

FREEDOM

Small Group Leader Guide

WEEK ELEVEN



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VESSELS OF HONOR

“In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.”

2 TIMOTHY 2:20-21 NLT

WEEK ELEVEN LEADER GUIDE

Overview

Every person is at a different place in his or her walk with Christ. No two stories are the same, and no one starts out as silver or gold; it is a process. If you're unsatisfied with where you are in the process, God is eager to take you to the next level. He is the One who prepares us, refines us, and makes us honorable. You are not defined or limited by your past. He says in His Word that He makes all things brand new (2 Corinthians 5:17), and He wants to help you become a vessel of honor.

Remember, justification is an event that takes place when we are saved. When Jesus becomes our Savior, at that very moment, every sin of our past is wiped clean. Sanctification, however, is not an event— it's a process. It's a journey through which God molds and transforms our character.

It may surprise you to discover that the highest level of our journey as Christians is servanthood. Our greatest goal as Christians is to fulfill the purpose for which God created us, and that requires us to become His servants. There are three steps we can take to become vessels of honor: offer our bodies, renew our minds, and surrender our wills. When we are intentional to give God our bodies each day, we are able to make conscious decisions to avoid sin. Sin functions in the body, but the mind controls the body. Sin begins in the mind, which is why it is so important to renew our minds to the Word of God. The enemy's goal is to plant thoughts in your mind that are contrary to God's thoughts.

Warfare is exchanging the report of the world for the report of the Lord. Peace can reign and rule in our hearts when we align our thoughts with the truth of God's Word. We know that the body carries out sin, and the mind controls the body, but the will controls the mind. As we surrender our will to God, His perfect will becomes the motivation of our lives.

Being useful to the Kingdom is the greatest honor of our lives, but it comes at a price. When we begin to walk in our purpose, we will get the attention of the enemy. We should anticipate his attacks and take them as a sign of encouragement. We are a threat to his plan to keep the world in darkness. When attacks come, remember, you belong to God and the enemy cannot change that. We need to remember the truth that "He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4) so we can stand against temptation. To do so, we must keep the dialogue going with God. Open communication keeps us safe and aware. If we find ourselves in bondage, we need to repent of our sin and cast off the powers of darkness in our lives. When we repent, our sins are covered by the blood of Jesus, but there are times we might still feel like we are not forgiven. When this happens, we need to tell the enemy to leave by casting him off in the name of Jesus. This destroys the demonic hold in that area and releases us to experience the complete peace of God's forgiveness.

Though becoming a vessel of honor may seem like an overwhelming process, intentional time with God every day will help you become useful for the Kingdom, allowing you to shine a powerful light that drives away darkness.

Discussion Guide

- Are you satisfied with where you are with God? How do you want your life to be different?
- Review justification and sanctification. Make sure your participants understand that justification is an event and sanctification is the process that allows us to become vessels of honor.
- If your group members feel comfortable sharing, ask: what areas of your life might need to be confronted and cleaned up by the Holy Spirit?
- What are some of the lies the enemy tells you about your ability to be used by God?
- What are some practical ways you can renew your mind to the Word of God so you can silence the voice of the enemy?
- What are some of the areas in your life in which Satan tends to have a foothold (areas might include rejection, abuse, self-hatred/unworthiness, depression, pride, unforgiveness, greed, guilt/shame, lust/sexual impurity, control, anger, fear)? Remind your participants to use the prayer outline provided to repent and cast off the enemy's hold in these areas so that they can walk in freedom.

Application

Here is an idea to help illustrate the idea of vessels of honor: Use the visual aids of a paper plate and a china plate, talking about the difference between the two. Ask your participants: In what kind of environments is each plate used? What kinds of food do each hold? What kind of plate do you want to be? We can all be fine china. The choice is ours!

Prayer Focus

Pray that your participants' eyes are opened to any footholds of the enemy and that they will be bold in standing up to the enemy regarding these areas.