



A PEOPLE IN A PLACE, WEEK 7

“MORE GOOD THAN HARM”

SPEAKER: ALEX LESSLER

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. They can help you understand and apply the teaching.

BIBLICAL TEXT(S) + MESSAGE SUMMARY:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

In the passage for this message, Paul constructs an argument from the Corinthians lived experience that shows how what we call communion points to everything else. He confronts them, explaining that the way the go about sharing the Lord's Table is doing more harm than good. He then goes on to cite examples from their culture that have influenced their gatherings in unwholesome ways, blunting their public expression of God's Kingdom and his King, Jesus. He also shows them the redemptive side of those associations.

In the process, the Apostle shows how the Gospel redeems all things and makes them right, but only when Jesus is held at the center. As the Scriptures say (Colossians 1:16), “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”

LEAN IN: These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What was it like the last time you were invited to a party?
2. Describe the last time you had a really good time with friends that felt like genuine community.
3. Have you ever been sidelined by a clique, a groups that excludes you? What was that like for you?

LOOK DOWN: These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. How do you think a gathering of Christians might do “more harm than good?”
2. What have you gathered over the course of series might be dividing this church? Do you think Paul gets that differences are okay, and maybe even good? Why or why not?
3. What does Paul say is the result of the Corinthian's Table gatherings? How does that reflect the love and humility of Jesus.
4. What's the purpose of sharing the Lord's Table and how we're supposed to celebrate it?
5. Paul says they should, “...all eat together...”, which is a very simple phrase. How would you unpack its meaning for someone who is new to Christianity?

CONTINUED:

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. You don't have to look hard see divisions in our society? What causes them? Is it only "differences", or something more? If so, what?
2. What are the advantages of differences within a culture or community? Where do you see some "differences" stop being helpful and start eroding community?
3. What's the best example of community you've seen within our culture? How do people achieve that kind of inclusion? What binds them together?
4. Where do you see the truths of God expressed outside the Church, if at all? Where do you see the Gospel pointing to things outside the Church, especially things God's doing in the world?
5. Where do you see the surrounding culture influencing the Church, and what's the result? Is it usually positive and redemptive, or does it more often have a negative impact? Why do you see it that way?

LOOK IN: *These are questions that help you consider how to engage the teaching personally. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.*

1. How do your habits and preferences influence your choices about who you associate with?
2. What binds you to other believers? Why do you feel connected to them, and if you don't, why not?
3. How do you love others you disagree with, or have conflict with? How much is on you to bridge that gap?
4. If you have more material wealth than most in your community, what responsibilities to others comes with that? How has your view of any possible obligation changed by this message? If so, how?
5. Why do you think it's important for you to commit to attending a regular gathering at church to share fellowship and the "table?"

LIVE IT OUT: *These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one prompts and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. Spend some time with a few friends or family this week, read 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26, and share the Table with one another.
2. Ask God if there's someone in your circle of relationships who needs you to see them, make space for them, and do what you can to ensure they don't "remain hungry."
3. Ask God if there's anything you need to repent of to help ensure you're a vibrant part of a healthy faith community.

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