

Week 7 – What does it mean to be open and real?



Leaders Note

One important value in the vineyard is this: ‘Come as you are’. The point of this is that people approach God and one another honestly. It also encourages trust. If people accept you for who you are then it is far easier to build trusting relationships with them.

Encouraging people to be themselves also helps us as a community to be open to others joining us. It discourages cliques as well as a jargon-based culture. These can be easily built if people feel they need to conform to some code of ‘being’ in order to belong.

Finally, when people come as themselves they can offer more to the community as it is easier to get to know them and easier for them to discover their gifting and to pursue the passions God has placed in them.

Our challenge as followers is to be who we are before God, and ultimately accept and be who He asks us to be

“If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.”

[Martin Luther King, Jr. quote](#)



Learning Session

Read Luke 18:9-14

The object of this study is to consider 2 types of people. The first is the self-righteous or the 'I want to be seen as Righteous' type. The second is the person who knows who they are, but approaches God none-the-less.

As people discuss the passage they may well over compensate in their views. Most will probably indulge in false humility (putting themselves down too much). Beware of this, and be ready to challenge it as some people use this as an excuse not to serve. We know we fall short of the mark, but we are still called to approach the throne with confidence because of what Christ has done, and we are called to partner with God in advancing his Kingdom.

Discuss the following questions:

- To what extent do you cover up who or where you really are in order to be thought of as a good Christian by others?
- What mask do you typically find yourself wearing and why?
- In your fear of being a 'Pharisee' do you over-compensate by making yourself out to be more scummy and worthless than what you really are?
- How is this working out for you?
- What step or steps do you need to take towards becoming more real with God and with others? What are the primary challenges you face in doing this?

Gather together for feedback. As well as being aware of the points previously made, be sure that these issues come up in feedback:

- Covering up is useless. We need to try to live before and audience of One. God knows who we are; hiding it is a waste of time and energy.
- Challenge the folk to be real, and to stop hiding.
- Challenge those who don't get involved in serving because of their fear of being 'discovered' to take the next step.

Do Ministry

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