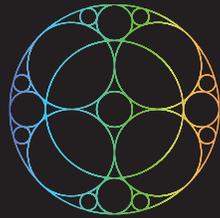


Discussion Guide.

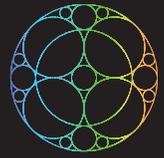


The Church I See

WEEK .04

IS PASSIONATE ABOUT _____

Teaching Text



(NIV) Exodus 33:12-17

Moses said to the Lord, “You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, ‘I know you by name and you have found favor with me.’ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people.”

The Lord replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”

And the Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”

(NKJV) Psalm 27:4

One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.

Recap

This week Banning Liebscher continues the series called “**The Church I See**”, by reminding us that we are a church that pursues God’s Presence. Our foundation is made up by a set of core values which we live by, and each value guides the decisions we make. When we are faced with a choice, the decision is made for us by the values we choose to live by. For example, if generosity is a core value, we make the choice to give freely rather than be stingy with what we have.

In Exodus 33 Moses is faced with a life-altering decision. In this portion of Scripture God is angered by the Israelites and on the verge of wiping them out and starting over. Moses intercedes on their behalf and pleads with God, so the Lord relents. God agrees to let the Israelites go into the Promised Land with His Angel who would drive out the enemies in the land, a land flowing with milk and honey. But God would not go with them and they would be without His Presence.

Moses did not hesitate in making his decision and declined the offer to enter into the Promised Land. He would rather stay in the wilderness with God’s Presence than enter into the Promised Land without Him. Moses didn’t hesitate,

because he wasn’t in pursuit of the Promised Land, he was in pursuit of God’s Presence. Moses had a core value for the Presence of God.

As believers, we face frustration when we are in pursuit of the promise instead of His Presence. We are going to be a people of His Presence above all else. Moses and David both shared this as a core value and it is seen throughout their lives. In order to be a people of His Presence, we must redefine success. Moses and David defined success simply as: God’s Presence is with us. He alone is our reward.

We are going to be a people in pursuit of one thing – the Presence of Jesus in our midst. What Moses understood was that all that they needed was found in God’s Presence and all that they had to offer was God’s Presence. Moses knew that the only thing that would satisfy the cry of His heart was God’s Presence and the only thing that set them apart was God’s Presence. It is not our programs, planning, or strategy that changes people, it’s His Presence. One moment in His Presence can accomplish more than a lifetime of effort.

Discussion Guide

EMOTIONAL HEALTH CHECK IN

Take a few minutes to do an emotional health check in with your Community, creating space for each person to answer the question below:

In what areas of your life do you feel like you are bumping up against your limits? Do you sense any invitation from God as you notice these limits?

If the need arises, spend a few minutes praying for one another, asking God to meet needs and help each person carry what feels heavy right now.

ENGAGE

1. What are some of the non-negotiables in your life and how do they affect your decision-making?
2. When you think about the decision Moses was faced with, do you think you would have easily made the same one? Are there areas in your life where you are seeking the promise over His Presence?
3. How have you defined success in your own life? What would it look like to define it simply as: God's Presence is with you?

4. What are some specific ways your life has been transformed by an encounter with Him?

ENCOUNTER

Spend a few minutes in stillness and quiet (you may want to play soaking music) in your group and ask Holy Spirit the following question:

Am I truly hungry for your Presence alone and nothing else? Are there areas in my life where I have pursued the promise over your Presence? Ask the Holy Spirit for a fresh hunger and an outpouring of His Spirit.

If time permits, allow those who want to, share what God spoke to them during the Encounter time.

EQUIP

Spend some time this week feasting on His Presence. Set aside space in your day to just encounter Him. Put on some worship music and spend a few minutes simply resting in His Presence. Journal any revelations or encounters you experience during this time.

