Title: Love That Makes Space
Date: Sunday November 15, 2026
Speaker: Kevin White
Series: Chosen For a Purpose
Passage: 1 Peter 4:7-11 (NLT)

1 Peter 4:7-11
Vs. 7 - The **end of the world is coming soon**. Therefore, be **earnest and disciplined in your prayers**.
Vs. 8 - Most important of all, continue to show **deep love for each other**, for love covers a multitude of sins.
Vs. 9 - Cheerfully **share your home** with those who need a meal or a place to stay.
Vs. 10 - God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of **spiritual gifts**. Use them well to **serve one another**.
Vs. 11 - Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will **bring glory to God** through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

The end of the world is coming soon. Wait what? This is the foundation on which Peter builds this section of Scripture. Peter, is one of Jesus' twelve disciples. Famous for being outspoken, hot-headed at times, he is the one that first confessed Jesus is Lord. He is the one that God used to start the church. Peter is writing to the Israelites who are exiles in a hostile culture.

For Peter, and the early followers of Jesus, this was an urgent reality. "The end of the world is coming soon." He's not trying to cause panic. He's trying to remind everyone of the story that they found themselves in. Jesus died, was resurrected and ascended to heaven. The next major event in the story is Christ coming back.

Since that is the case, we are called to live expectantly in light of the end - we know how the story is going to play out - so out of all people, we have hope - even as Pastor Steve talked about last week - in the midst of suffering.

We keep cool, stay alert and we don't get swept away by the anxiety of society. We're earnest and disciplined. I remember as a kid my friend Cliff had heard a prophecy that Jesus was coming back on his birthday - October 7. But Jesus didn't. Or in the year 2000 - people thought the world was going to end. So they bought water and canned goods and got ready. We should be ready. But we also need to know the Bible enough that we're not wild. We shouldn't be lazy dreamers or zealous fanatics. Someone has said we need to know the news and know the Bible.

Because of this expectation, Peter gives us challenges:
1. Deep love
2. Radical hospitality

3. Faithful stewardship

Today, we're continuing our series, Chosen for a Purpose: Living as Exiles on Mission. Our topic for today is, "Love that Makes Space." Space is literally what we're based on. "Making space for Jesus to shape us together in God's love." We're all about making space. This is what Cornerstone is based on. This building, this community, every ministry is based on making space for people to experience God's love. It's the goal of everything we do.

Before we get into deep love, radical hospitality and faithful stewardship, we have to start where Peter starts. Peter starts with prayer. Prayer isn't supposed to lead us into isolation - running away from the world. It's supposed to lead us to community. As we've talked about this whole series, our faith is lived out in community.

With that in mind, let's jump into it.

1. **Deep love**

Peter challenges us to love each other deeply. The Greek for that pictures an athlete straining every muscle, stretching to maximum capacity to cross the finish line. Another word I came across was fervent. It's not just a warm emotional feeling, it's a decision.

Christian love is something we have to work at the same way an athlete works on his or her skills. It's not a matter of an emotional feeling, though it is included, but of dedicated will. It's a muscle that we grow, and practice, and strengthen. It may not be easy all the time, it may be uncomfortable, but it gets easier and it's always worth it.

Then Peter talks about how "love covers a multitude of sins."
It doesn't broadcast people's faults. It doesn't stir up drama or hold permanent grudges. It overlooks minor insults and chooses to forgive again and again.

Love making space means that we don't stir up sins. We show love to other believers by truly forgiving them and not talking openly about their past sins. This verse comes from Proverbs 10:12. "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offences."

Now this doesn't mean overlooking people who are continually offending and not caring or asking for forgiveness or looking to change - think about it like this. When we were in sin, we were apart from God. But through Jesus, we are brought into the family. If we don't forgive others when they sin, it's like we're telling them to go back to their place as an outsider. Instead, we should always be making space, always welcoming people home. This is exactly what Jesus did. He invited people in again and again and again, even in their mistakes and sin. It's not up to us anyway, it's all Jesus. We can't change people's hearts, but we can love them as fully and wholly as we can, shine Jesus' light as best we can, and trust that Jesus is the one who rescues and heals hearts - that's not our job.

Love is the badge of the Christian in this world. So when the world looks at us, that's what they should see. This passage is directed to the Christian community. What would someone looking at Cornerstone see?

Story of Micah and go-kart - character matters.

Fairness is a big deal to me. But life isn't always fair. We naturally want to strike back and cut off. But Christian love is supposed to be different. When someone bumps into your lane or cuts you off or makes a mistake or offends you, deep love stretches to absorb the collision and cover the fault.

In my commentaries I came across two cultural concepts. Jeong and Ubuntu (I know I spoke about Ubuntu before)

Jeong is a Korean concept which is a deep, quiet, unbreakable bond formed through shared life and redemptive relationships. It's a love that sticks, even when things get messy. It's more easily felt than said. It's when you help an elderly person carry groceries. It's when you buy something from a local business - supporting them and then sharing it with others. It's kindness, love, sharing and caring. It's a way that turns seemingly mundane interactions into miracles with impact on both us and the other.

Ubuntu is an African concept. The story is told of a man who brought candy to a group of kids. He put it at the base of a tree, brought all the kids a distance away and challenged them. Race to the tree, the first one to the tree gets all the candy. When he said go, they joined hands and walked to the tree. When he asked them why they didn't want all the candy for themselves they said - Ubuntu - it's the interdependence of humans, community over isolated individualism. It means "I am, because we are." We are only who we are in the context of love and relationship.

When we have Jeong or Ubuntu or deep love - it's intentional. It crosses cultures, it's intergenerational. It crosses a multitude of differences - it takes our differences and still chooses love. We turn strangers into neighbours, neighbours into friends, and friends into family.

At the men's basketball program we go for 8 weeks at a time. It's a mix of people from the church, people who found the program online and are new, and a couple of guys who have been coming for 10 years, don't come to the church, and invite their friends. When they come on a Wednesday, I say, welcome home. They belong here.

At our LEAP program or on Sundays in youth Bible class, I challenge them to at least know the name of everyone at their table. It varies from week to week and they don't all go to the same schools, but I ask them - who's at your table?

So this morning I ask you? Who's at your table? Do you know the name of the people who live next to you? Do you know the name of the people on your team? Your classroom? Do you know the name of the people you sit around on Sundays? This is really important. Do you know those

around you on Sunday? The welcome of Cornerstone is not just the job of the welcome team, staff or those who have been here since the beginning. It's the job of every single one of us. It may be hard, it may be uncomfortable, but it is important, and it leads to this deep love that makes space for each and for our community. It lays the essential groundwork for us to become a community of belonging. We can't have a handful of people in charge of creating space for belonging. We need every single one of us and all our gifts, stories, cultures, and experiences - we need all of our uniqueness to create space for our community.

Deep love makes space.

2. **Radical Hospitality**

In verse 9, Peter tells us to "cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay."

When this was written two thousand years ago, hospitality meant opening your doors to travelling believers and hosting house churches. It was especially needed as there was persecution against Christians and so oftentimes they would be on the move.

Peter says they should do it cheerfully. Why? Because it's hard work. It takes time. It costs energy and privacy. I should say that Peter is writing to Christ followers about Christ followers. This passage is about the community of believers. Of course we want to show hospitality to everyone, but in particular - as Steve was talking about last week, we have an opportunity as a community to live in a way that will be a model to others on what it should actually look like. Unfortunately, we often act in ways that are contrary to what we believe. That confuses the people around us and doesn't attract them to Jesus.

When we think of hospitality we think of having a clean house and then inviting people over. But what if it was about making room in your life for people to belong? It's not about necessarily adding more to our lives, it can be about being intentional with the spaces, places and people we already have.

We live in a culture where we are known for being welcoming and yet millions of people feel completely alone in terms of true connection. A teen can have hundreds or thousands of online friends but not feel really close to any of them. A small group can meet for years but not actually share the struggles of their marriage or the addictions they have.

What would it look like if we welcomed each other - here in the church and also in the community in a way that was genuine? How would you feel if you were welcomed as is without having to meet certain expectations first. We were talking about this in the Sunday class last week and the kids said it would be amazing because then you wouldn't have to wear masks or pretend because you're scared people won't like you.

What would it look like if you had the space to be known and cared for? What would it look like for you to offer that space to others? Again, it takes all of us. It takes being real, being humble, showing grace. It has to be something we all have to commit to grow in.

The Greek word is translated as “love of strangers.” Love is intensely practical, not just emotional.

We’ve been talking about “Deeper and wider discipleship.” Spaces like Alpha are great for anyone who wants to explore faith. We are loving our neighbours by making space for our community to encounter Jesus.

We’ve been talking about “building bridges across differences.” One of our core values is unity in diversity. It’s a challenge to walk together when we have so many different experiences, expectations, due to age, culture, socioeconomic status, etc. How can we handle conflict in a hospitable way? When we choose each other, and value unity over differences, we are making space for each other to encounter the love of Jesus.

We’ve been talking about joining God in the neighbourhood - right now we’re in the middle of a 40 day challenge so grab a book to explore more - you can practice home-based hospitality as a family. Your family can practice hospitality by making space to experience Jesus through your relationship.

We’ve been talking about Cornerstone Centre as a hub. What would it look like to expand our physical space so that even more people can be welcomed here? What would it look like to build deeper relationships with the people who are already here? We have the opportunity to extend radical hospitality and make space for Jesus to work in ways we can’t even imagine now. Again - we need everyone.

30 people wanted to make space for people to experience multicultural community at church - Cornerstone was born.
300 people wanted to make space through a physical building in the community - Cornerstone Centre was born
600 people wanted to make space for more people to experience God through a second worship service 9:30 and 11:30 services were born
And now, with over 1300 people a week, we need all of us to make space for our community in a new way by helping others create a hub of belonging for our neighbours and for ourselves.

A while back in one of our messages Beth Nolson talked about how no one gets a pass. Whether you’re introverted or extroverted, there are opportunities - when you drive, are you hospitable to those around you in traffic? Are you hospitable with the earth’s resources so that the people after us can enjoy this beautiful world that God created? For those who can’t come to us, do we go to them? Missions in Thunder Bay, Nicaragua, Roatan, our friends downtown, sponsoring a child, the sick?

What does it look like to be open to extending hospitality on the way… Most of Jesus' work and speaking happened while they were on the way from one place to the next, walking on the road, stopping in cities, around meals, etc. What does it look like to pursue hospitality in our normal routines?

This doesn't mean we never have private space or boundaries - but how are you allowing God to stretch you.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer talks about how the first service we owe to others in the community involves listening to them. Listening can be a greater service than speaking.

Ex. Pastor Jeremy

Don't multitask when you're with someone… imagine a world where people listened. Husbands listened to wives, kids listened to parents, parents, listened to kids, coworkers listened to each other - classmates, doctors listening to patients, governments listening to people, pastors listening to congregants, business owners listening to clients..

What about being hospitable by giving people space? Think of Cornerstone for example. We're a big church - intimidating for some people. If I'm a person who is nervous in crowds, how can you welcome me in a way that is true to Cornerstone and also makes space for me if I want to slip in and out because I'm checking it out to see if it's a good fit for me?

What does hospitality look like in a digital age? (skip this question if there isn't time) - if there is time, ask the actual congregation to shout out answers

3. **Faithful Stewardship**

"God has given each of you a gift."

This was a key idea for them in that day as well as us in ours. We aren't just consumers here. It's so contrary to what we learn everywhere else. We are stewards - a steward is a manager. A trustee - we will be held accountable - did we use the gifts God gave us in the best interest of God? Or did we use them only for ourselves?

A gift is any talent or ability which is empowered by the Holy Spirit and able to be used in the ministry of the church.

There is a major misconception that we have in the church is that only the paid staff or key volunteers are the ministers. We believe that every believer is gifted by the Holy Spirit to serve the community.

We're all ministers. We're all prime ministers :) This is where you laugh out loud.

Whatever your gift is. It could be speaking or things that are more front-facing, or it could be behind the scenes. Take the worship team for example…
They have forward facing team members like - the band and worship leaders.
They also have behind the scenes people like - audio - helping with the sound that you hear on Sunday as well as the livestream, visual - camera operators, live directors, stage managers, worship set coordinators, communion team, prayer ministers… There are some who are fully remote. It takes all of these people with all of their gifts for this one ministry. That's not even including the special service teams - like Good Friday, etc. They have over 100 people on the team. But you know who they don't have? You. If you're interested in joining this team of finding our more information contact Alexis - kristy@cornerstonechurch.ca
In particular they are looking for visual worship - like camera operators and stuff. Also stage managers - so making sure service is on schedule and people are where they are supposed to be - like the time one of the pastors forgot to come back up from their sermon to do the benediction :)

Our example is always Jesus. His love made space. He stepped into our broken neighbourhood, made room for us at his table while we were still sinners. On the cross, Jesus took the penalty for our sins - covered our 'multitude of sins' so that we could be transformed from strangers into family - sons and daughters of God.

Since Jesus made space for us, we can now make space for others.

So all this is amazing. So let's get to it right?
Well, I know what some of you are thinking. How will I fit any more into my schedule? I'm already too busy. Aren't you the same ones telling us about Sabbath and rest? It definitely is a challenge. We are so busy that we have no margin left to listen or notice someone in need. Maybe the first step is to make more space in your schedule so that you are available.

Or perhaps you can be fully present in your schedule with intention and openness… noticing the people waiting in line with you, if you're a parent, talking on the parents while you wait to pick up your kids, bringing a friend with you to run errands, inviting someone over for dinner - even if your home is messy for a normal every day meal instead of something super fancy.

1. **Love makes space to listen.**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said the first service we owe to others in the community is listening to them. Put away your phone, stop multitasking, and give people your full attention.

Story about my neighbour P
Story about Pastor Jeremy

Another barrier could be a fear of being misunderstood. We don't like conflict and we are different - so there will be tension sometimes. Honestly, it is easier and more comfortable to be in our silos and just continue with what we're used to. But we're called to so much more. There is so much beauty in the messy. It's sometimes hard, but it's so worth it. When we visit our

friends downtown we interact with people far different from us - who have experienced hardships we can't imagine, but they have made space for us and we've formed a beautiful community that reflects Jesus in ways we've never seen before.

The final barrier we'll talk about today is that we're selfish. If you're like me, you want to hoard your time, money and talents for your own self or your own family. But if we're a part of the kingdom, where God is in control, then we should see where he is at work and join in.

2. **Grab the 40 days workbook.**

Get it at the welcome desk or download it online. Pick a specific place - your street, your school, your work, your team… pay attention, pray and notice where God is already at work. Join in.

3. **Practice shared tables**

Invite a neighbour, coworker, school friend, someone from a different race, age for coffee or a meal or over to your place. Or outsource it. Treat them to OTT and come with them :)

4. **Know your gift/use your gift**

Use this https://spiritualgiftstest.com/spiritual-gifts-test-adult-version/
to find out what your spiritual gift is. Then write down a couple of ways you can use your unique talents to serve the community.

To get to our 10 year vision we need all hands on deck.
The church started with 30 and then 300.
Now we need everyone. The 3000? :)

Let's remember that we're on a mission. The world is watching how we live, how we forgive, how we welcome one another. So let's be a community whose roots go deep in Jesus - that hope that comes from knowing that he's coming back for us. People of prayer, deep love, radical hospitality and faithful stewardship.

Let's go from strangers into neighbours, neighbours into friends and friends into family.

May our love make space.

Let's pray.