Also by Danny Silk

Loving Our Kids on Purpose

Available from Destiny Image Publishers
Culture of Honor

Sustaining a Supernatural Environment

Danny Silk
DEDICATION

To Bethel Church: thank you for your tireless efforts and participation in this grand experiment called “Bethel.”
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bill Johnson and Kris Vallotton—thank you for your courageous leadership!

Bethel’s senior management team—you are the “masters” at making all this work. It is a perpetual honor to work at your side.

Allison Armerding—you never cease to amaze me with your life of honor toward others. Thank you for pointing it at me!

Dann Farrelly and Andre Van Mol—to your gift of critique I am forever in debt.
**ENDORSEMENTS**

God is in the process of restoring Kingdom mentality to the church, and those who “get it” will move under the blessed order of God’s government. This book is both an indication of this process and a clarification of the strategic issue of honor as it relates to how Christians work together in church. Chapter 2, entitled “The Funnel From Heaven,” is an absolute must-read for those who not only are wondering why the fivefold ministry is not working as we had hoped, but for all who have not seriously considered this vital approach to church life. Danny’s contribution toward the Kingdom Church will help us all navigate this adventure of Kingdom life together.

*Jack Taylor*
President, Dimensions Ministries
Melbourne, Florida

In this book, *Culture of Honor*, Danny Silk unearths the ancient foundations of the Kingdom of God. With great wisdom and insight he examines and explains the fundamental building blocks of a supernatural society and constructs the framework for a powerful Christian
life. This is more than a book; it is a manifesto of reformation, destined to become a classic that will be a reference for generations to come. *Culture of Honor* is a must-read for every serious believer. It is essential that this book find its way into every seminary in America!

**Kris Vallotton**  
Senior Associate Leader of Bethel Church  
Redding, California  
Author of several books, including  
*The Supernatural Ways of Royalty* and  
*Developing a Supernatural Lifestyle*

Pastor Danny Silk has written a wonderful book sharing one of the core values of Bethel Church in Redding, California, that has been foundational to the revival that Bethel has been experiencing for a number of years. I believe the “culture of honor,” as Danny presents it, can bring and sustain revival and reformation to anyone who lives out this biblical principle. I highly recommend this book.

**Ché Ahn**  
Senior Pastor and Founder, Harvest Rock Church  
Pasadena, California

Sometimes I read a book, and many times my experience is that the book reads me. *Culture of Honor* is one of those books. I want to live this book! Bethel Church has been an open Heaven for many years, and I am grateful to be a part of the family at Bethel Church. The Kingdom of God is a “family business,” and in this book Danny Silk gives us the DNA of Heaven on earth. *Culture of Honor* is destined to be a classic that will be read and lived from
generation to generation. Read the book, and let the book read you!

Dr. Leif Hetland
President, Global Mission Awareness
Florence, Alabama

_Culture of Honor_ is a revolutionary book that will transform the leadership paradigms that have been so prevalent in every institution, including the church. I believe Danny Silk captures the essence of how Jesus led His disciples and how the disciples led as apostles in the early church through honor.

_Culture of Honor_ will transform the way you think about leadership and the way you lead. You will learn how to be an empowering leader, through practical Kingdom core values that are taught throughout the book. Your leadership lid can’t help but to increase as you apply these biblical principles of honor.

Every leader should read this book! Every church leader should read this book! Every husband and wife should read this book! Every parent should read this book! Everyone should read this book!

And then, read it again!!

Kevin Dedmon
Author of _The Ultimate Treasure Hunt: Supernatural Evangelism Through Supernatural Encounters_ and _Unlocking Heaven: Keys to Living Naturally Supernatural_

Danny had me hooked from the stunning first-chapter demonstration of how a jaw-dropping, leadership-imploding fall was redeemed through application of a culture of honor. In both its fullness of content and crafting of delivery, this is the finest book from any Bethel
author yet. Danny’s call and challenge is for the Church to purposefully live empowered and empowering in the New Covenant through a compassionate, safe, liberating, relational culture free of fear, legalism, control, shame, and impotent victimhood. Danny makes the scriptural basis, conceptual models, and successful applications—on congregational, leadership, family, and individual levels—robustly and disarmingly clear. This book is a catalyst for transformation.

André Van Mol, MD  
Family Physician  
Elder, Bethel Church of Redding  
Vice President, Pray North State

I am grateful to Danny Silk who, in Culture of Honor, has explained the “recipe” that is the backbone of a 10-year-plus revival that is rapidly accelerating into a movement—and already impacting the nations of the world. In 40 years of being a Christian, I have not witnessed a “movement” that has been sustained for more than 10 years. It is not for lack of gifting or anointing, for that was present in abundance, but it was for lack of an understanding of the “culture of honor” that could allow leaders and followers to flourish in the empowering atmosphere it brings.

Andrew Sievright  
President, Heroes of the Nations

The church has for the longest time been in need of governmental reconstruction. Not only are we in need of having our notions of “Kingdom government” conceptually and structurally redefined, we also need to have our heart language of Kingdom definition revisited and restated. It is out of our hearts that we will speak and therefore live. Danny Silk, in his book Culture of Honor, goes a very
long way in giving us an inspired, informed, and creative approach to understanding what needs to be the heart culture of the Kingdom. His wit and intelligent authorship will seduce you into your own moments of revelation. “Free people cannot live together without honor” is a truth that is non-negotiable and in need of application. This book could be one of the most significant to come out of Bethel Church. An essential read for those who desire supernatural fruitfulness. That fruitfulness will come out of the context of honor.

David Crabtree
Senior Leader of DaySpring Church
Castle Hill, New South Wales, Australia

In 2003, when I first came into contact with Bethel Church and this revival, my life and ministry went through a tremendous and sometimes painful transformation, mainly because I was deeply immersed in religiosity and legalism. Seeing and experiencing the supernatural really impressed me and caused me to wonder about my beliefs and core values. I saw miracles and healings, but I also saw freedom, unconditional love, empowering, acceptance, healthy confrontation, and many other elements of a genuine “culture of honor” that had not been a part of my life. It was actually the culture of honor in every one of these “weird people”—as they appeared to me in the beginning—that pushed me to make the choice of accepting revival and submitting to this transformation and all that it means.

About a year later I met Danny Silk, whom I consider to be one of the most authorized spokespersons of the culture of honor in the midst of this amazing revival. He has become one of my best friends and one of the most influential people in my life and ministry. From him I have
learned what the culture of honor looks like, and that revival without this culture of honor is like new wine in an old wineskin.

What this book contains needs to be learned and embraced by every person, whether a leader or not, whether a believer or not. It is urgent that every one of us get tuned in to this culture of honor while seeing Heaven invading earth.

Angel Nava
Senior Pastor, Seeds of Life Church (Semillas de Vida)
La Paz, Mexico

This book could turn your world upside down and help you extend the Kingdom of God wherever you live. The “culture of honor” talked about in this book has the power to lead you on an adventure that will result in the transformation of you, your church, and your city.

As you read this book, be prepared to be challenged to think anew, to review your Christian thought and practice, “to be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” As you do so you will be better equipped to transform the culture in which you live.

Dr. Pete Carter
Senior leader of North Kent Community Church
United Kingdom
“Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.”

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
February 14, 1776
CONTENTS

Foreword by Bill Johnson................................. 19
Preface .................................................. 23
Introduction............................................. 25

Chapter 1: A Supernatural Culture ....................... 29
Chapter 2: The Funnel From Heaven ...................... 47
Chapter 3: Governing From Heaven ...................... 77
Chapter 4: Dearly Loved Children of Light ............. 91
Chapter 5: Freedom Practice—Developing a
          Wealth Mindset ................................. 117
Chapter 6: The Top Priority of Leadership ............... 147
Chapter 7: Kingdom Confrontation ...................... 163
Chapter 8: Revolution to Reformation to Transformation ... 185

Notes ..................................................... 215
Resources ............................................... 219
Recommended Reading ............................... 221
FOREWORD

An adulterous woman was thrown at Jesus’s feet. She knew the punishment for her sin was public stoning. The fact that she was caught in the very act only heightened the shame and intensified her fear of a painful death. Her accusers stood with confidence because the law of God supported their position. They held the stones that would soon take her life, while she waited for them to display their outrage for her complete disregard of God’s standard of holiness. Then the Master began to write in the sand.

We don’t know what He wrote. All we know is that the atmosphere created by the writings of the “grace giver” completely disarmed her accusers. They fled as the grace of God drove away the judgments of men as quickly as light displaces darkness. Grace is that superior.

No one needed to tell her to put her faith in Christ. The atmosphere of grace made faith in Jesus the most logical response. Perhaps this is why the apostle Paul taught us that faith is “according to grace” (Rom. 4:16). *Grace is the atmosphere created by love that makes faith the only reasonable response.*
Few things overwhelm me more than an authentic display of the grace of God. Whenever the presence of God enables a person to become free from lifelong issues, you can’t help but be amazed at such a wonderful Savior. But grace goes beyond healing from the past: it also launches us into our divine destinies.

I read this manuscript with great joy. But I also read it with many tears as I recalled the impossible situations that we faced together as a church family. They were the kinds of problems that only God could heal. And He did, again and again. It’s that same grace that leaks from the pages of this book. It is not a new theology. It is just a clearer manifestation of the original—the heart of God as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. But that is only half of the story, for grace is but one of the expressions of this revolutionary force of His Kingdom come to earth—the culture of honor.

When I teach on the culture of honor, most everyone says “amen” to show support for what they already believe. Soon after the message they proceed to tell me that they too have a culture of honor. But the response is much different once they’ve had a chance to come to Bethel for a week or two and they watch the interaction of the staff and the church family. Invariably they leave asking us to please mentor them on developing this as a reformational way of life. Giving honor actually releases the life of God into a situation.

Many people live in atmospheres void of honor and desperately seek our help in creating such a culture. Pastors often ask us to come and teach their church and staff how to show honor. The need is real, and the desire is genuine. But this culture is never built around “what I need.” It is built around “what I can give.” And if I don’t learn to give it to those who deserve it the least, I will continue to live in an environment without honor.
I absolutely love *Culture of Honor*. I’ve waited a long time to see this revolutionary way of life captured and put into words. While many on my staff teach on this subject, God has given Danny Silk the best language for it. And the spoil he obtains for the Master through his wonderful insights is becoming legendary. In carrying the empowering presence of Jesus in everything he does, he lives to show God’s value upon each person he serves, regardless of his or her station in life.

The Church is in need of a radical reformation. I believe that this book is a part of God’s prescription to address this need. As we succeed, we’ll be positioned to help bring the cities of our world into transformation. And it’s a transformation through honor—that which communicates the grace of God so beautifully.

**Bill Johnson**

Senior Pastor of Bethel Church
Redding, California

Author of *The Supernatural Power of a Transformed Mind* and
*When Heaven Invades Earth*
I realize that in this book I am challenging what many understand to be true. I am messing with long-standing paradigms. Nonetheless, I find myself undaunted in a course to shed light on many topics long held in a type of darkness by my beloved community, the Church. As a first-generation Christian there are many cultural traditions that have not directly affected my life or family. Equally so, there are many that have not yet taken hold and strengthened my legacy. But as for some of these traditions that I have come across, unfortunately I find them to be highly unjust and a poor representation of who I have come to know as my Lord. The “culture of honor” is a contest to those long-held approaches and core values one can easily find in the historic and contemporary Christian church culture.

I mean no disrespect in presenting this perspective. It is confronting and reforming what we’ve come to know about church leadership, authority, and church discipline for literally centuries. Please know that I know this is a “grand experiment” at Bethel Church and we have much to learn about how to steward an environment of freedom. Nonetheless, I will present what we’ve learned thus far.

Peace!
INTRODUCTION

Within these pages you will find what one of my friends calls a “recipe.” The ingredients in this recipe are a set of beliefs and practices. The steps in this recipe combine these ingredients in such a way that they create something powerful—an environment that is uncommon on the earth today. It is an environment that attracts and hosts the presence of God. We at Bethel Church, in Redding, California, call this environment the culture of honor. By no means is our “recipe” the only one that creates a culture that hosts the presence of God, but we can tell you that it is one that works.

When God first speaks of honor in the Ten Commandments, He promises that long life will be our reward for honoring our parents. At Bethel, we believe that this command reveals a principle of honor in general. We often say, “Life flows through honor.”

The principle of honor states that accurately acknowledging who people are will position us to give them what they deserve and to receive the gift of who they are in our lives.
Honor creates life-giving and life-promoting relationships. The key here is “accurately acknowledging who people are.” We can only do this when we recognize their God-given identities and roles. This is what we see in the statement of Jesus: “He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.”

Names and titles are important. Mother, father, son, daughter, apostle, prophet, Christian, human being—such names define a person’s role and identity and, when used correctly, establish God-designed relationships in which specific “rewards” are given and received to build and strengthen us.

A culture of honor is created as a community of people learns to discern and receive people in their God-given identities. Throughout this book we will explore some of the “names” that have enabled us to establish very specific kinds of relationships in the Bethel community. These are the relationships that attract and sustain the outpouring of God’s presence and power in our midst. The names “apostle,” “prophet,” “teacher,” “pastor,” and “evangelist” and their distinctive anointings, mindsets, and gifts create a network of relationships designed to bring the focus and priorities of Heaven to earth. Names like “free sons” and “children of light” define the way we must honor and relate to one another, particularly when addressing areas of behavior and relationships that need discipline and restoration. Descriptive names like “royalty,” “wealthy,” and “benefactor” shape our relationships with our resources and with the wider community that the Church is called to bless and encounter with the love and power of Heaven.

In a culture of honor, leaders lead with honor by courageously treating people according to the names God gives them and not according to the aliases they receive from people. They treat them as
free sons and daughters, not slaves; as righteous, not sinners; as wealthy, not poor. Leaders also acknowledge their interdependence on the diverse anointings God has distributed among His leadership and their design for functioning as a team that creates a “funnel” from Heaven to earth. They lead in teaching and preaching a Gospel that accurately acknowledges God’s identity as good, as love, as shalom, and look for clear manifestations of these realities as signs that God’s presence is truly welcome in the culture. And in the safety and freedom that grow as His presence grows, leaders lead by developing ways to help people get along with one another in a free culture. They have tools for confrontation that are congruent with people’s God-given identities and are motivated by the passion to protect and grow the connections that God is building among us. Finally, leaders in a culture of honor naturally lead their people in extending the honor of the Kingdom to the wider community, creating ways for our cities to experience the life that is flowing among us.

Life flows through honor. The clear fruit of establishing a culture of honor is that the resurrection life of God begins to flow into people’s lives, homes, and communities, bringing healing, restoration, blessing, joy, hope, and wholeness. If we are not seeing this fruit, then we must ask ourselves whether we are truly honoring those around us as we ought. As you will find in the coming pages, I am convinced that there are some patterns of relating in the Church that are based on false versions of who people are, and we must confront and dismantle these if we hope to see abundant life growing in our midst.

My prayer and hope is that this book will guide you as you seek the ingredients and steps for creating a culture around you that hosts the presence of God. Admittedly, this book is just a start, but it’s a great start!
A SUPERNATURAL CULTURE

“If you’ve heard of Bethel Church in Redding, California, chances are that you’ve heard testimonies of the supernatural happenings that take place there on a regular basis, particularly miracles of healing. What you may not have heard is that these supernatural events are directly related to the supernatural culture that the community of saints at Bethel has been developing for over a decade. The heart of this culture is the conviction that Jesus modeled the Christian life for us. Jesus explained that all the supernatural things that happened through Him flowed directly from His intimate connection with His Father, and that same connection was what He came to give us through His death and resurrection. Sustaining a supernatural lifestyle, where signs and wonders follow us, is therefore totally dependent on living out our true identities as sons and daughters of God. Armed with these truths, the leaders at Bethel understand that their primary
role is to empower the saints to know God and walk in the fullness of who He says they are. As these core values have been taught and demonstrated, a group of people has grown up with faith and courage to bring Heaven to earth.

In order to help you understand Bethel’s culture of supernatural empowerment, I want to show you what it’s like. I am going to share something that happened in our School of Supernatural Ministry several years ago. Since this incident, hundreds just like it have been added to the list, but this particular story is the classic case that we refer to in teaching our staff to *create a safe place.* (Creating a safe place will be further explained in the chapter titled “The Top Priority of Leadership.”)

To set the stage for this story, I need to mention that every member of our staff shares a great mutual delight in our First Year graduates. We are so proud of their zeal and love for revival. After each summer break, our staff interviews the graduates returning for Second Year, and this always reignites their excitement to spend another year with the amazing people we call our students. These Second Year students are the cream of the crop and are leaders to our fresh batch of First Year students.

One year we had two First Year students, amazing people, who were leaders in worship and other ministry activities. After graduating from First Year, they decided to get married in December while attending Second Year. So they applied for Second Year and were accepted. Of course they were—they are amazing!

Shortly after Second Year began, Banning Liebscher, the Second Year pastor, came to me and said, “We have a problem. I have two students who have confessed to me that they had sex over the summer.”
I asked him what he was going to do.

Banning then said, “Well, if having sex was all that was going on, that wouldn’t be as much of a problem. They stopped about a month before school started and are truly repentant. And I really believed this guy when he told me that.”

“What else is going on?” I asked.

“I just found out that she is pregnant,” he said.

Now this was a situation—an unmarried, pregnant Second Year Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry student roaming the halls. That was something we would have to explain. I could see a certain dread in Banning’s eyes. He knew that we would have to remove these two students from the school. This was the first time he’d been the leader in a scenario quite so extreme.

I said, “Let’s get together with them and talk about it.”

So Banning and his copastor, Jill, came into my office with these two students. Now, I did not know them and they did not know me. Neither of them made eye contact with me as they entered my office. Their heads were slumped low, and their eyes were pointed to the floor. It was clear that they were absolutely ashamed of what they had done, and they came in expecting us to punish them for their mistakes. Not only did they believe they deserved judgment for their sin, but they also were aware of the commonly held conviction that church leaders must protect the whole from the rebellious few. They knew they had been rebellious and that this would most likely be “the talk.” What else could we do but tell them we love them and show them the door?

I began the process by saying, “Thank you both very much. You don’t know me, or what is going to happen. Thank you for the
vulnerability and trust that you have just offered. I know this is scary, and I don’t want you to feel scared. We have not made any decisions because we don’t really know what the problem is. Do you need any water? Are you okay?”

After they had responded, I addressed the young man. “Now, let me ask you this. What is the problem?”

He looked at Banning, stunned, and asked, “Didn’t Banning tell you what happened? Didn’t he talk to you?”

I could tell this question made him uncomfortable.

“Yes, he has. Banning has talked to me,” I replied.

He asked, “You want me to say it?”

“If you know what the problem is, I want you to tell me,” I said. My hunch was that he probably didn’t yet know what the problem was.

“We had sex this summer—a bunch of times!” he exclaimed.

“Now, I thought you stopped doing that.”

He said, “Yes, we totally did. We stopped doing it about a month before school started.”

“So, what’s the problem?” I asked again, trying to send him searching further into his heart for the problem.

“Well, she is pregnant,” he said, searching for the next thing I might not know.

I asked, “Well, is there anything we can do about that?”

“No!” he fired back emphatically, sending me a clear message that abortion was not an option. He was clearly frustrated by my
questions. Apparently, he had not intended to do so much thinking through this process. He had anticipated punishment, and this was catching him completely off guard.

“Okay, so what is the problem?” I asked once more.

He looked at me for a few moments, shook his head and said, “I don’t think I understand the question.”

I chuckled. Banning and Jill chuckled. We all chuckled. No one seemed to know what the problem was, and everyone was wondering where I was going with my question.

Finally I said, “If we were going to spend our time today solving a problem, what would that problem be?”

“I don’t know.”

I asked him if he had repented.

“Yeah. Of course I have,” he replied, as if this was a no-brainer question.

“What have you repented of?” I asked.

After a long pause he admitted, “I don’t know.”

I said, “All right. Well, that is part of the problem, isn’t it? How can you repent from a problem unless you know what that problem is?”

“I see what you are saying. Yeah.”

“So, we need to find a problem here to solve,” I said. “That is what this is about. Let me ask you some more questions.”

My whole plan was simply to ask him questions. I was not going to tell him what I thought or tell him what to think. I was not trying
to convince him of my amazing perspectives or my powerful discernments. I was searching for the glory, wisdom, and capability in this young man. It needed to be raised to the surface so that he could remember who he was in this house. The shame of his mistake had made him forget who he was. He thought he was one of those people who needed to be kicked and spit on, and he was ready for our leadership team to kick him to the curb. Questions led him, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, to run around and search for the wisdom and knowledge inside of him and find a solution that would change his life forever.

I lofted a couple of slow balls to him. “Tell me, did you not know it was a bad idea to sleep with your girlfriend?”

“I totally knew that,” he shot back.

“Well, then, what happened?”

“I don’t know.” He lowered his head, breaking eye contact.

I gave him a choice to consider and an opportunity to stay with me. “You don’t know, or are you not wanting to think about it anymore?”

“Well, it is probably because we were staying up until like 2:00 in the morning watching movies at her house.”

“You think?” I raised my eyebrows.

“But I tried to leave. I tried to leave over and over. I would say to her that we shouldn’t be in this situation. We shouldn’t be here doing this. I told her that we went too far last time and we shouldn’t be doing this.” As he sheepishly looks over at her, she is pursing her lips and her face is flushed, but the fear of the unknown of being in this room has her in a bit of verbal paralysis.
He continues, “She would get so mad at me! She would call me names, tell me that I was rejecting her, and it was just hellish for days afterward. So I just wouldn’t say anything and stayed there. I am not saying that I didn’t like it or wasn’t a part of it. I totally was. It just wasn’t worth fighting with her about it.”

“All right. So what you are telling me is that you were more concerned about her being mad at you than you were concerned about doing your job of protecting her from you.”

Slowly, he answered, “Yeah.”

“So what you are telling me is that when you are around angry people it is easy for you to let them control who you are. Is that what you are telling me?”

“Yeah,” he said sheepishly.

“So all it takes for you to abandon your character and your integrity is someone who is upset at you.”

“Yeah.” He was starting to get a revelation.

I asked, “Dude, is that a problem?”

“Yeah.”

“So if we could build a solution to that problem, would that make our time today worth something to you?”

“Totally.” He looked up again and made eye contact, trying to hide a smile. I could tell he was unsure about feeling better when this was supposed to be a process that made him feel worse about what he’d done.

“Fabulous. Then let’s work on that,” I said, with a big smile on my face.
The whole room felt hopeful. Banning and Jill were smiling. I could sense their expectation and sense of responsibility to help this young man deal with the problem he had just identified. But instead, I turned to the girl, who had been watching this whole process with her boyfriend. I could see that she did not want to go through the same thing. Her arms and legs were crossed and her chin was lowered to her chest. I ventured in anyway.

“What is the problem?”

“I don’t know,” she quickly shot back, defensive.

“You don’t know, or you are afraid to think about it?”

“I don’t know.”

I gently said, “I can see that you are scared. I don’t want you to feel afraid. I do want to help you find out what is causing you to add so much pain to your life. Will you let me help?”

For the sake of time, I’ll cut the dialogue down and simply say that we eventually got down to the revelation that she did not trust people. It was a stronghold in her life and showed up in numerous behaviors. She struggled with suspicion, and it kept her from letting people speak into her life. Several students had tried to address their situation over the summer, but she did not allow it to affect her decisions. She felt like those people were trying to control her, and her fear blinded her to the care and concern they had for her. This issue had wreaked havoc with her for many years. She was fearful, isolated, often stubborn, and guarded. I got to the bottom of things with her through the same process: questions. I only asked questions—lots and lots of questions, but the right questions.
Asking the right questions in the right way is one of the keys to creating a safe place. A successful confrontation depends on how safe those being confronted feel. If we ignore their need for a safe place, we set them up to act like defensive, blaming, unloving, selfish people who are more interested in saving their own lives than cleaning up messes they’ve made. We then completely miss who they really are and blame them for their behavior. A process that respects the need for trust and honor will have an entirely different outcome because it allows them to be free—free from control, punishment, and fear. This is how we do Kingdom confrontation. (We will explore this process more fully in a later chapter.)

We had two people in the same situation with two completely different problems. He was afraid of other people being upset with him, and she was afraid of other people controlling her. By the time we discovered these problems, they no longer expected to be beheaded over them. We had created a safe place for them to be themselves, the amazing people they truly are. It was then time to help them fix their problems and set them free from the shame of their mistake.

I asked them another question. “Who is affected by these problems in your life? It’s like you walked through a room with a big bucket of paint and then dropped it. Paint has splashed all over the place. Who has paint on them?”

They began to remember the people they loved, the people who didn’t yet know that she was pregnant. These were people who loved them, who believed in them, and who had honored them. These were the relationships they wanted to protect—their parents, siblings, leaders in the School of Ministry, and leaders back home. His small home church had been taking a monthly
offering to help pay for his school tuition. She had a newly saved brother who thought she had hung the moon. These two represented Jesus to him.

It was as though Banning, Jill, and I could see these two remembering all these people in succession, and as they came to mind, they realized how this situation was going to hurt them. They wept as they listed the names, finally experiencing the pain that this problem had created in their lives. Our team just sat silently, recognizing that this was the “godly sorrow” that the Bible talks about. It was leading these two to repentance, and we needed to let it do its work and bear its fruit.

They continued to sob. No amount of threat or punishment could have created what was happening inside of them in that moment. It was a beautiful thing, and it all happened from the inside out. No one forced them to see anything. No one tried to talk them into repenting. This all came to the surface because we trusted them to have a great deal of love and respect inside of them, and because we asked them the right questions.

After they listed the people in their lives who would be most impacted by the news that she was pregnant, Banning, Jill, and I mentioned some people they didn’t get to, people who were important to us. I asked, “What about the rest of the Second Year students? How are they going to be affected by this?”

“This news will totally affect them. They are our classmates,” he said.

But she retorted, “Some of them will care, but most of them don’t even need to know about it!”

“Ah, is this some more of that same problem?” I asked her.

“What?” she asked, seeming not to understand.
“Is this another time when you think that you need to defend yourself from the people who most likely do care about you?”

“I don’t know,” she said, knowing she had been busted.

“You don’t know, or you see what I am saying?”

“I see what you are saying,” she admitted.

“Good. Thanks for taking a look at that. Now, what about the First Year students who see you as leaders in this community? How will they be affected by this problem?” I specifically addressed her with this question.

“What! They are a bunch of strangers to us! Why would they be affected by this?” she barked out, upset by my audacity.

But her boyfriend said, “You’re right. We are supposed to be leaders in this school. They will totally be affected by us and what we’ve done.”

I asked her what she thought of that perspective. She didn’t like it but did agree that it might affect some of them.

“Might? Or will affect them?” I asked her. I was committed to pinning her down each time that issue of trust and vulnerability tried to keep her from showing her best self in the situation.

“Will!” she blurted out, followed by a half smile to thank me for not letting her get around it.

I then asked, “What are you going to do? You made a pretty good-sized mess here. We know who has paint on them. What are you going to do to clean it up?”
They went through the list and began to come up with solutions. “We are going to call our family members, and we are going to write letters to these people. We will inform them of what’s going on, repent, and ask them for forgiveness.”

I asked them, “How much time do you need?”

After they conferred together, he said, “One week. We want a week to be able to contact our family and clean up this mess.”

“All right,” I said. “We will wait and take care of the School of Ministry students involved in the mess later.”

And so they did what they had said. Within the week, they contacted their family members and their church leaders and also went to Pastors Bill Johnson and Kris Vallotton and some other school staff members. No longer were these people ready to be kicked out of the school. No longer were these people who deserved to be punished. They were met by a stream of loving responses and affirmation by almost every person they approached. There were a couple of unfavorable responses, but this couple had more than enough grace toward those folks.

You see, shame is removed through love. Shame tries to keep people trapped in their mistakes by convincing them that there is nothing they can do, that they are powerless. When we lovingly removed the shame over them, these two became powerful again, faced their consequences, and went around cleaning up their mess. All they could do was clean up their mess. They could not change the past, but they could go to those they loved and ask for forgiveness. In asking forgiveness, they were saying, “Please allow me to manifest my love toward you and protect this relationship. Please let me clean up this mess.” Love cast out their fear and made them powerful again.
The following week they came back to school. Banning and Jill found a break in the class schedule. Banning called my office and asked me to come up to Second Year and facilitate the “clean up.” I knew how difficult this might be for some of the students. I knew that some of them would have no place to put what was about to happen. So I wanted to put the experience in a context for them to consider over the next few minutes and months. I gathered the class together and said, “All right, everyone. Something is about to happen that many of you may have never experienced before. Before they say a word, I want all of you to remember something very important. It may be tempting to judge these two for what they are about to share with you. So, please, remember this: each and every one of you in this room, without exception, is a low-life scumbag without Jesus in your life. Please keep that in mind while you listen to what they have to share with you. If any of you have judgments toward them, I want you to come and talk to me personally, before I hear it coming from somebody else that you spoke with.”

Then I signaled for the couple to come up. The young man started by saying, “I want to apologize to this class because I know that we are a part of you and you are a part of us. Over the summer we ended up messing up and now we’re going to have a baby.”

I was struck by his humility and vulnerability. He was truly repenting to this group of peers. He went on to say, “I've discovered a problem in my life I didn’t know I had. It has been causing a lot of problems for me. I am working on it now. I have more hope now than I have ever had about solving this problem. But as it stands, this is what's going on.” He explained the whole thing. She stood there with him, humble and vulnerable, and after he had finished, did the same thing.
I invited one of their fellow students, Brandon, who held a fatherly role in the class, to come pray for them, forgive them, and restore them to a heavenly standard in relationship with the rest of the class. When he got up, 47 other students—the whole class—got up with him and surrounded these two, pressing in on them. Some began to weep. Brandon began to pray prayers of forgiveness and love. He welcomed them back into fellowship with the community of the class. Someone else told them how much they loved them and thanked them for not leaving the school. Another student thanked them for trusting the class with this part of their lives.

Then the students prophesied over them and the baby. They accepted the baby into the community. The whole class wept together. It was truly an amazing time. I was stunned by the response, but at the same time I knew these people and that all of them were amazing!

The room felt much lighter as people hugged and smiled through tear-covered faces. Then someone came in from First Year and said, “Hey! First Year has time to do this now.”

“Do you want to do this now?” I asked them.

They said, “We might as well.”

“All right, let’s go.”

I led the way. As the two of them headed to the First Year class, the 47 Second Year students followed them. The First Year students could not help but be aware of a huge presence entering their classroom. The 47-student entourage lined the walls of the room like an army of guardian angels as this couple stood before 100 strangers and repented.
I asked Kevin Drury, a pastor who had taken a year off from his ministry to come to BSSM, to pray for them, bless them, and forgive them. As he got up, 100 First Year students stood up and gathered around the couple to pray and bless them. Kevin began to pray and prophesy over them, breaking the curse of shame and illegitimacy over this baby and severing the enemy’s legal right to access and destroy this child through shame. It was a powerful time of love and reconciliation.

One hundred strangers embraced and loved this couple that day. They had done all they could to clean up their mess and carried on as some of the prime examples among our Second Year students for the remainder of the year.

Months later, they got married and, shortly after, welcomed a daughter into the world. But from the day she was born, she was fighting for her life. Something was wrong with her blood, and she was dying day by day. Her light was going out. They were living at a specialty children’s hospital in Northern California, sending us report after report that the baby was dying. Wherever we were when these reports came in, including in our church services and staff meetings, we prayed. But she continued to decline for weeks.

There was desperation in the last phone call we received from this new mother. “She is going to die. The doctors have all said that she won’t make it through the night. Please pray!” After this call, I specifically remembered and declared Kevin’s prayer. I remembered that there was no shame on this child. I remembered that the enemy had no right to this baby. I reminded our team of the process of restoration they had gone through. We remembered the honor and protection that we had given to this family. Our team prayed in our staff meeting and declared that Kevin’s prayer canceled the shame. Death and destruction had no jurisdiction over this child’s life.
The next day we got a call.

“The doctors don’t know what happened, but they are calling our baby ‘The Lazarus baby,’” said a very excited new mother. To this day, their baby girl is alive and well. She is strong, beautiful, and full of life.

The following year, this same young mother was one of the speakers at a Third Year gathering. She got up and, through tears, said, “I just want to thank the leaders in this house. You transfer strength and life from this culture to everybody who comes into it. You build strength in other people. You’ve given us an inheritance. We will never be the same because of how you managed a situation in our life. Not many other leaders would have handled our situation the way you did. You will never know how deeply that has affected us. You gave us life in a situation that could have easily derailed us for many years to follow. You’ve given us a relationship that we will die for. Thank you!”

The miraculous recovery of this child was nothing short of supernatural. But the environment in which it occurred is what we simply call “Bethel.” As I mentioned, it’s becoming a place known for its many miraculous testimonies. But it’s the stories of the people who make up this miraculous culture that illustrate the lifestyle and relationships that actually create an environment that draws Heaven to earth. Our culture is what this book is about. Without understanding the core values that drive us, you won’t understand the fruit we are getting.

At the heart of this culture is a value for freedom. We don’t allow people to use this freedom to create chaos. We have boundaries, but we use these boundaries to make room for a level of personal expression that brings what is really inside of people to the surface. When people are given choices, it reveals the level of freedom they are pre-
pared to handle. When people discover their true capacity for self-control and responsibility, they then have the revelation and opportunity they need to grow toward the freedom that God desires for each of His sons and daughters.

Before we begin to explore the core values of Bethel’s culture, however, I feel it’s important to expose you to our leadership structure. Our leadership is responsible for empowering and equipping the saints with the revelation and impartation they need to exercise their freedom in a safe place, and I believe we have been successful in this because our leadership has been aligned with the apostolic and prophetic anointings. I will explain these terms and how they work in the following chapter.
RESOURCES


RECOMMENDED READING

A Life of Miracles by Bill Johnson
Basic Training for the Prophetic Ministry by Kris Vallotton
Basic Training for the Supernatural Ways of Royalty by Kris Vallotton
Developing a Supernatural Lifestyle by Kris Vallotton
Here Comes Heaven by Bill Johnson and Mike Seth
Loving Our Kids On Purpose by Danny Silk
Purity—The New Moral Revolution by Kris Vallotton
Release the Power of Jesus by Bill Johnson
Secrets to Imitating God by Bill Johnson
Strengthen Yourself in the Lord by Bill Johnson
The Happy Intercessor by Beni Johnson
The Supernatural Power of a Transformed Mind by Bill Johnson
The Supernatural Ways of Royalty by Kris Vallotton and Bill Johnson
The Ultimate Treasure Hunt by Kevin Dedmon
When Heaven Invades Earth by Bill Johnson
Available From Destiny Image Publishers
IN THE RIGHT HANDS, THIS BOOK WILL CHANGE LIVES!

Most of the people who need this message will not be looking for this book. To change their lives, you need to put a copy of this book in their hands.

But others (seeds) fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold (Matthew 13:8).

Our ministry is constantly seeking methods to find the good ground, the people who need this anointed message to change their lives. Will you help us reach these people?

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop (2 Corinthians 9:6).

EXTEND THIS MINISTRY BY SOWING
3 BOOKS, 5 BOOKS, 10 BOOKS, OR MORE TODAY, AND BECOME A LIFE CHANGER!

Thank you,

Don Nori Sr., Publisher
Destiny Image
Since 1982
DESTINY IMAGE PUBLISHERS, INC.

"Speaking in the Purposes of God for This Generation
and for the Generations to Come."

VISIT OUR NEW SITE HOME AT
www.DestinyImage.com

FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO DI NEWSLETTER
Receive free unpublished articles by top DI authors, exclusive
discounts, and free downloads from our best and newest books.
Visit www.destinyimage.com to subscribe.

Write to: Destiny Image
P.O. Box 310
Shippensburg, PA 17257-0310

Call: 1-800-722-6774

Email: orders@destinyimage.com

For a complete list of our titles or to place an order
online, visit www.destinyimage.com.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK OR FOLLOW US ON TWITTER.
www.facebook.com/destinyimage
www.twitter.com/destinyimage