Community, Week 5

Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Oct 19th

OCT 19TH SERMON SUMMARY

Authentic Community (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

While there is no formula for developing authentic Christian community, the core will always be the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (v. 2).

- People today crave authenticity and recognize inauthenticity in our media driven culture. We respond to inauthenticity by seeking out what's real (craft, process, journey).
- Definition of authenticity*: true to one's own personality, spirit, character; made or done in same way as original (i.e. Christ-like); not false, not imitation.
- The challenge: What is authentic community and how do we build it? We can't explain it, but like Paul, we grapple with how to live *knowing nothing except Jesus Christ crucified*.

Nick shared personal examples from his college, young adult, and young family experiences. It's not easy and there are a lot of reasons not to engage, but whatever courage and attempts we make to invest in people, God will honor and use them to transform us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION: Do you have a radar for inauthenticity? Share one way you crave authenticity, or recognize when something is fake.

IL THINK AND REFLECT.

Read 1 Cor. 2:1-5.

> And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2** For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. **3** I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. **4** My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, **5** so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

1a. Using the definition above (*), how is Paul authentic?

b. Why is this so remarkable? Think about Paul's purpose, culture, audience, etc.

2. Think and talk about the 3 experiences Nick shared:

- in the dorm, in a house with 6 very different guys
- with roommates in Sacramento, and the late night talk with Justin
- as a young family, spending weekends with the Kawamuras.

a. What stood out to you, or appealed to you, in these examples of community?

b. What are the challenges you saw in building community?

c. How did these communities impact Nick?

d. Share any similar examples of community you have had, and how they impacted you.

3. Think about authentic community.

a. While it is difficult to explain, what makes a community authentic to you?

b. *For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified* (v.2). How is this central to Christian community? How does it change the way we relate to others?

c. Why do you think this single-mindedness is so difficult to achieve and maintain?

d. What hopes does this awaken in you for your communities (small group, CBC, or others)?

III. PERSONAL APPLICATION (Choose 1 of the following if time is limited)

4. What makes your small group an authentic community?

- How have you been blessed, transformed, molded, changed by your group, or by specific people in the group? Tell them what you appreciate about them.
- How would you like to grow in authenticity with your group?

5. What feels scary, threatening, or difficult about authentic community? How do you want to trust God to help you face those difficulties?

6. What do you need Jesus to do for you today to grow in authenticity and community?

As you share prayer requests and pray for one another, remember to try to share about your own needs; try to work toward sharing from the heart, instead of talking about the needs of others. Your small group really wants to support and pray for YOU, more than they want to pray for your relatives, friends, and neighbors.