



## LIVING IN A COMMUNITY OF HONOR

### WEEKLY ACTION STEP

Each day this week, find someone to honor with your words or actions. Whether it's sending a written letter, email or text, honor someone with your words each day. Perform a small, thoughtful action that honors someone in your life each day.

### TAKEAWAYS

- It's in our nature to long to be accepted, worthy, and honored.
- Your Heavenly Father defines your value, not your critics, failures or feelings.
- Don't let any "older brother" steal your joy or condemn you in shame.
- Let's be a community opposite of the "older brother" and more like Jesus.
- Honor others with your words and actions.

### SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-28, 3; Luke 15:21-3; Romans 12:10; Ephesians 4:29-5:2; Revelation 21:27

### QUESTIONS

1. Pastor John reminds us that we'll often struggle with shame related to rejection by others, like the older brother in the story of the Lost Son. Discuss a time when others treated you poorly or didn't accept you, but you still felt loved and honored by God.
2. When you struggle with shame and honor, are you more likely to act like the father (and be accepting of others) or act like the older brother (where you are less likely to accept others)? What steps can you take to be more like our Heavenly Father who accepts and loves us unconditionally?
3. Identify one specific way you have been acting like an older brother to someone in terms of not accepting and loving them as Jesus would. What is one specific action you can take to reach out to that person and be more accepting?
4. Pastor John notes that we tend to go up and down the spiral of shame and honor. When you notice that you're starting to spiral downward toward shame, what steps can you take to stop and move back toward honor?
5. What attitude and actions did the older brother demonstrate regarding the return of his younger brother? How did his response affect the younger brother's homecoming? What could he have done that would have brought honor to his younger brother and to his father? What steps can you take to prevent this from happening in your own life and in your church (see Ephesians 4:29-32)?
6. In certain situations, we may not feel accepted, worthy or honored. However, scripture is filled with examples of shame and repeatedly shows us that we are accepted, worthy and honored by God (examples: Luke 15, John 6:56-58, Hebrews 4:14-16, Proverbs 3:5-6). Do your own scripture investigation, make a list and share with the group.