

A culture of honour

1. Living in honour	
Teaching:	To live in honour means to live in the light our new identity in Christ as sons and daughters. Honour is the result of our salvation: we have been embraced by our heavenly Father (Luke 15:22-24). We have been seated with Christ (Col 3:1, Eph 2:6), and share in his glory (Col 3:4). We are no longer sinners but saints. To live as a community of honour means to “regard no one according to the flesh” because “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Co 5:16-17). This requires us to lay hold of what God says about us (and about other people) rather than what our performance, experience or history says about us.
Beliefs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a new creation (2 Co 5:17) • I am defined by my destiny in Christ, not my history (Heb 3:1) • I cannot afford to have a thought in my head that does not come from God (2 Co 10:5) • Humility is not talking down about myself, but celebrating his amazing grace (James 4:6)
Testimony:	Has anyone here broken free from speaking negatively about themselves? How did that go?
Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I celebrate the amazing work of God in my life achieved through the cross • I refuse to entertain negative thoughts about myself • When I am dishonoured by others, I do not allow their actions to determine my responses, but rather draw on the honour that flows from heaven • I receive honour that is offered to me by others openly and graciously
Activation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HONOUR: Find a volunteer who has struggled to live in honour, and the rest of the group shower them with declarations of their identity in Christ, and how God sees them. Then repeat for someone else. • SHARE: What are the greatest challenges to living in honour? How can we help one another at these points? • BELIEVE: Add the 4 beliefs above to your daily declarations.
How are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WELL: I have watched someone rise up despite their own failure • BADLY: I have often heard people speaking ill of themselves

2. Giving honour to others

Teaching:	<p>We build a community of honour by consistent recognition of the God-given identities and anointings of those around us. This may be in specific words (2 Tim 1:6), in monetary gifts (1 Tim 5:17) or other ways, but is always an expression of a heart posture (1 Thess 5:13). We honour all (1 Peter 2:17), especially the less prominent members of the community (1 Co 12:23-24). We honour unbelievers too, because God desires salvation for them as well (1 Tim 2:4). We are to be competitive about this! (Rom 12:10)</p> <p>Honour builds up the body (Eph 4:15-16), releases the supernatural (Matt 8:5-13) and brings us into the good of the anointing carried by the one we honour (Matt 10:41).</p>
Beliefs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am surrounded by awesome people (Matt 11:11) • I unlock heaven by giving honour to people (Matt 10:41) • There is no shortage of honour in heaven (Lk 6:38) • I have never met a mere mortal (CS Lewis)
Testimony:	<p>Does anyone have a testimony of having honoured someone who was really down-trodden? How did they respond?</p>
Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I seek to release honour over every person I meet • I look for the anointing and direct honour there • I give in order to honour, not merely to meet needs
Activation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HONOUR: Have an honour competition: see who can speak the most words of honour over the rest of the group! • SHARE: What is your experience when people honour you? • BELIEVE: Add the four beliefs above to your daily declarations.
How are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WELL: I have been buoyed up by people's affirmation on several occasions • BADLY: Someone tried to honour me, but it felt like pretty empty words

3. Honour when people behave badly

Teaching:	People do not always behave in accordance with the honour given them in their salvation. We need to know (i) their sin does not contaminate us: therefore we do not need to denounce them or even renounce our connection with them (Matt 9:10-13) (ii) Jesus has already borne their punishment, therefore we do not need to punish (Is 53:4-6). Instead we continue the honour process by reminding them of their identity and calling (Eph 4:1, Gal 6:1). Their restoration lies in two things: (i) repentance (which means turning back from something they are trusting in more than Jesus – 1 Thess 1:9) and (ii) cleaning up their own mess (dealing with the fallout in other people's lives – Ro 13:8). They may need to help of someone with a pastoral gift to process this.
Beliefs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God is not afraid of my sin (Ro 5:8, Lk 17:4, 1 John 1:9)• Victory over sin lies in embracing my identity (Ro 13:14)• I am my brother's keeper (Gal 6:1)
Testimony:	Has anyone here a story of being restored from a broken place by other believers? Was it done with honour?
Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I honour people even in their brokenness• I refuse to hear gossip about the sins of others• I pursue connection with my friends even when they fall in sin
Activation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PRAY: For one another to strengthen our sense of identity at our points of vulnerability.• HONOUR: Continue to speak honouring words over one another• BELIEVE: Add the three beliefs above to your daily declarations
How are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WELL: I went through a tough time and people continued to honour me• BADLY: I have heard gossip which was frankly dishonouring

4. Living in honour with powerful people

Teaching:	Honour means respecting the choices made by people even when we disagree with them. Sometimes people close to us make decisions that, while not sinful, are just not what we wanted, or perhaps thought wise. These decisions can cause us anxiety, which we manage by trying to get the decision reversed by fair means or foul! An open conversation about the decision may be in order (“have you considered...?”), but manipulation or bullying is not. Instead we need to (1) communicate the value we put on the relationship (2) assure them we respect their choice, even though we disagree (3) be honest about our own fears, without getting into emotional manipulation.
Beliefs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Love only operates in an environment of freedom (John 8:36)• Peace comes from heaven, not from having control (Phil 4:6-7)
Testimony:	Has anyone experienced anxiety or fear as a result of a decision taken by someone close to you? Did you handle it well?
Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I respect the decisions made by other people• I resist the opportunity to bully or manipulate• I do not give away my freedom to others who try to bully or manipulate me
Activation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PRAY: For people who are struggling with decisions others have taken.• HONOUR: Continue to speak words of honour over one another• BELIEVE: Add the two beliefs above to your daily declarations
How are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WELL: I have made a major decision and felt supported by people but not controlled• BADLY: I have experienced hostility from someone who didn’t agree with a decision I made