

# HIGHLANDS SMALL GROUPS

## THE ROYAL LIFE

### Big Idea

This week, Pastor Larry Stockstill encouraged us that in the midst of all the pain and brokenness that our world is experiencing right now, as the body of Christ, we can bring change to the atmosphere around us. We can shift the narrative from one of pain and hatred to one of honor, unity, and blessing.

An atmosphere of honor starts with looking past a physical person and seeing the image of God within them. 1 Peter 2:17 describes how we can live this out: “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.” Once we begin to honor others, we can create an atmosphere of unity. 1 Peter 3:8 outlines five ways to create unity in the body of Christ. First, we must become united in our minds, willing to admit that we don’t have all the answers and asking others to share their thoughts and experiences with us. This will lead to more sympathy for others and help us understand their feelings. We can then start to cultivate brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Ultimately, this kind of intentional unity will lead to an atmosphere of blessing. An atmosphere of blessing is marked by forgiveness, positivity, and worship. When we cultivate these things, heaviness and tension will give way to blessing. Let’s commit to changing the atmosphere! As we do, we will see the truth of Psalm 133:1: “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

### Discussion Questions

- Is there anyone in your life who you find it hard to honor? Explain your answer. What can you do to cultivate honor towards that person?
- What is one environment in your life that needs more unity? How can you help change the atmosphere there?
- Forgiveness, positivity, and worship are the keys to unlocking an atmosphere of blessing. What can you do to grow in these areas of your life?

### Prayer Focus

Father, help me to see every person the way You see them. Help me pursue unity, sympathize, cultivate brotherly love, and have a tender heart and a humble mind towards others. God, I ask You to pour out Your blessing on our church, our nation, and our world. Thank You for the truth that, in the midst of the chaos and pain in our world, You are for working all things for good.

### Next Steps

Think of one practical way you can foster unity in your family, community, or workplace this week. Commit to taking that step, and come prepared to share with the group next week!

### Leader Tip

The events of the past few weeks may be weighing heavily on your group members. Take extra time this week to talk about how each person is feeling and offer support to those who may be hurting.

