

CROSSROADS BIBLE CHURCH

GROWTH GROUP CURRICULUM

June 9, 2019

"CITY OF GOD" - Week 5

For more information or to join a Growth Group, please visit our Growth Group page online at cbclife.org/groups or call the church office at 408.288.4115.

QUICK REVIEW

For those who weren't there or even those who didn't understand it very well it will help them to get acquainted with the text and topic. These questions are also designed to be "softball" questions in order to get people to engage and participate.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

This is an opportunity to clarify the teaching for those who may not have understood it. This can also be a jumping off point for great discussion. Sometimes groups don't get past this question and that's ok! Remember, you want to "scratch where it itches" so don't feel the need to rush past this.

2. What is one thing from Sunday's message you are likely to remember two weeks from now?

MY STORY

3. How did you first hear the Gospel?

This question is very biographical and should help your group to share some aspects of their faith journey. You may want to ask a follow up question along the lines of: "Was there anything special about the person or community that gave the message more credibility?" We want to wrestle with what true "witness" entails.

4. On Sunday we learned that there is a credibility that comes if you are consistent in your behavior. Do people notice your lifestyle and that of your community? Do they appreciate it, even if they don't understand it? Share examples.

We don't want to go around patting ourselves on the back for how great we are at witnessing. It may be helpful however to see if your group can distill any common aspects of their life which are particularly noticeable to those outside the community.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read aloud Acts 2:42-47 which describes the early church, and then work through the questions below.

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

1. What do we discover about how the early church learned together? What do we discover about fellowship and service? What can we learn from this?

Learned together - They were devoted to the teaching (vv. 42) and they learned daily (vv. 46) It is also worth nothing that while they learned together everyday, they lived it out practically each day.

Fellowship of service - All of their service was connected to caring for others in the community.

2. The early church were so involved with each other that they had fellowship "every day." Do you have fellowship with another Christian every day? Is this possible? Why or why not?

This question is meant to invite an honest discussion of the differences between our context and that of the first Christians. As a group try to decide what the realistic corollary to this framework might look like here and now.

3. What do we discover about how the early church worshiped and how they witnessed to others? What can we learn from this?

These may have been answered in th previous discussion but be sure your group recognizes the key aspects and connection between their generosity, community, and doctrine. The lives they lived were in response to the Apostles teaching about grace.

****This is in stark contrast to those who would argue that all religion is simply fear based control.**

4. British theologian Lesslie Newbigin observes:

"The gospel does not become public truth for a society by being propagated as a theory or as a worldview and certainly not as a religion. It can become public truth only insofar as it is embodied in a society (the church) which is both "abiding in" Christ and engaged in the life of the world."

Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not? Share examples.

Theologian N.T. Wright makes the following statement in his book *The Challenge of Jesus*:

"The gospel of Jesus points us and indeed urges us to be at the leading edge of the whole culture, articulating in story and music and art and philosophy and education and poetry and politics and theology ... a worldview that will mount the historically rooted Christian challenge to both modernity and postmodernity, leading the way into the post-postmodern world with joy and humor and gentleness and good judgment and true wisdom. I believe we face the question: if not now, then when? And if we are grasped by this vision, we may also hear the question: if not us, then who? And if the gospel of Jesus is not the key to this task, then what is?"

5. Why do you think Wright is suggesting that the Gospel transforms not just our hearts but our music, art, philosophy, education, poetry, politics, etc... ? What will those areas look like being transformed by the Gospel?

While Christians should be wise and discerning and not out of touch, we should also be the ones with the most hope and the most joy even in the face of societal strife. In light of our affection for Christ and the gift of grace the contributions Christians make in the areas of art, philosophy and education should represent a rich counter-narrative to expressions that are less hopeful.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Fathers Day Burgers and Brats. Bring your Dad to church and enjoy a special “meat treat” in his honor after service.
- This Saturday is Ernie Cota’s Celebration of Life at Crossroads at 11 am