

# Transforming America through Faith & Action - Pastor Corey Brooks

Featuring Pastor Corey Brooks

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## TRANSCRIPT

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Welcome, everyone, to the Wisdom and Influence podcast here at Cornerstone University. I have a very, very special guest and friend with us today, Pastor Corey Brooks. He is the pastor of New Beginnings Church in Chicago, the CEO of Project Hood, and soon to be a record champion of Walk Across America.

Pastor Brooks, thank you for joining us on the podcast.

**Corey Brooks:** Thank you. I'm excited to be here, and it's always a blessing to be here at Cornerstone.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Well, tell us first about the Walk Across America, and the idea behind it, and the theme behind it. Because when I first heard about it just a few weeks ago, I was blown away. But you tell us. Tell our audience.

**Corey Brooks:** So, we're walking from New York Times Square to Los Angeles, California. We start September the 1st. It'll take us 365 days. So it's one man, 3,000 miles, 365 days. Whew. And we're gonna raise \$25 million to go toward several things. Number one, we wanna finish the building that we're building. It's a 90,000 square foot leadership and economic opportunity center.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Wow.

**Corey Brooks:** Secondly, we wanna build a school for boys on the South Side of Chicago. And thirdly, we want to create Project Hoods in inner cities and urban areas that are in much need of bringing back faith, hope, and merit. You know, that's—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** It's beautiful. Thank you. I had—when I was visiting you just a few weeks back, I had a tour of the facility.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Congratulations.

**Corey Brooks:** Thank you.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And praise God, the beautiful, beautiful facility.

**Corey Brooks:** Praise the Lord.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And when I hear you talk to us about the school for boys, because as you know

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —we have a crisis in our country with men, and young men, and boys.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** It's almost like they've been forgotten.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** So talk to us about why, and how, and the vision for that.

**Corey Brooks:** So the vision was born out of the fact that, during COVID, we started really realizing that a lot of our young boys could not read. They were totally illiterate. And then we looked at the fact that we realized that a lot of the little boys in our community, in our institution, our organization, that could not read, that were illiterate, they were some of the most violent ones as well.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** And we said, "Listen, we have to do something about it." And then when we really found out that 6% of the children in our neighborhood were reading at grade level and 4% math level, we said, "We gotta do something." So we're starting something with these young boys to help educate them, to give them an opportunity to live the American dream.

You know, it's sad when you come across individuals who can't read, like a young man by the name of Jonathan, who's a part of our organization. Jonathan's six-month-old baby was shot and killed in his arms.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Oh.

**Corey Brooks:** And I decided, you know, I wanted to help Jonathan, and I wanted to pour into Jonathan's life. Well, I soon found out that Jonathan was part of a long line of Black boys on the South Side of Chicago that could not read.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Oh.

**Corey Brooks:** And so I never want little boys in our neighborhood growing up facing violent acts, and I never want little boys in our neighborhood growing up not knowing how to read. Because if you can't read, you definitely alienate yourself. You definitely eliminate yourself from being able to live the American dream. And we wanna create opportunity, so reading has to be done.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, I love your emphasis on the American dream—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —you know, on country and opportunity.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And it resonates with me because we—my family, I—immigrated 40 years ago.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And my father was—he would say, "We're bringing you to the land of opportunity."

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** "What you do with that is up to you."

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** "But we're bringing you there." That's it. Right? And there's this beautiful part of America and the American dream, but talk with us about—there's a lot of folks in our country who are demonizing it.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? And they lose sight of the tremendous opportunity and the great things in this country. How are you bringing, leveraging that and talking to the, in Southwest Chicago about the beautiful opportunities here?

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, absolutely. You know, there are a lot of people, like you say, who are growing up in America and they're being taught, number one, not to love God.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** Number two, they're being taught to hate America. And I believe if we're ever gonna transform communities like the one that I live in, where people are gonna find themselves trying to achieve and get out of the trenches, we gotta give them the love of Christ, and we have to allow them to have opportunities that they would not normally have.

And so it's real important that we create these opportunities. It's real important that we give them the love of Christ. It's real important that we do as much as we can, and we can't wait on government to come in and do it.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** We can't wait on someone to fly in and do it. We have to roll up our sleeves, be fully committed, and you're a prime example of what can happen when you take advantage of an opportunity that's given to you, and that's what America's all about.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** It is still, regardless of what anyone says, the land of opportunity. When I first encountered you, it was the rooftop pastor and the revelations—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —on the rooftop, and I shared with you just in a beautiful event we just had—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —the impact of seeing you and the prophetic voice—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and channeling the gospel and truth and beauty and goodness to the community. There's a lot of conversations today about what people call moral courage. But moral courage has to be focused on the right thing.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You can be courageous about the bad thing, the wrong thing.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** So talk to us about moral courage and the gospel. Absolutely. And because it seems to me that in your ministry you've brought both to bear. The gospel, but the courageous voice—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and action involved. How have you done that in your ministry? How do you model that for your people, and the young boys and girls? And—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and what would be the message for our listeners, wherever they may be, how do they bring the gospel and moral courage together?

**Corey Brooks:** Well, I'll tell you. It hasn't been easy. You know, having moral courage can sometimes be difficult, especially when you're on the South Side of Chicago, and you consider yourself to be a conservative, you consider yourself to be a Christian, a believer, and you're in the face of so many skeptics, so many people who are doubting, so many people who don't have faith. So many people that have a philosophy that to have faith in God is something that you shouldn't do. To have faith in fellow brothers and sisters, that's something that you shouldn't do. So you have to have the moral courage and the fortitude to say, "You know what, I'm gonna face these obstacles on. I'm gonna face the issues that we face in our community. I'm gonna face them head on." And you have to have the moral courage to do that, and sometimes it can be very difficult when you feel as if maybe people are not for you. But I have to keep—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Or you're alone.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, or you're alone. You're all alone, right. But I keep reminding myself, you and God can conquer absolutely anything. If you just have faith, and believe, and trust, and follow the directions of God, there's absolutely nothing that you cannot achieve.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, one of the beautiful things is how all this connected to your church—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —to the local church. Thank you. And there's a lot of conversations today, as you mentioned already, where even church-going folk—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —believe that the government is a better answer and solution—

**Corey Brooks:** For sure.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —right, than the church. So, you know, here at Cornerstone University, we have a seminary. We train future pastors and—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —future ministers. What would be your message to those men and women out there in the pews preparing for ministry about the importance of the local church—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —as God's institution, right? Absolutely, as God's institution.

**Corey Brooks:** You know, God—the Lord said in the Word, "Upon this rock I will build..." Not the Salvation Army, not the YMCA. He said, "I'm gonna build my church."

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** And so there was a popular pastor that used to say that the local church is the hope of the world.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** I believe that. I believe if you take the church out of the world, the world is gonna fall apart. It is the church that keeps the world together. It is the church that can move Christ into the hearts of people. And so we need people to realize that the church is the hope of the world. We need to take our rightful place, use our prophetic voice, our gift, skills, talents, and abilities to do everything we can to advance the Kingdom of God, to do everything we can to help transform the lives of people. Because as believers, being part of the body of Christ, that's what we're called to do. We're called to be salt in the earth. We're called to be light in the midst of darkness. And until we realize that and put forth everything that we have, the moral courage to live that out, we're not gonna achieve everything that God would have for us to achieve. But once we start really fully trying to live that out and believe it and do it, there's so much in store for us.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** It's easy to see your ministry, Pastor Brooks, and you see, as an outsider, we outsiders looking, you see the achievements.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, the building being built, the walk, and so on, but there are some hard days, I'm sure.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely. Some hard days.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yes. Some days of waiting and waiting and praying. And so talk to us a little bit about that part of your story and journey—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —which is a very important part. I think it's where the real work gets done sometimes.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** What has that been like for you?

**Corey Brooks:** You know, when someone asks me to tell them the hard part, I have to take a deep breath because I don't wanna start crying. Because I think a lot of times people see your success, and they see the achievements, like you said, but they don't understand the heartache and the struggle that went behind it.

And so the sleepless nights on a motel roof trying to accomplish a dream, you know. We're building this 90,000 square foot center, and it's 60% complete. But people don't realize that it's taken us almost 15 years just to get to the point of this.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Wow.

**Corey Brooks:** So if you could imagine saying something, believing God for something for 15 years, and steady telling your church it's gonna happen, and they're looking at you like, "Okay, when is it gonna happen?" And those can—it can be very tough. But I'm so thankful, for whatever reason, that God chose me and placed me on the South Side of Chicago, and I'm glad that He gave me the gift of faith to keep

believing even when it doesn't look good, even when it looks impossible. And so I'm just thankful to God that He's given me a mustard seed faith—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** —in the face of adversity and hard times to just trust Him without a shadow of a doubt that it's gonna happen.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, Pastor Brooks, thank you. I would love for our listeners to hear maybe one or two of the incredible transformative stories—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —of the men and women or young boys and girls that you serve and your team serves. When I was there, I was moved. I shared with you just a few hours ago at the event, seeing the little boys running around—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and seeing your team helping and blessing. It was very moving, beautiful. But maybe you can tell our listeners, here are some stories of men and women that normally would be left behind.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely. First of all, there are so many stories. There's so many individuals who have totally transformed their lives. But we have a violence prevention team, and our violence prevention team is made up of five different gangs, and from those five different gangs, we have five individuals who all work full time. So that's 25 people on this violence prevention team that all participated in gang lifestyle. We took them through transformation. Meaning we taught them conflict resolution, we talked with them about their faith, we helped them to heal from some of their own personal traumas, and then on top of that, we got them all to work together.

The amazing thing about that is that some of these guys were arch enemies, and about a few months ago we had one of our staffers sit down with another one of our staffers, and it was the first time they had really asked for forgiveness for something that happened, and I didn't even know that it happened.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Wow.

**Corey Brooks:** But I found out that this individual shot this other individual. They never talked about it. They never discussed it. They didn't tell the police who did it. But everyone knew who did it, and they wanted to have a—we have these things called a peace circle, and they wanted to have a peace circle moment. And when I found out what really happened and how they were able to forgive one another—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Wow.

**Corey Brooks:** —and move on, I thought to myself, "That's worth all of it." And so that's the type of work that we do on the South Side, and that's the type of work that I'm really excited about.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Thank you. Yeah. That's powerful. I want to ask you to speak to the young generations for the future, young people who will listen to this, students, college students, high school students. Someone sent a post to me yesterday that there are some in Gen Z who believe that they are the best hope for the future of America—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —young people. Young people are very skeptical today of religion—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —of churches, of institutions, and yet some say they're maybe one of the most spiritual—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —generically so, generations ever, who are looking for—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —direction. And so just talk to them as a ministry leader, as a man, as a CEO and entrepreneur about what would your message be for young men, young women everywhere—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —who will listen to this about the future and the opportunity?

**Corey Brooks:** Oh, yeah. My message would be simple, two words: yield early. Yield to God as early as possible. One of the greatest things that ever happened in my life is when I was 19 years old, I finally came to a realization that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that I am called to do ministry.

And I think about so many of my friends who were with me and decided to go the other direction, and some of them aren't even here today. Some of them may be even locked up and in jail. Some of them have gone through some horrible experiences. But for whatever reason, God saved me, and I believe it's because I yielded early.

So I tell people, "Give God your life while you can. Sell out to Him while you can. Give all of your gifts, skills, talents, and abilities while you can, and He will honor that. He will bless you beyond your wildest imagination." If someone had told me that I would be where I am today, I would have never believed it. But I know it's only because—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** —I yielded early. And so I want to encourage every young person to give God your life. Work as hard as you possibly can for Him. And there's an old saying: you pray like it all depends on Him, and then you work like it all depends on you. So.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** That's right. And the theme of your walk across America, I believe it's merit—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —faith, and family.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** So talk to us about why those three pillars. Very important pillars.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** But talk to us about those three pillars.

**Corey Brooks:** So we wanted to deal with merit because we're living in a day and time, especially in our neighborhood, where people are saying that, you know, get rid of all the standards. Just become a victim of your circumstances. And we wanted to make sure that people understand that, listen, we don't need standards to be lowered. There's a certain responsibility and a certain amount of integrity, and a certain amount of courage and wisdom that comes from work, and rolling your sleeves up.

So we wanted to deal with merit. And then we wanted to deal with faith because we're living in a day and a time, unfortunately, where people are turning away from God. People are resisting the truth. They're running after all kinds of ideas and philosophies and ideologies. And we wanted to say, "Hey, listen, no, let's come back to God. Let's have a revival for America one block at a time, and give people an honest view of what Christ looked like."

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** And so we wanna show people the love of Christ in practical ways. And then the hope, we just wanna inspire people. We wanna have families come back together and let people know that we can have healthy, thriving families in America. You know, there are so many families that are falling apart.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** And there's so many neighborhoods that are suffering from absent this and absent that.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** But we believe that family and family values are still a must.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, all this is rooted in the gospel.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? In the gospel. And, you know, it was interesting, the latest issue of the magazine *The Christian Century*—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —it's a progressive magazine—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —Christian magazine. There's a feature, center feature on the importance or maybe the necessity of blending religions so that I become multi-religious.

**Corey Brooks:** Wow.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? And so this whole article—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —on being multi-religious.

**Corey Brooks:** Mm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And it reminded me of just the importance of the gospel.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** The centrality of the gospel, right?

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Of Jesus Christ.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** The gospel. So talk to us about that in Southwest Chicago, the importance of the gospel because family, faith, all these things are rooted in that, and yet today there's a lot of push against the gospel. Even in the religious community.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? There is so much push against the gospel.

**Corey Brooks:** You know, I tell people Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." By the way, that's our theme for this year at Crossroads.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Oh, well, see, hey, that's the theme. I'm right on, I'm right in the right place then. I'm in the right place.

**Corey Brooks:** And that's the centrality of the gospel. I believe He is the way. I believe He is the truth, and I believe He is the light. And I tell people He is the way. Without Him, there is no going. He is the truth. Without Him, there is no knowing.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** He is the life. Without Him, there is no living. And that is what the gospel is all about.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah. I may use that, but I promise—

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —I will cite you if I do. That's a good point.

**Corey Brooks:** Throw a poem on it and an ending, and you got it.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** But no, it's, you know, we were thinking about that at Cornerstone. I mean, our mission, educating influencers in the world—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —for Jesus Christ. And several years ago, when in my second year here, we thought long and hard about that mission and realized that you can't have that mission be true if Christ is not at the center—

**Corey Brooks:** Definitely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —of everything you do.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** That He becomes your greatest influencer.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? And so this push and move away from the gospel, we can be spiritual and religious—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and put it together ourselves.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** But the gospel's different, and—

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —and it's the answer. It's the powerhouse. It's the power of God—

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —as Paul tells us in Romans 1.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, absolutely. You know, there was a time in our neighborhood, in our culture, where Christ was first and foremost.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Mm.

**Corey Brooks:** But over the years, we've seen the decline of that, and with that decline, we've also experienced the decline of families.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** We've just experienced the decline of education. We've experienced the decline of economics. Everything in our community seems to be going down, and I think that is directly tied to the fact that we have put Christ on the back burner.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** But my prayer is, and my goal is, to bring Him to the forefront, so He can have His rightful place in our community and in our lives.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, I remember years ago having a conversation with someone about some significant social ill, social problems. And we were having—it was a very intense conversation. I shared with the individual, "Well, the scripture says this, and the gospel says this," and this person said to me, "We tried that, and it didn't work, so we need to try something different."

**Corey Brooks:** Wow.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? And I've always—that conversation has been in the forefront of my mind. We tried it, and it didn't work.

**Corey Brooks:** Mm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And it seemed to me that oftentimes the failures of us as Christians—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —to live out the gospel faithfully—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —oftentimes is interpreted as the gospel just doesn't work.

**Corey Brooks:** I agree.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? So help us to think through that, for our listeners and others. How do we... You know, there is that issue of we're fallen people.

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** We're works in progress.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** But you can't throw the gospel out because of that.

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah, yeah. You know, there used to be an old Negro spiritual that they would sing way back in the day, "The Blood Still Works."

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Come on.

**Corey Brooks:** The Blood Still Works. And you know, I think you can apply that to Christ. He still works. And no matter what anyone says, and no matter what the world does, Christ still works. If we can get Christ into the hearts of people, we'll see lives transformed, we'll see families being brought back together, we'll see communities being brought back together. And it's gonna take people like you and me and other believers to take a stand and say, "Listen, we're not gonna allow Christ to be put on the back burner. We're not gonna allow people to neglect the message of the gospel. We're gonna stand boldly, and we're gonna proclaim, and we're gonna be prophetic with our voice, and we're gonna declare the righteousness of Jesus Christ and what we believe He can do for you. And we're gonna line up as many testimonies as we—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** —possibly can, and stories as we possibly can to show people that the blood still works."

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, I would love for our listeners to get a peek into your thinking about this. How do we deal with how Christianity has become politicized?

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Right? I mean, it just has.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** But then again, everything else has.

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Baseball, music, cooking, you name it—

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —it's become all politicized, unfortunately. But Christianity has become that. It's become this sort of political wrecking ball for everyone to kick around. And when that happens, the centrality and the beauty and the purity of the gospel gets lost. Right? Not that politics doesn't matter.

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** We have to be there.

**Corey Brooks:** Yes.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** We have to have those conversations and be there. How have you worked through that in your ministry when it's easy for someone to peg you or to peg me as you're this—

**Corey Brooks:** Mm-hmm.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —or you're that because you say this—

**Corey Brooks:** Yeah.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** —or you're for this? Right. How have you worked through that to focus on the purity of the gospel and the beauty of opportunity?

**Corey Brooks:** Absolutely. I try to stay with the supremacy of scripture. I try to stay with the inerrancy of scripture for me. I believe that scripture is how we live out our life, and I believe that you put that in the forefront. And when you do, you'll find out that sometimes scripture does not line up with your right way of thinking or your left way of thinking.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** It's its own way of thinking, and it's a Christ-centered way of thinking. And so I try to make sure that I live out a biblical perspective and a biblical mindset in a world that is totally contrary to the word of God. And regardless if it's right or left, I try to always say, "You know, what does the Bible say, and what does scripture say about this situation?" And I try to teach our church that as well. And sometimes that's hard, because in our neighborhood a lot of people have grown up with a liberal way of thinking—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** —or a leftist way of thinking. And to tell them something different can sometimes bring on a fight. But if you can get people to understand that it's about the scripture—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** —not about being left or right, but it's about being Christ-centered on the word of God.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Pastor Brooks, I want to give you an opportunity to speak directly to our listeners now.

**Corey Brooks:** Okay.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** You know, sort of the closing words, what message would you have for them? We'll have the Cornerstone University community listening, and friends, and alum, and others. What would be your message for them as you think about the future of our country, the opportunity? I mean, I love the vision of a leadership center like Project Hood in every community. Powerful and beautiful. So what would be your message for them that you want them to really think about and take with?

**Corey Brooks:** You know, I would say, listen, in this day and time, we need every single believer to give their time, their talent, and their treasure. To find institutions—

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Yeah.

**Corey Brooks:** —like Cornerstone University that line up with their values, and give them everything you have so that they can... Because institutions like Cornerstone, institutions like Project Hood and New Beginning Church, we're on the front lines of the fight, and we need all the resources, all the help that we can possibly give. And there are so many people who are sitting on their apathy who could very well help our organizations to reach more people and be even better.

So I would tell people, listen, if you have some time, give it. If you have talent, sow it. If you have treasure, give it. And what better way to live your life and to see where your gifts are going than to do it while you're alive? You can't do it after that. Impossible, right?

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Pastor Brooks, thank you for being with us. Blessings to you on your walk across America.

**Corey Brooks:** Thank you.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** And I'll see you on the walk, right?

**Corey Brooks:** I'll be on the walk. I will be on the walk. I will let you know. Would definitely want to do that.

**Gerson Moreno-Riaño:** Absolutely. And I'm so grateful that you're here with us today and for our new Golden Eagle partnership, and it's gonna be a beautiful blessing for us and for you, and we're grateful to do it together.

**Corey Brooks:** Thank you. It's a blessing to be here, and a blessing to be a part of the Cornerstone family.

#### TRANSCRIPT NOTICE

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