

## I. Moving Forward Together in the Kingdom of God

### A. Moving Forward

1. Paul's life strategy
  - a. Corinthians: To know nothing among you but
  - b. Galatians: Christ crucified
  - c. Romans:
  - d. Philippians
    - (1) **Philippians 3:12-14 (ESV)** *Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*
    - (2) I press onward
2. In the kingdom of God, there are only two directions
  - a. We press onward
  - b. We fall away.
    - (1) **Hebrews 3:12 (ESV)** *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.*
    - (2) **2 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV)** *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,*
      - (a) *Rebellion* = apostasy, falling away, abandoning God's truth
      - (b) The warning of God is against falling away from the truth of God
  - c. There is no standing still
    - (1) There may be seasons of rest and quietness
    - (2) But even those seasons of submission, as we are refreshed and renewed in the Lord, lead us onward in faith, in humility, in grace, and in wisdom.

### B. Like Paul, Cornerstone is committed to moving forward.

1. Set out our strategy for progress: Four Cornerstones for Cornerstone
  - a. Establish our theological identity
  - b. Engage our educational responsibility
    - (1) Discipling the Next Generation
    - (2) *Zealous: Seven Commitments for Discipling the Next Generation*

- c. Enact our relational opportunities
- d. Empower our mission priorities

## II. Cornerstones for Cornerstone: #3 Enact Our Relational Opportunities

### A. A simple admonition with a long history

1. Hebrews 13:2 (ESV) *Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*
2. Genesis 18:1-8 (ESV) *And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, "O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.*
  - a. God has called Abram into covenant with Himself
  - b. God promises to make Abram a great nation through whom all the nations on earth will be blessed
  - c. God promises old and childless Abram a son
  - d. **Abraham's response to God is an act of hospitality.**
    - (1) He enacted a relational opportunity.
    - (2) Sets a pattern for hospitality

### B. Pattern for God-honoring hospitality

1. (2b) An eager greeting - he ran to meet them when he saw them
2. (3a) A gracious welcome
3. (4b) An open invitation to rest
4. (4a) An opportunity to wash (freshen up)
5. (5) A provision of food and drink
6. (8b) An invitation to converse
7. (8b) A provision of security

### C. "Hospitality" - *philoxenia* "love" and "foreigner"

1. New Testament frequently makes hospitality a component of Christ-like faithfulness
  - a. **Romans 12:13 (ESV) *Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.***
  - b. **Hebrews 13:2 (ESV) *Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.***
  - c. **1 Peter 4:9 (ESV) *Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.***

2. New Testament Pattern
  - a. The Good Samaritan
  - b. Ministry Model of Jesus (Sheep and Goats)
    - (1) **Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)** *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’*
      - (a) THE definition of hospitality: ministry to Christ by ministering to others with the character of Christ
      - (b) **Hospitality is the extension of the grace, mercy, support, compassion, provision, and favor God extends to all of us in Jesus Christ.**
      - (c) Hospitality is God offering Himself, His resources, His blessing to sinners through sinners for His glory and their joy.
        - i) Hospitality is not a burden God imposes or a chore God demands.
        - ii) Hospitality is a gift God readily extends to us, and through us, to others.
        - iii) **Hospitality is an active expression of God Himself and His heartfelt desire to share Himself with you, and through you, with others.**
  - c. Open Door Policy for Christ
    - (1) **Revelation 3:20 (ESV)** *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*
    - (2) If anyone is hospitable to me, I will accept their hospitality and enter into intimate fellowship with them.
      - (a) Jesus seeks the welcome of our hearts, that favor of our thoughts, the embrace of our spirit, and the decision of our will.
      - (b) Jesus entreats us to hospitality, first to Him, then, on account of Him, to others.
      - (c) Jesus comes not as the outside invader but the treasured, desired, expected, welcomed guest.

- (d) **All other genuine, biblical, kingdom-stamped. Christlike hospitality flows from the hospitality God offers you and the hospitality you in turn express to Christ with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.**
  - i) Why then is there so little authentic hospitality among God's people at Cornerstone?
  - ii) What can we do about it?
  - iii) What must we do about it?

### III. A Last Word for Today

**A. Next week: How does hospitality fit into the four commitments we are making to God and to one another as we move forward together?**

**B. Leave you with this thought to ponder this week:**

1. **Leviticus 19:33-34 (ESV) *“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.***
2. God's covenant word on the subject of hospitality: Hospitality on our part, the way we welcome and bless one another and the people around us, reminds us and proclaims to others what God has done for us, both in what we once were (sojourners in Egypt) and what we are now (saints in exile.)
3. In light of God's covenant revelation this is the instruction we must learn to love and enact:
  - a. **1 Peter 4:7-11 (ESV) *The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.***
  - b. Our life of hospitality brings glory to God through Jesus Christ. If that hospitality is missing, where is the glory?