

Dignity
The Separation of Church and Hate – Part 3
October 11-12, 2020
Dr. Jeffrey Allen Love

“Then a voice said to him, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat them.’ ‘No, Lord,’ Peter declared. ‘I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean.’ But the voice spoke again: ‘Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean.’”

Acts 10:13-15 (p.839)

“As Peter entered his home, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter pulled him up and said, ‘Stand up! I’m a human being just like you!’ So they talked together and went inside, where many others were assembled. Peter told them, ‘You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean...Then Peter replied, ‘I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism.’”

Acts 10:25-28, 34 (p.839)

- **Love Unconditionally, Even When You Disagree.**

“A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Matthew 22:39 (p.753)

- 1. Identify my prejudices.**

“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28 (p.892)

“I do not let women teach men or have authority over them. Let them listen quietly.”

1 Timothy 2:12 (p.911)

- 2. Intentionally build bridges.**

“Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.”

Romans 12:18 (p.866)

Next Step: _____ This week I will look out for and act in the best interest of those I disagree with, just as I do myself.



ONE VOICE

Discussion/Groups Guide from the Weekend Talk

From the Weekend Talk of October 10-11, 2020
The Separation of Church and Hate - Part 3: Dignity

Life Groups use these questions to go deeper into what we talked about this weekend. Dig into them so you will be ready for the discussion at your Life Group. If you are not in a Group, find out more at alivechurch.com/groups.

You can also use this guide to discuss the Talk with your family or friends.

Conversation Starters

- Who were the kids at the “cool kids table” when you were in school?
- So far, how has this series affected you? Have you adjusted any habits? Do you watch the news differently? Do you post differently?
- How have your responses changed over the years to people who are different from you or who disagree with you?

Quick Review

- Looking back at your Talk Notes, was there anything you heard in the service that stood out or maybe even confused you?

Discussion Starters from the Weekend Talk

Refer to the Talk Notes and related Bible verses from this Weekend’s Talk Notes.

This week Pastor Jeff Love encouraged us to remember One Thing from this Talk:

“Love Unconditionally, Even When You Disagree.”

- **Read Acts 10:1-34 (p.839) and Matthew 22:33-40 (p.753*)**
- Let’s start with Jesus’ words in Matthew 22.
 - Who is He speaking with? What question is He answering? Why was He asked this question?
 - What does Jesus’ response (vs 37-39) say about our topic of dignity? Does he qualify His answer?
- Now let’s talk about Acts 10:1-34.
 - Jeff leaned into verses 13-15. Why did Peter respond the way he did?
 - What might be a modern-day equivalent of Peter’s reaction? Have you ever reacted that way to something or someone?
 - How did the Holy Spirit respond to Peter’s hesitation?
 - Do you think Peter remembered how Jesus responded to the Pharisees in Matthew 22?
 - Jeff also highlighted verses 25-34.
 - Peter wondered about this vision he had. Then he finds out why he had it as he is summoned—and agrees to go—to the home of a Roman (a ROMAN) officer! Why is this significant? (see vs 27-28).
 - What stands out about Cornelius’ role in this account? Do you think he also had prejudices?
 - The kicker comes in verses 34-35. Talk about the differences in Peter from 10:14 and 10:34-35.
 - Now, do you think Peter connected the dots from Matthew 22 to this encounter with a Roman officer?

Jeff challenged us to regularly employ two practices to help us Love Unconditionally, Even When We Disagree.

1. **Identify my prejudices.** (Galatians 3:26-28 (p.892*); 1 Timothy 2:12 (p.911*))

- What prejudices have you personally experienced or witnessed?
- What is the fact stated in verse 26 that makes the distinctions of people insignificant?
- What does it mean to be “one in Christ?”
- The passage in 1 Timothy is one that often brings up strong discussions. Many barriers were being broken down because of Jesus, as we have already seen in our study. Jeff spoke of the biblical cultural context of women historically having no rights or status at all, but now they are seen as having equal value. Jeff also talked about a logical probability that Paul was speaking in terms of women in the Ephesian church, and not necessarily a mandate to ban them for all time, since several other women in positions of leadership are also mentioned in the New Testament (see Priscilla in Acts 18:24-26; Phoebe, Mary, Tryphena, and Tryphosa in Romans 16, to name a few.) The point today is not to get fixated on “women in the church” but to realize that Jesus blew apart many cultural norms. Many very smart people have had centuries of disagreements on this, but we have chosen at Alive Church that this is not a point we will fight over.
 - Please, if you did not attend the service this weekend, go watch on-demand to hear how Jeff explained this point.
 - And what a great opportunity, if you do happen to have differing opinions on this, to put into practice our One Thing, that we will “Love Unconditionally, Even When We Disagree.”

2. **Intentionally build bridges.** (Romans 12:14-18 (p.866*))

- Romans 12:18 is our key verse for the series. Verse 14 begins the progression of Paul’s point, as he emphatically states we are to BLESS (used twice) those who persecute us and not to curse them. “Bless (X2)” and “curse” are the imperative verbs used in the original Greek construction of the verse 14.
 - What else does Paul say about how we are to treat others?
- What are some “bridges” that you think may need to be built?
- What are some practical ways we can “do all that we can” to build bridges?

Digging Deeper

In the American southwest when we see a building that is over 100 years old, we think “that’s pretty old!” In the northeast when they see a building that is over 200 years old, they might say, “that’s pretty old!” In Europe you have to go back 500 or 1000 years to call something “old.” You see the point? It’s a matter of perspective. The Jews had lived with God’s Covenant with Abraham and later the Law of Moses for over 2000 years. Jesus came along and changed everything.

- Read Romans 8:1-4 (p.862*) and Romans 10:9-13 (p.864*).
- How do these passages speak to the “game-changer” that Jesus is?
- What from these passages could speak hope into our divided culture?
- What can we learn about God’s love and care for us from these two passages?

Next Step

My Next Step: *This week I will look out for and act in the best interest of those I disagree with, just as I do myself.*

What's Ahead

- *Our next Talk Series is "Hold Nothing Back." It's designed to encourage us with the "why" and the "how" of the amazing gift God has given us called prayer!*

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* The Life Transformation Bible is the New Living Translation of the Bible, including many useful tools to help you better understand God's Word, including our own Alive Church Life Transformation Discipleship Plan. They are available FREE. Let us know if you'd like to have one.