

The State of American Christianity: Does It Dishonor Jesus?

1 Corinthians 13:5

Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To better honor Christ and his church

Sermon Reminder: Keith continued our sermon series on 1 Corinthians 13. This week he talked about “Love does not dishonor.” He mentions how this doesn’t primarily mean “don’t be rude,” but is better understood in the honor/shame cultural context which Paul was writing. This is what we’ll explore in our discussion.

Icebreaker: What are your Spring Break plans?

Discussion:

1. Individualistic cultures and honor/shame cultures approach shame and dishonor differently.
 - In individualistic cultures, shame is when we embarrass ourselves.
 - In honor/shame cultures, shame is when we embarrass the community.

How might this change how someone experiences shame in an honor/shame culture?

Read:

[1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-12](#)

⁴ As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— ⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage

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war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

2. How is the Christian life both individual and communal according to Peter?

Read:

[1 Corinthians 13:5b](#)

⁵ (Love) does not dishonor others...

3. How does this help us to understand what Paul means when he says "Love does not dishonor"?

4. What are some ways you've been embarrassed by public Christian leaders and their failures?

5. Keith listed out ways that we personally might embarrass other Christians.

- Putting too much emphasis on political saviors
- Harboring racist thoughts or looking down on people different from them
- Being unsympathetic to people in need
- Having moral failures...whether public or private

How should the dishonor we have brought to Christ change the emphasis of what we feel towards others' failures?

6. Look back up at the 1 Peter 2 passage. How has God dealt with our shame problem?

7. What are some practical ways we can bring honor to Christ and his kingdom personally and help others do the same?

Sharing and Prayer:

- In a time of silence...confess ways that you have brought dishonor to God.
- Close the time of silence with a prayer of thanks that Jesus took away our shame and a prayer that Jesus would empower us to live lives that bring honor to Him.