



# A Time for Dignity: Crisis and Gospel Today

*Mel Lawrenz*

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**"An urgent call..." —Os Guinness**

What is a human being worth? That is the opening question in this new book by Mel Lawrenz which explores the meaning of human dignity and its connection with the Christian gospel and mission.

Human dignity is a widely-held ideal, but there is much confusion over what it means. Is it simply autonomy—the supposed right that people have for complete self-determination? Is it good behavior? Is human dignity the basis for protection for all people, especially the vulnerable, founded on the reality that people are created in the image of God?

Lawrenz speaks to the issue of dignity not just as a philosophical topic, but as an everyday reality. This is "a time for dignity" because of the many indignities that diminish people, whether abuse, illness, aging, injustice, terrorism, economic crises, etc. The mandate of the gospel requires specific commitments to recognizing and respecting human worth—all carried out in obedience to Jesus Christ.

- What is a Human Being Worth?
- Slap in the Face: The Insults of Indignity
- Restoring Dignity
- The Mandate of the Gospel
- The Dignity of Jesus

## ENDORSEMENT

"The dignity of the person is the bedrock of any society with a human face. But if the last century witnessed some of history's greatest violations, the coming century may well prove worse. *A Time for Dignity* is an urgent call.... Followers of Jesus must not fail to rise to the challenge of the hour."

—Os Guinness, author and social critic

## EXCERPT

Despite all the painful circumstances of life that can make us feel incomplete, or less than fully human, most people do not give up the hope that they have some worth, some dignity. Illness makes us less than whole. Aging diminishes the body and oftentimes the mind. Abusive relationships violate. Loss and trauma fracture people's lives like earthquakes that weaken the whole structure of life. Unemployment and under-employment rob people of a sense of purpose. Many who have a job work for managers who treat them like gears in a machine. Yet most people hope that there is something higher about personhood that cannot be taken away. Most people want to hold their heads up.

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