

LEAD SHEET

REAL CHURCH : Week 2

Community

June 25, 2017

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:

DIALOGUE WITH GOD

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, TALK TO HIM!

GETTING STARTED

Obviously, we prefer the items in our life to be authentic. We prefer real over fake. However, we live in a world full of imitations. Many of us will settle for fake as long as we think we will not be found out. Some of us will fall for fake and not know the difference. When we begin talking about community, we need to realize that there are plenty of counterfeit types of communities out there. We also need to realize that when we talk about community, we are always referring to the people. The difference between a community and a neighborhood is that a community refers to people, while a neighborhood refers to location. Because we are the Church, we will always be referred to as a community of believers. We are the people of God.

General Discussion:

- What do you think a "fake" community looks like? (Liars, hypocrites, people who are not really friends, do not really know each other, etc.)
- What does a "real" community look like? (People are loving, helpful, sharing, kind, etc.)
- What kills a "real" community? (Hate, disunity, selfishness, racism, etc.)

One big lie that kills community, in our culture, is that the individual is more important than the group. Romans 12:3 calls us to submit our lives to one another in humility. However, if we become isolated and individualized we can become puffed up with pride and not see our need for community.

DIGGING IN

General Discussion:

- What is the Church? (*God's people, disciples, missionaries, servants, followers of Jesus.*)
- What are some things the Church is not? (*Building, an event, a rock show, or a business.*)
- What would it look like if we just focused on being the Church by its real definition? (*People would love each other, serve one another, share with each other, etc.*)

The Greek word for Church is *ekklesia* (pronounced ek-klay-see'-ah). When used outside the New Testament, this word meant an assembly of people. However, in the New Testament, it is used 114 times and takes on a new meaning. In the New Testament, the definition expands to the people of God (whether they are gathered in an assembly or not.) An example of this is found in Acts 5:11 where “a great fear spreads through the entire Church.” During this time, the Church was scattered, so we begin to see that the word Church refers to much more than a Sunday morning event.

General Discussion:

- Why is it important for us to realize that the Church is the people? (Because that is what the Bible teaches, if we think of it as otherwise, we are missing out.)
- What would happen if we focus on the incorrect meaning of Church? (People fall through the cracks, are hurt, and do not get to know Jesus.)

MAKING IT REAL

Read Ephesians 1:18-23

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is in charge of the Church? (Jesus.)
2. What is the Church compared to in this passage? (Christ's body.)
3. How does real community operate like a body? (Everything works together, functions for one purpose.)

When we start with real community, we have to start with Jesus. There are communities that center on football teams or age groups, but the community of the Church is centered completely on Jesus.

Now that we understand how the Church belongs to Jesus, let's look at the purpose for His Church. As members of the

Church, we should move outward, share the Gospel, and expand our “real” community. This gives us purpose and meaning for our own lives within the Church.

Read Acts 2:41-42

Discussion Questions:

1. After 3,000 people were added to the Church, how did the people behave? (They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer.)
2. How is this similar or different from what we do today? (Allow for discussion.)

Read 1 Peter 2:9-10

Discussion Questions:

1. What actions did the Church take in this passage? (The Church declares God’s praises for calling them out of darkness.)
2. Since we have received mercy, how should we show mercy to others? (By showing kindness to others, helping the helpless, etc.)
3. How does mercy come into play when we refer to “real” community? (*Feed the homeless, forgive an enemy, go on a mission trip, etc.*)

Read Acts 4:32-35

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the Church act in this passage? (*Unselfish, generous, kind.*)
2. Do we still act this way today? (*Allow for discussion.*)
3. In what ways can we improve on these actions? (*Be willing to sacrifice for others.*)

We know that the Church is not an event or a business. It is a living organism. The Church is a body. We are a family. We should be the tightest community that the world will ever experience. When our minds are changed to see what “real” community looks like, then our actions will also change.

CLOSING PRAYER

Close in prayer, asking that God help your students create strong bonds among other believers.