

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**March 24, 2024 Palm Sunday. "Honoring One Another"**

### **I Intro.**

Welcome to our companion devotional to Sunday's message. It's just a part of all we have to offer to you. We don't want you to miss out on anything. So, make sure you stay connected to keep informed. We hope you are fed and ministered to by NCC, and that you can be an essential part of us moving forward. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know. This is our weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from Sunday's message. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. You can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey.

### **II Recap.**

We're in the fourth Sunday of our series on relationships; "*Above and Beyond: elements of Healthy Relationships*". We're covering all the close relationships in our lives. Friendships, co-workers, family, neighbors, and any other relationships you may find yourself in. Relationships can be messy, because people are messy. Including us. But we believe we were created for connection. To be in relationship. With both God and each other. And since these relationships can challenge us, we want to be curious, students, and admit that no matter how long we've walked this earth there is always more we can learn about how to make our relationships even better. First Sunday we talked about helping walk a friend through the process of recovering from making some poor choices. The second week we talked about forgiving in relationships. Last week we talked about conflict resolution. Today is Palm Sunday and we talk about what it looks like to honor one another.

### **III Sunday.**

Since we're talking about honoring another person, we need to talk about what honor is in general. Then what that would look like when you honor another person. Let's hit the ground running.

**In general, what does honor mean to you?**

**Considering your understanding of honor, what does it look like and mean to honor another?**

Let's talk about honor a bit before we get to our scripture, and the truths we can pull from the passage. To honor is to recognize the dignity and personhood of someone else. No matter how different the person is from you, or how difficult they may be to deal with. Honoring them is treating them in the way you would want to be treated. The scripture we read is **John 12:1-11**. Before you read this passage know that a similar account appears in all four gospel narratives. But interestingly enough, all have significant differences in details of each account. We'll address that later. So read **John 12:1-11**, and then we'll break it down.

**What jumped out to you about this passage?**

**What specific elements did you discover that can speak into the practice of honoring another?**

**How to show honor in a relationship.** Specific things we can pull from this passage.

**1. Joining the other person in their space.** This woman (whoever she was) went to Jesus where he was. This is one of the greatest acts of honor and respect you can give. We like being in our spaces where we're comfortable and it's familiar. But Jesus constantly went out to the places where those who needed him were. And I can't help but think that the description; "*The house was filled with the fragrance*", is also how you can describe Jesus being in places you didn't think Jesus would be. This should be the goal of honoring others in the relationships we are in. Meet people in their world. Push through the discomfort of moving into unfamiliar new places, and meet the other where they are.

**2. A sacrificial genuine act.** Most of you may not have an expensive bottle of perfume to anoint someone with. This bottle of perfume was something Mary had poured (pun intended) her savings into. I've heard stories of people giving cars, paying for college, paying for trips, or more for another person. You may not have something tangible to give to someone else. You may not be able to honor another with anything big and flashy. But we all have valuable things we can sacrifice for the benefit of another. Your time, energy, some skill you have. We have volunteers who come and give their time at NCC, and places in the community. When you do those things. You are showing honor.

**3. Practicing 'honoring' may test and stretch other relationships.** Sometimes the act of honoring will challenge and stretch other relationships. Have you ever had two really good friends, but those friends didn't really like each other? That's a tough place to be isn't it? But I know people who can navigate that space well. You want to know how they can do this well. Because others know that they are consistent and sincere in honoring others. They rarely say anything bad about anyone. No matter who comes up in conversation, no matter how 'difficult' that person can be. They just know how to stay silent or find something positive to say about that person. Our calling, and we see it in the life of Jesus, is to live a life of giving honor to others all the time. That doesn't mean we ignore or overlook some people's questionable behavior. It simply means if we have things to say about others, we don't do it in public. Grow the ability to be consistent and sincere in honoring everyone even if it challenges some of your other relationships.

**4. We are to honor everyone.** The most amazing thing about the accounts of this story is how each gospel writer placed this event at a different location. Which highlights the first point. "*Join the 'other' in their space*". Matthew and Mark say Jesus was anointed in the home of Simon the leper. Luke says Jesus was anointed in the home of a Pharisee. And John says it was in Bethany at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. His best friends. Whether you believe there were several anointings of Jesus at different places and times. Or one anointing of Jesus, but each gospel writer adapted it to make a particular point, the truth remains the same. Jesus entered the home of an outcast, a religious elitist, and his best friends. In their own homes, to honor them, and then we have the stories of him being honored in return. We are to be people who are good at showing honor to everyone.

#### **IV Challenge.**

This is the beauty of living a life of honoring others. When you incorporate into your regular life, in your relationships, the act of honoring others...of ALL types of people, then you will grow the reputation of being a person of honor yourself. And that is what we all want our lives to be anyway.

**So, in what way this week could you show honor to the people around you?**