

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

Feb 14th, 2024

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. When you park in a parking lot, do you drive around to find the best, closest, etc. spot, do you take whatever you see first, or something else? What do you think your habit says about you?

Bible Study Questions

1. What kind of stereotypes do you think that most people have about the church?
2. What would your ideal church community be like?
 - How do you think that God envisions the church?
3. Pastor Michael talked about both pride and insecurity as causing division in the church. How do they both do that?
 - When was a time that pride impacted your relationship with others?
 - When was a time that insecurity impacted your relationships with others?
4. Read Philippians 2:1-11
 - What does Paul teach about the way that the church should interact with each other?
 - Paul challenges us to value others above ourselves and to look out for the interests of others. Being that we are naturally self centered people, how do we shift our focus from ourselves to others?
5. In Philippians 2:6-11, Paul talks about the example of Jesus. How does the work of God dismantle both pride and insecurity?
6. Christians should be the most humble people (knowing that they are sinners in need of a savior) and the most confident people (knowing that they are the beloved of God). What does this look like in your life? How can you grow in that area?

7. The church is meant to be a place where people of all different backgrounds can find love and community through Christ (Colossians 3:11). How can you help further that type of community at Crosspoint?

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Don't Look Down on Each Other

In our individualistic society, we forget that much of the New Testament was given to a community and contains teachings on how to relate to each other. When the church functions as God intended, it is an incredible force to draw people toward Christ. Sadly, we allow sin to get into the way and often present a broken view of God to the world. Over the next weeks we are going to look at what the Bible teaches about community and ask the question, "what if the church really took these things seriously?"

I. Two community killers

- a. **Pride:** Pride always divides. 1 Corinthians 11 and James 2 tells the story of divisions within the early church due to the pride of wealthier members. Pride puts us in a position of privilege where it is impossible to serve others.
- b. **Insecurity:** Insecurity tells us that we have nothing to give. Whether one has been haunted by guilt or the abuse of others, the result is that one withdraws because of their shortcomings. Ironically, many people have a both pride and insecurity operating in their lives at the same time.

II. The answer

- **Shift the focus from ourselves to others:** In Philippians 2:1-4, Paul pleads with the church to be unified. He tells them to value each other above themselves and to look out for the interests of each other. This involves a powerful switch from looking either at our own ego or shortcomings, to look out for others.
- **Shift from one's own actions to what God has done for me:** In the following verses, Paul shares the story of Jesus who gave up his life for us. What enables us to choose humility is knowing that God has already taken that step on our behalf. The result is that we are forgiven and restored to a right place with God.
- **Embrace my position as a sinner loved by God:** A famous 12th century preacher was named Bernard of Clairvoux. He used to teach that as one grew spiritually, they shifted from loving themselves to loving God. First they loved God because of what he had done, then they loved God because of who he was. Then ultimately, they began to love themselves because they shared in the heart of God. When one really considers what God has done for them, they live with a paradox. They live with the humility of knowing that they are sinners in need of a savior. But they also live with the confidence of knowing that they are the

beloved of God. Embracing this position enables us to defeat both pride and insecurity.

Conclusion

In Colossians 3:11, Paul casts a vision for the church being a place where people of different backgrounds are all one in Christ. The gospel was able to erase the divisions of pride and insecurity. What if Crosspoint took this seriously? What if we modeled to the world that kind of community that the gospel creates? It would be exactly what a divisive world needs to see.