



# CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF HONOR

*In the Three Rivers Region*

## WEEK 4: CULTIVATING HONOR WITHIN THE CHURCH – PART 2

### CREATING AN HONOR-RICH ENVIRONMENT FOR BELIEVERS TO GROW

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*To Cultivate...* is to nurture and help grow. When you cultivate something, you work to make it better. Originally, the word referred only to crops that required tilling, but the meaning has widened. Sometimes friendships come naturally and sometimes you have to cultivate them. **To cultivate anything requires an attention to detail, an understanding of what is being cultivated, and a lot of patience.**

#### – WHAT WE NEED FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD OF US...

If God wants to give us gifts for the journey ahead, who are we to pick and choose what gifts we want and which ones we think we can do without? If He desires to give them, all of them must be important to the way we function together (Eph 4:11-13; 1 Cor 12:27-31).

- **Apostles...***Where we are going?* Their focus is mostly the coming Kingdom, especially preparing NOW for **Heaven** to come to earth.
- **Prophets...***How we get there?* Their focus is mostly about the things of the **Spirit**.
- **Pastors...***Holding things together along the way.* Their focus is mostly on **Believers**.
- **Evangelists...***Making sure we don't leave anyone behind.* Their focus is mostly on those who are **not Christians**.
- **Teachers...***Give us the tools to get there.* Their focus is mostly on the **Truth**, especially as it is revealed in the **Bible**.
- **HONOR...**Is what keeps all these engifted people with very different agendas **moving in the same direction together!**

The “glue” that holds us together is...

the **faith** we have in Jesus,  
the **honor** we have for each other,  
and the **grace** we receive by the Holy Spirit.

- <sup>9</sup> Don't just pretend to love others. **Really love them.** Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Love each other with genuine affection, and **take delight in honoring each other.** (Rom 12:9–10 NLT-SE)
- <sup>18</sup> Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud, <sup>19</sup> and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For **he holds the whole body together** with its joints and ligaments, and **it grows as God nourishes it.** (Col 2:18–19 NLT-SE)

- Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be **honored because of the way you live**, and **you will be honored along with him**. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ. (2 Th 1:12 NLT-SE)

## - HOW DO WE CULTIVATE HONOR IN THE CHURCH?

- **Remember...To cultivate is to nurture and help grow.** When you cultivate something, you work to make it better. To cultivate anything requires attention to detail, an understanding of what is being cultivated, and a lot of patience.
- **Learn...by paying attention to how HONOR is demonstrated in the Word, then apply that knowledge to our relationships.**
  - **HONOR** is **central to the relationships of the Trinity. The relationships of Heaven are held together with HONOR.** Another word we can use for this heavenly connectedness is **interdependence**. We can see the interdependence that marks the Trinity in many places in Scripture. Here's a great example...
    - After his baptism, as **Jesus** came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven [The Father] said, "**This is my dearly loved Son**, who brings me great joy." (Matt 3:16–17 NLT-SE)
  - **HONOR** was **given to man at Creation.** The two greatest statements God made towards man were that He **created us in His own image** and **gave us free will in our choices**. What honor! He wants us to be like Him and voluntarily love Him with all our hearts. How could we say "no" to a heart like that?
    - Then God said, "Let us make human beings **in our image, to be like us**. (Gen 1:26 NLT-SE)
    - <sup>4</sup> What are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? <sup>5</sup> Yet you made them only a little lower than God and **crowned them with glory and honor**. (Psa 8:4–5 NLT-SE)
  - **HONOR** was **exemplified by Christ.** He HONORS us when we choose to align our hearts and actions with His will.
    - Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will **honor anyone who serves me**. (John 12:26 NLT-SE)
  - **HONOR** is **mandated to disciples of Christ.** When we choose to HONOR each other, to give a high value to each other, we are choosing to HONOR the God who created that person...just the way they are.
    - Love each other with genuine affection, and **take delight in honoring each other**. (Rom 12:10 NLT-SE)
    - Dear brothers and sisters, **honor those who are your leaders** in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance. (1 Th 5:12 NLT-SE)
- **Establish...HONOR as a priority and protect HONOR as a necessity.**
  - If HONOR is important to us, we will **build it into our church culture**, creating the expectation that there's something to HONOR in every person.
  - We **protect** HONOR by giving people the **freedom** to be the person God created them to be and to continuing to encourage them to **grow** spiritually, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
  - If our pursuit is truly authentic, we should begin to see **our hearts become increasingly sensitive** to DISHONOR when it pops its head up.
    - Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. (Eph 5:4 NLT-SE)
    - <sup>18</sup> Just as damaging as a madman shooting a deadly weapon <sup>19</sup> is someone who lies to a friend and then says, "I was only joking." (Prov 26:18–19 NLT-SE)
  - **WARNING:** If you choose to go down this path of HONOR, you are entering a **major battleground** of the heart and mind, where the enemy is used to having control, doesn't like giving up precious real estate, and won't usually go quietly!

- **Restore...HONOR when it slips away.**

- HONOR is not just something we **celebrate**. It is **essential** for healthy **discussions** and **disagreements**. Even when the situation necessitates **confrontation** or **discipline**, HONOR will create a meaningful and useful context for our actions.
- We feel most dishonored when we are under the influence of someone's **control or manipulation**. HONOR is often restored when freedom is restored. This doesn't have to take a long time, but it does require a great deal of **intentionality** and **courage**. We're talking about HONORING people, finding the "gold" in them, not making a hero out of them.
- "God is calling the Church to a level of radical love and honor so strong that we won't mind the dirt in someone's life as long as they became God's treasure in the end. **When we honor another person, we are honoring a life assignment that came from eternity and was short-circuited in this realm.**" ~ **Garris Elkins**, *The Leadership Rock: A Journey of a Life in Leadership*

**Anyone can find the dirt in someone.  
Be the one who finds the gold.**

Proverbs 11:27

- 'HOW DO YOU HONOR SOMEONE WHO HAS FAILED YOU? Speak the truth in love. **Create a pathway of grace with your words so people can return from failure.** Never compromise truth, and never use truth to beat someone into submission to your way of thinking. Truth spoken in love will set people free to become more. This freedom is part of what it means to honor someone. And the ones who give honor are set free from the need to punish the one who has wronged them." ~ **Garris Elkins**, *The Leadership Rock: A Journey of a Life in Leadership*
- As we've talked about, the battle over HONOR is real. One of our greatest struggles when it comes to honoring people is **perceptions**. Honoring someone does not mean we **condone** the way they choose to live their life, but **highly valuing** who they are, **who God created them to be**, and the person they will learn to be under the amazing grace of God's leadership!

## – RESOURCES:

