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. If you were stranded in the middle of the Amazon, what three items would you want to have with you?

2. What was the most important part of your identity in High School?

DIGGING DEEPER

3. Apart from Christ, what do you view as the most important aspect of your identity? Why?

(This could be race, class, culture, gender, parenthood, social standing, church, etc)

4. Share with the group a time that you or someone with you experienced discrimination based on race, class, or culture.

5. Read Numbers 12.

a) Why did Miriam and Aaron criticize Moses?

* They speak out against Moses because he married an Ethiopian (black) woman. They disapproved of his interracial marriage.

b) Considering Miriam was lighter skinned than the Ethiopian woman, what do you think God was communicating by making her leprous "as white as snow?"

* In essence, God was saying: "You love your light skin so much? Why don't I make you white as snow!" It was an ironic condemnation of Miriam's racism against those of darker skin.

c) What does this passage communicate to you about race?

* At least God opposes racial discrimination and does not condemn interracial marriage.

6. We talked Sunday about celebrating diversity and filtering culture through Christ. What aspects of your race, class, or culture should be celebrated as God-glorifying? And which parts should be filtered out?

(This is deigned to get people thinking about what parts of culture bring praise and honor to God and what parts do not line up to the gospel and the worth of God.)

7. Read Ephesians 2:11-12 and write down all the way's Christ brings unity and all the different ways Christian unity is described.

* Christ brings Unity:
  + By bringing us near by His blood
  + By making peace
  + By making us one
  + By breaking down the walls of separation
  + By destroying hostility in His flesh
  + By reconciling us to God through the cross
  + By preaching peace (reconciliation)
  + By granting us access to the Father by one Spirit
  + By making us fellow citizens of God's household
  + By being the cornerstone of our unity
* Christian unity is described as:
  + Nearness to Christ
  + Peace
  + One new man
  + The death of enmity (hostility)
  + Membership in God's household
  + A holy temple of the Lord

8. Read 1 Samuel 16:17. What truth can you take from this passage in the context of identity?

* As creatures have only the ability to see externals and not motives, thoughts or intentions we are  quick to make shallow judgments. God, on the other hand, sees all of the unseen and judges based  on the condition of the heart. The outward identity that man sees is not the ultimate identity that God sees.

9. In Revelation 5:8-10 and 7:9 we read about a scene where John saw people in heaven standing before God’s throne. What can we learn from this scene about diversity and the gospel?

* The people around the throne are believers, followers of Jesus. They are from all over the world, “every nation, tribe, people and language.” This shows us that the gospel knows no racial barriers. God’s saving grace extends to all no matter their race or culture.
* Additionally, since this scene takes place in heaven and John can identify different "races, nations, and tongues," that indicates that those thing are still present in heaven. In other words, we don't lose the secondary aspects of our identity when we are with God.

10. Suppose we were living on the Mexican border, how do you think you as a follower of Jesus and us as a church should respond to the immigration crisis?