

Foundation Series

Week 5 – Outreach/Mission

Big Idea- Being a part of a care group will enhance our ability to be people of influence. We can help each other become more effective and intentional in our efforts to share Christ with those whom the Father has placed in our sphere of influence.

Engage

- Describe a time in your life/experience when you were part of something bigger than yourself, when you accomplished something together that you could not do on your own- something of significance.
 - Describe how that has impacted you.
- What comes to mind when you hear the following words: evangelism, outreach, witnessing?
- Why do these words have a negative connotation to some people?
 - our culture values tolerance, acceptance of everyone’s personal belief system.
 - The idea that I would somehow try to influence you to adopt or impose my belief system on you is met with resistance, or even overt hostility

Explore

[Acts 1:8](#) - 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and [you will be my witnesses](#) in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A8&version=NIV>

“You will be my witnesses.”

- What does a witness do?
- Testifies to what they have seen/heard/experienced personally.
- Their personal experience validates the truth that is being conveyed.

[Matt 5:13-16](#) - 13 “[You are the salt of the earth](#). But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 “[You are the light of the world](#). A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, [that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven](#).”

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matt+5%3A13-16&version=NIV>

What are the 2 primary functions of salt? Particularly in that culture?

- Salt was used as a preservative to prevent food from spoiling.
- As disciples, what is it we are seeking to preserve?
 - ["that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."](#)
- How can we do that without becoming offensive?

“You are the salt of the earth”

- Our calling- “[you will be...](#)” not an option, not a program that we sign up for.
- It’s who we are. Being a person of influence to those within your sphere of influence.

What are some of the mistakes that the church, or people within the church, has made over the years in terms of trying to be a preserving agent?

- The church has been reactionary, at times even heavy-handed. (gay rights, politics, religious division)
- We do a better job of declaring what we are “against” as opposed to being part of a solution, offering a “better way”.

What are some examples of where we as the church can not only address the issue but be part of the solution?

- At times the church has over-valued things that aren’t necessarily meant to be preserved (traditions, ministry techniques, cultural values that have become “enshrined) and have not valued things that are truly important.
- Salt was used for flavoring - What is one of the unique properties or characteristics about salt as a flavoring agent?
- The right amount creates a desire/thirst for more
- Too much and it becomes distasteful/unpleasant. “I bet you can’t eat just one!”

Jesus says “if salt loses its saltiness, it is no longer good for anything”

What do you think Jesus is getting at here in terms of our involvement with those whom we are seeking to influence and introduce to Christ? Can there be too much of a good thing?”

- perhaps he is saying there is an appropriate level of involvement and engagement.
- Part of being a person of influence is learning to be sensitive to what the other person needs at that particular moment in time

“you are the Light of the World” (perhaps “to the world”) and the light cannot be hidden.

What is the underlying assumption here?

- When we live with integrity and intentionality, people can’t help but see the presence of Christ in us.
- The difference that Christ makes should be evident to those who are close enough to notice

Imagine you were lost in the dark and you spotted a light in the distance. What would that light provide for you?

- light provides orientation and direction (i.e- a search light/lighthouse, runway lights)- a clear sense of direction- this is the way you want to go
- light provides a sense of hope- this is the way home

According to Verse 16, what is the light, what is it that is being seen by those in the dark?

- It’s our “good deeds”- the acts of service, kindness and even sacrifice that are seen by others and then provide a backdrop or opportunity to share the hope we have in Christ.
- What is the result when we live that way?
- We earn the respect and trust of people, and ultimately, it is the Father who gets the credit.

Apply

True community comes from being on mission together, rather than simply "coming together" to study/talk/share.

The title of this discussion is “Better Together” How can being a part of a group like this make us more effective as we seek to influence those whom God has placed within our sphere of influence?

- We do not simply talk about what we "should do" or "could do"; but there is a follow-through.
- One of the characteristics of a healthy group is that it looks for opportunities to serve together.

What does severing together do for you as a group and for the community/people you serve?

- Serving others in the name of Christ draws a group together and fosters the sense of community.

Where do you start when it comes to serving?

- We can leverage our talents and resources. Start by looking at what talents/skills/gifts you have. What do you do for a living?
- Trusting God and taking a step of faith into something you have no experience with.
- Ask "Who do we/I want to influence?" and find a way to connect/plug-in with them.
- We can be praying for each other, and the people in whom we see the Spirit at work
- We can share our relationships. For example, we can entertain with a purpose, seeking to connect people within our spheres of relationships (Introduce our non-Christian friends to our Christian friends in a very natural way)