

essentials

Essentials- Part 4 Sermon Discussion Notes

Opening Thought

Have you ever noticed how people are different? Just as no two snowflakes are the same no two people are alike. Some people are extraverted, some are introverted and some are occasionally introverted and extraverted. Some people like sports and some people do not like sports. Among those that like sports one may like basketball while others like ice hockey. Some people are rich and some people are not so rich (while just about everyone wishes they were rich). It seems as if people on this planet are like a giant box of animal crackers; we all are just a bit differently shaped. The church is also made up of great diversity. Ironically, we as very different people are called to live in fellowship with each other as believers in Christ. The word for "fellowship" in the Greek language is *koinonia*. Although we are very different in vocation, personality and personal preferences we all have this in common: we have received Jesus as Lord and we have a passion to love him with all our heart and share his love with the world.

Discussion Questions

1. When we become Christians, according to the verses below, we are called not only into relationship with God but with each other as well. Read and discuss the scriptures below regarding our connection not only to God but to each other.

1 John 1:1-3 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that *you also may have fellowship with us*. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. NIV

1 John 1:7 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, *we have fellowship with one another*, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. NIV

2. Underline or highlight the words below that indicate we have a special relationship not only to God but his sons and daughters as well.

Galatians 6:10

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to *the family of believers*. NIV (See Psalm 68:6)

Ephesians 3:14 14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom *his whole family* in heaven and on earth derives its name. NIV

3. How does the first word in the Lord's Prayer show we are part of a spiritual family? "Our Father which art in Heaven" Matthew 6:9
4. The early church had two levels of fellowship small and big. Discuss how they did this according to the passages below.

Acts 5:42 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house , they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. NIV

Acts 2:42-43 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. NIV

5. How frequent should we be involved in cooperate worship according to the verse in Hebrews below?

Hebrews 10:24-25 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching. NIV

6. What are the benefits of being in regular fellowship? What is one of the main things we derive from regular fellowship?
7. What are the barriers to regular fellowship?
8. What kind of things can we do personally to seek out fellowship?
9. Share with the group how important fellowship has been to your personal Christian life?
10. How can you individually and collectively in your group reach out to others that are need of fellowship?

Concluding Thought

God is a God of community. He loves for us to not only enjoy his presence but also to enjoy and be connected to others who we will spend eternity with.