churches
79th Annual Convention, October 27, 2020
Video Conference
Resolution on Honoring Heroes of the Faith

God directs all men through the fifth commandment to give “honour to whom honour” is due (Rom. 13:7, cf. Ex. 20:12). This command applies not only to “natural parents, but [also to] all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God’s ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.” As the *Westminster Larger Catechism* explains: “The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defense, and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.” The catechism continues to say that inferiors can sin against their superiors by “neglect[ing] . . . the [aforementioned] duties[;] . . . envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.”¹

Sadly, we live in an age when many revile their elders, particularly those who are deceased (Ex. 1:8, Judg. 2:8-10, 8:33-35). Rather than humbly learning from past mistakes, scoffers self-righteously belabor the infirmities of the godly.² The modern sons of Shimei³ even claim that heroes of the faith should be anathematized for their unperceived sins.⁴ The Apostle Paul prophesied in 2 Timothy 3:1-4 that “perilous times [like this] shall come . . . [when] men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, [revilers], disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, [irreconcilable], [slanderers], [without self-control], fierce, despisers of those that that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, [and] lovers of pleasures [rather] than lovers of God.”

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches, at its 79th Annual Business Meeting, October 27, 2020, resolves to “hold fast that which is good” and to heed Paul’s exhortation to “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.”⁵ We likewise urge all professing believers to “let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:31-32). For, “he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.”⁶ Finally, we are resolved to “turn away” from implacable scorners, lest by associating with them, we allow their influence to “creep into houses, and lead captive” weaker brethren.⁷



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¹ *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Questions 124, 127-128.

² In contrast, see the response of Shem and Japheth towards their father’s indiscretion in Gen. 9:21-24 (cf. Prov. 10:12b).

³ Shimei cursed King David, calling him a “man of Belial,” i.e. “worthless” (2 Sam. 16:7). David, as with all the saints, is “of whom the world is not worthy” and “precious in [God’s] sight” (Heb. 11:38, Is. 43:4). To say otherwise is slander (Ex. 20:16), which will not go unpunished (Prov. 19:5, 9, cf. 1 Kings 2:44-46).

⁴ See Jared C. Wilson, “Was George Whitefield a Christian?: Dealing with the Tainted Legacy of American History’s Greatest Preacher,” For the Church Web site, Midwestern Seminary (May 23, 2019): <https://ftc.co/resource-library/blog-entries/was-george-whitefield-a-christian/>, Samuel Sey, “Cancel Culture And Christian Culture,” Slow To Write Blog (July 3, 2020): <https://slowtowrite.com/cancel-culture-and-christian-culture/>, Dwight McKissic, “An Open Letter to Dr. Al Mohler and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Board of Trustees Regarding Honoring the Founding Slaveholders,” Word & Way Web site (July 11, 2020): <https://wordandway.org/2020/07/11/an-open-letter-to-dr-al-mohler-and-the-southern-baptist-theological-seminary-board-of-trustees-regarding-honoring-the-founding-slaveholders/>, D. G. Hart, “The Stumbling Blocks Whom You Should Read for Edification,” Old Life Blog (July 14, 2020): <https://oldlife.org/2020/07/14/the-stumbling-blocks-whom-you-should-read/>, and Anthony B. Bradley, Twitter post, September 10, 2020, 6:13 p.m., <https://twitter.com/drantbradley/status/1304226423713026048>.

⁵ 1 Thess. 5:21, 2 Tim. 3:14, cf. 1 Cor. 11:1, Phil. 3:17, Heb. 6:12.

⁶ James 2:13, cf. Matt. 7:1-2, 18:34-35.

⁷ 2 Tim. 3:5-6, cf. 1 Tim. 6:3-5, 1 Cor. 5:11, Ps. 1:1.