

FIVE WEEKS OF PREPARING FOR GOD'S GREATER MOVE IN OUR CHURCH



HONOR



LIVE IN HIS PRESENCE | LOVE ONE ANOTHER | LEAD OTHERS TO JESUS CORNERSTONE.AG/ALLIN

CORNERSTONE LIVE • LOVE • LEAD

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SERMON

NOTES	
DATE:	
SERMON TITLE:	

SESSION 3



Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10

INTRODUCING THIS WEEK'S FOCUS: HONOR

Let's start thinking about honor in some practical ways and with a few questions. Honor isn't something our society talks about often, and when it does, it often honors things that aren't biblical.

Here is my (Pastor Shawn's) definition of honor: To honor someone is to obey God's Word and God's love in how we treat and value someone. To honor someone is to value them as someone who is loved by God and who Jesus died for. So honor doesn't always mean agreement or having things in common. Websters dictionary says that to honor someone is to "hold in great respect," "hold in high esteem," or "have a high regard for."

GETTING STARTED

- When was a time you felt honored by someone in this group or by someone else?
- We know the Bible tells us we should honor our mother and father. It also tells us to honor those who rule over us. Does that mean we should always agree with them?
- How do you honor someone even when you don't agree with them?

ABOUT THIS assage

SCRIPTURE READ: ACTS 11:1-19

1 The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them." 4 Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: 5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. 6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds. 7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.' 8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' 9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.' . . . [I went to Cornelius and shared the Gospel with him and his household] . . . 15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with[a] water, but you will be baptized with[b] the Holy Spirit.' 17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?" 18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life." 19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

Acts 11:1-19 is a story of Peter learning to honor all people God's way. Until Acts 11, Peter had learned to only honor people that were Jews. When Peter was in God's Presence, Peter learned God's desire for Peter to honor and value every person who is made in God's image.

This is an important part of being ALL IN with Jesus. If we don't honor according to the Bible, we can never truly follow Jesus and be part of His legacy in this world.

There can be three stumbling blocks keeping us from honoring others.

1. The first and greatest stumbling block is "my pride."

When I worship myself and measure everything by myself, the only people I honor are people who please me, agree with me and are like me.

2. The second is "their sin."

Because people make mistakes or commit grievous sin doesn't mean we should not honor the fact that they are made in the image of God. We can judge sin, but show "high regard for" the person's soul. This is what God did for us when He sent Jesus to die for our sins.

3. The third stumbling block is "our differences."

When we are not accustomed to the way people do things, we can choose not to value that person or that expression. Yet, if we want to know Jesus more, we need to be opening to experiencing His love and truth in new ways from new people.

QUESTION

Which of the three stumbling blocks is your greatest challenge in honoring others who around you?

LIVING THIS OUT TOGETHER

Right now, Chester and the greater Richmond area continue to change and grow with new cultures and languages. New languages can be heard in the grocery store and new generations are born that grow up in a very different society than we did. The question is not, and cannot be, "how do we keep the status quo?" or "how do we preserve our former cultural way of life?" The question must be "how is God calling us to see and honor the cultures around us in such a way that we can lead others to Jesus and learn from others what Jesus has already done in them?" Here we must continue to follow the Scriptures to know how to honor well. As Cornerstone follows the pattern of Acts 2:42-47, we can see our church become a house of prayer for all nations (Luke 19:46). The following three, of Cornerstone's six priorities (p. 19), help us grow disciples from every culture and generation God sends us.

PRIORITY #4: BILINGUAL MINISTRY

Acts 2:44 says that "All the believers were together and had everything in common." Of course, we know from Acts 2:8-11 that this was a group that spoke many different languages and came from many different cultures. Since Spanish-speaking people are the fastest growing cultural demographic in Chesterfield and Richmond, Cornerstone seeks to follow the pattern of Acts 2 by offering bilingual ministry.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Because it is always challenging to learn or welcome new languages into a church, how can living in His Presence and loving one another give us the grace and power to do this?
- 2 How can the times we sing or pray in a different language be times to worship or pray in the Spirit that leads to more joy and glory to God at Cornerstone?
- How can our group help honor other cultures in our church?

PRIORITY #5: MINISTRY TEAMS

More frequently than we would care to admit, we as people focus on how we are served more than how we are serving. This leads to dishonor, just as the Judiazers did when they heard how Peter had gone into the home of Cornelius (see Sunday's message). Jesus is calling us to become less and to honor those around us more. He calls us to be like Him who did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10.45). Our ministry teams are how we serve one another and our community.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is it important that each of us get involved, looking for ways to come alongside others and serve the vision of the church to grow disciples who are discipling others?
- How can our group find a way to serve together on a ministry team one Sunday a month or quarter? Are there other ways we can serve according to the needs of others and not our own?

(Connect to the Church Care Coordinator for more information.)

PRIORITY #6: THE NEXT GENERATION PROGRAMS

Despite being quoted routinely, it is apparent in how we prioritize our time and effort that the North American church still struggles to understand Jesus' command to "Let the little children come to me. Don't stand in their way! The kingdom of God belongs to such as these (Matthew 19.14). Could it be that we love childcare because it makes "church" more comortable for us while forgetting our next generation ministries are discipleship pathways for our sons and daughters? Without winning the next generation to Christ we fail at the mission Jesus gave us.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How could our group help with Next Generation ministries in some way?
- Pray together and identify who among you is feeling called by God to get involved to serve our children and youth to meet with Jesus in new and life-shaping ways.

Turn to "Praying Together" and pray for a greater move of the Holy Spirit in our next generation and identify anyone who would be willing to serve once a month or quarter. Share that with Children's Pastor, Elise Deal, and Youth Director, Edgar Ruiz.

PRAYER POINTS

Close your time together in prayer. Take down prayer requests at some point. Take your time to live in His presence together. Here are some ways you can choose to pray as a group based on this session:

1 1	Based on what you have heard from each other as you answered the
	discussion questions, spend some time praying for each other.

- 2 Pray that each one in the group will grow in honoring God's Word in all their relationships.
- Pray that the next generation would experience a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the end of 2022 and that workers would come forth to disciple many!

PRAYER REQUESTS

Below is a space for you to write down the prayer requests of others from your small group to pray for all week long.





DAY 2

Another look at Acts 11:4-18

DAY 1

Another look at Acts 11:1-3

'You went to uncircumcised men and ate with THEM!"

"Them!" Throughout history, men have dishonored other men by separating into the "thems" as opposed to the "us." The jargon supposes that "them" are somehow different and inferior to us. To the converted Jews in early Christianity, the "them" were uncircumcised Gentiles. "Them" and "us" still exist today in the Body of Christ, perhaps in even greater measure and intensity than in the time of Jesus.

In Galatians 3: 26-28, Paul addresses these divisions. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In today's vernacular, he might say, "There is neither black nor white, male or female, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, old or young, Republican or Democrat; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Whoever our personal or cultural "them" is, all rights to hold onto these prejudices fall in the face of James 2:8-9. "Your calling is to fulfill the royal law of love as given to us in this Scripture: 'You must love and value your neighbor as you love and value yourself!' for keeping this law is the noble way to live. But when you show prejudice, you commit sin and you violate this royal law of love!"

How can we do this? The wounds of past offenses, real or imagined, hinder our ability to obey. There is no answer but God. No savior but Jesus. And no one who can empower us to do so but the Holy Spirit. ONLY through the Holy Spirit can we receive the grace to forgive and love the "thems" in our lives.

Who is your personal or cultural "them"? What will it take to overcome this? Seek the Holy Spirit. Pray. Cling to Him. Cry out to Him for the grace to truly love and obey. Endure the battle that may result. Persevere until your heart is healed and you find you have become more like Jesus.

When Peter arrived, the circumcision party was ready for Him. They were upset because they didn't understand how Peter could do such a thing. They criticized and judged him severely for entering the house of "uncircumcised men." They forgot their mission – to spread the Gospel! This Good News is for all people! They were more concerned about the law than they were excited about the news that Gentiles had also received the word of God.

This could have turned out bad. Peter could have matched their energy and given them exactly what they were giving him. Instead, Peter's approach was gentle. Regardless of their negative response, he chose to treat them with honor and respect. He begins by catching them up to speed. Then he patiently began explaining step by step what God did. Peter knew that he heard from the Lord and what he just encountered was all God. Peter shared that, as he began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as He had come on him. He gently reminded them of what their encounter was like and the word of the Lord that was spoken. Through Peter's explanation, they could see that God was doing the work. If they chose to oppose what God was doing amongst the Gentiles, they weren't just opposing the Gentiles, they were opposing God. When they heard this, they praised God and had no further objections.

Our being ALL IN with honor reduces objections as the Church rejoices in the move of the Spirit.

14 15



DAY 3

Our Priorities:

We grow disciples through our: Bilingual ministry

We honor each other best when we honor God's Word. In Acts 11, the Jews refused to honor God's plan for Gentiles. But when Peter focused on what God was saying (instead of what society believed) God's plan to go make disciples of all nations (people groups) became a reality. The power of the Holy Spirit overcame every obstacle so they could love one another.

REFLECT

How have you already been blessed by believers from other cultures?

Who (from another culture) is God giving you the opportunity to show His love to and learn from?

Ask Jesus to fill you with His Spirit and joy for people from other cultures.

DAY 4

Our Priorities:

We grow disciples through our: Ministry teams

Peter never understood the complete beauty and power of the Gospel until he served Cornelius and his household. In the world, we often get burned out by serving. In the Kingdom of God, serving always leads to abundance in life and intimacy with Jesus. Jesus said that when we serve the least of these we are serving Him.

REFLECT

How has being obedient to serve blessed your life and grown your relationship with Jesus? How are you called to serve Jesus in this season?

Ask King Jesus to help you know Him more in the ways you serve and renew your joy in serving.	
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DAY 5

Our Priorities:

We grow disciples through our: Next Generation Ministries

In Acts 11:15-18, Peter and the believers that were with him discovered that there was an entire community of people that were just waiting to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Peter had no idea the harvest that was right in front of him! Today, there is a harvest all around you and our church who is waiting to truly hear and see the Gospel of Jesus lived out.

REFLECT

When did you come to Christ? Who helped you come to Christ? How can you join in God's faith, hope and love for the next generation?

Pray for those you know in your family or life that are from the next generation.		

16 17



In John 17:11 Jesus prayed that all of His disciples would be one. As a church, understanding our mission, priorities and standards helps us to have unity within our great diversity.

Knowing these gives us the ability to be ALL IN for His glory 365 days a year!

3 || OUR MISSION

WE grow disciples who:

- 1. Live in His presence
- 2. Love one another
- 3. Lead others to Jesus

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus has given us one mission: go and make disciples. True disciples make disciples. Our church is a place where we strengthen you and provide space to do that. Our mission statement identifies three of the greatest characteristics of a true and growing disciple.

In Mark 12:30, Jesus said the greatest commandment was to love God with everything you have and everything you are. We know this is only possible through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our mission is to help disciples grow in living in the Spirit (Live in His Presence) every day.

In John 13:34, Jesus gives one new command, to love one another the way He loves us. Cornerstone's mission is to provide the teaching, opportunities and encouragement for each disciple to receive the love of God and grow in living it out. (Love One Another)

In Luke 19:10, Jesus said that He came to seek and save what was lost. True disciples of Jesus want to do the same thing. True disciples make other disciples and fulfill the heart of God to have the lost found and come back to His family. (Lead Others to Jesus)

We sum all of this up with a simple saying: "Live. Love. Lead."

6 || OUR PRIORITIES

Acts 2:42-47 describes the pattern and priorities of the first church that Jesus created through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We commit to these same priorities through specific programs that give you the chance to be discipled and disciple others.

WE grow disciples through our:

1. Discipleship Pathway	(v42) "devoted to the apostles teaching"
2. Small Groups	(v42) "devoted themselves to the fellowship"
3. Spirit-led Services & Prayer	(v43) "many signs and wonders were done"
4. Bilingual Ministry	(v44) "All had everything in common"
5. Ministry Teams	(v45) "They gave to anyone as they had need"
6. Next Gen Programs	(v47) "The Lord added those who were saved"

You can find out more about each of these priorities on our website and in our Week 2 & Week 3 ALL IN study.

5 || OUR STANDARDS

Acts 6:3-5 gives us a description of those who were first called to serve the church. We believe that all those who serve should grow into this as a standard. We want every member to become a disciple that has these qualities and commitments in their relationships and in their ministry. These standards grow great disciples who make a very fruitful church! Notice the New Testament church pattern for those who serve & lead.

WE grow disciples with:

(v3) "known to be full of the Holy Spirit"
(v3) "we will turn this responsibility over to them"
(v3) "choose seven men from among you"
(v3) "full of wisdom"
(v5) "they chosePhilip, Procorus, Nicanor"

You can find out more about each of these standards through our Week 4 & Week 5 ALL IN study and in both our Keep Growing and ministry team trainings.

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