CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY (C3) HOMEWORK

“Edifying the body by embracing the grace of the Spirit to live out the love of the Son in fellowship that glorifies the Father”

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

WARM UP

1. What is your favorite holiday tradition?

2. What does a bunny and eggs have to do with Easter which celebrates the death and Resurrection of Jesus?

DIGGING DEEPER

3. Easter is all about Christ and the gospel. Watch this short clip on the gospel by John Piper and answer the following questions (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3psJWtT68WE>):

a) In your own words, what is the gospel?

* "The heart of the gospel is that Jesus Christ, the righteous one, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation, but everlasting joy, for those who trust him." John Piper
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTv5KEcyGQw&list=PL0Cn3vhuo1B3IJojahk4bQuwv5dU-W8Ov&index=11&t=0s>

b) Read 2 Cor 4:3-6 and 1 Peter 3:18. What is the ultimate goal or purpose of the gospel?

* The glory of Christ is the goal of the gospel. The ultimate purpose is the display of the glory of God and the blood bought ability of our hearts to know and enjoy and show that glory for eternity. The good news of the gospel is that there is a way for sinful rebels to be restored to fellowship with the God that created them. God is the end of the gospel. The display of His glory for his own joy and for the everlasting joy of a redeemed people.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_R2B6ej_eU&list=PL0Cn3vhuo1B3IJojahk4bQuwv5dU-W8Ov&index=15&t=0s>
* What is not the end goal of the gospel?
  + Many things that we say are the gospel are actually only means to get to the chief end of the gospel, which is Christ. Forgiveness, redemption, justification, righteousness, heaven, freedom from hell, guilt removal, sanctification, and holiness are all good and glorious things but they are not the gospel. They are means to get to Christ.

c) John Piper talks about never outgrowing the gospel. What do you think he means by that?

* The gospel is not just a one time salvation. Christ purchased for us the power to be continually conformed into His image. The gospel is the strength we have and the assurance we have to pursue righteousness. In the new covenant of Christ's blood, we are given a new heart with new spiritual tastes which gives us the desire and Spirit power to be righteous and pursue holiness.

d) John Piper explains how preaching the gospel to himself from 1 Thes 5:9-10 brought peace in suffering. Read Romans 8:32-35, how can the gospel realities in that text help you deal with suffering? Struggles with sin? Fear?

* Suffering - God promises to give us all things which we know from Rom 8:28 is all good things. And God makes the foundation of that promise the love that He displayed for us on the cross (aka He did not spare His own son). And no amount of suffering or loss or persecution can separate us from that love. We are invincible even in suffering and death! (Phil 1:19-23)
* Struggles with Sin - We can no long be condemned when we are in Christ. Not simply, we will no longer be condemned but if we are in Christ we are removed from any condemnation. Christ died and stood in our place to take that guilt and punishment. Now that we are found in Him we cannot be condemned though we fail and struggle. We have the freedom to pursue righteousness and put sin to death (Rom 8:13). Though we fall and fail, we have one who intercedes for us.
* Fear - Nothing can separate us from the love of God which was so great that the most valuable being in the universe suffered and died as a demonstration of that love! If that love is for us and we cannot be parted from it, what in all the universe should we be afraid of? If we fear with the truth of Rom 8 in mind, we either do not know who God is or we do not understand His love for us!

e) How can you apply the power and strength of the gospel (Rom 1:19 & 16:25) to your everyday life?

This question is designed to tie the John Piper video (especially the illustration on cancer) and the realities of Romans 8 together, and apply them to work, marriage, family, and other practical parts of life.

4. The gospel event centers around the cross and the Resurrection. Read 1 Cor 2:2 and Gal 6:14 and observe how important the cross was in Paul's mind.

Paul was so fixated on the cross that it was the only thing he wanted to talk about. This does not mean that he didn't have any other teaching but that everything he said and did and taught always came back to the cross. And that cross was the only thing he had any boast in. Nothing else was as praise worthy or glorious or deserving of being proclaimed as the reality that God came to earth and ransomed rebels to restored fellowship. Everything else pales in comparison.

5. Although we proclaim the reality of the cross on Easter, we celebrate the Resurrection. Why is the Resurrection important?

The Resurrection is the eternal exclamation point on the excruciating payment of the cross. The Resurrection of Christ is God's stamp of approval on the transaction that went down on Calvary between the Father and the Son. The Son declared the payment for mankind's rebellion complete when He died and the Father acknowledged that "It is finished" when He called the Son out of the grave. It validated everything that Jesus said and did and claimed and it gives us a rock solid assurance to trust in Christ.

6. Read the following Bible texts and write down what each one says about the importance of the Resurrection:

1 Cor 15:12-19

If Christ is not raised, we are still dead in sin and deserve to be pitied by all men because our hope is worthless.

Rom 1:3-4

Christ declared himself to be the Son of God through the Resurrection.

Rom 6:4-11

Our Resurrection spiritually and physically hinges on whether Christ was raised from the dead.

Rom 8:11

The Resurrection is the grounds on which we can believe that God will give us life. If He cannot give His own Son life, how could He give us life?

7. Imagine that you were one Jesus' disciples or one of the women at the tomb. What kind of emotions or reactions do you think you would have to see Jesus alive after watching the crucifixion?

* This question is designed to get people to really think about the Resurrection as an actual historical event that took place in the real world. Try to get your group to really sit and think about how unreal and mind-blowing it would have been to be an eye witness of the risen Jesus.
* What part of the Resurrection would you like to see a replay of in heaven?

8. Thinking about the fearless and ferocious love that we talked about last week, the power of the gospel, and the amazing reality of the Resurrection, how are you doing at overcoming your discomfort and boldly loving people by telling them about Christ and the gospel? How can you improve?