



AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS LEADER GUIDE – January 26, 2020

PRIMARY PASSAGE

³⁶“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” ³⁷When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” ⁴⁰With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

ICE BREAKER

- Have everyone share who his/her BFF (best friend forever) was growing up, and maybe even a fun story to go along with it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) We were created out of relationship for relationship (see Genesis 1:26). How does this understanding change your view of the importance of authentic relationships?

- We believe God created us out of relationship (the Trinity – Father, Son, Holy Spirit) for relationship because we were made in His image.
- God also values a relationship with us – that is why He entered into our world in the form of man -> to reveal Himself to us, and to make a way for us to have a relationship with Him.

2) The only way for us to have authentic relationships with others, is to first have a relationship with Jesus. Do you have an authentic relationship with Jesus? If not, why not?

- This question is born out of Acts 2:38 – for all the believers to hold all things in common (Acts 2:42-27) they must first have unity in Christ. We believe we can’t truly love each other unless we first experience Jesus’ love (1 John 4:9-12)
- Take time to explain the terms “repent” and “baptized” with your group
 - Repent -> “name it, claim it, and turn away from it.” Recognizing our sin is pulling us from God, so we turn away from it and toward God
 - Baptism -> Kevin and Andrew made a strong push for baptism in the service because it is a step of obedience that shows an authentic relationship
 - We don’t believe baptism saves us, but is a step of obedience (after salvation) that identifies us with Jesus
 - Ask your group if they have been baptized, and if not, why not

- We have a baptism service coming up 2/16 and would love to have a conversation with anyone that has questions!

3) In Acts 2:42-47 we see the early believers were committed to studying God's Word, praying, gathering (Temple and home), and breaking bread together. Why are each of these important in authentic relationships? How can your group "re-up" your commitment to these things?

- Studying God's Word -> see last week's message on Biblical Truth; at the Chapel we believe God's word is sufficient and relevant to direct everything we do
- Prayer -> to use the words of Coach O, this is what gives us one heartbeat; community prayer is either a collective praise of God or collective call to Him asking to meet our needs
- Gather -> both large group (Temple) and small group (home); this is where we get our large group // small group model from; we collectively worship and study God's word in services and then break into smaller groups for deeper study and greater relationship connection/accountability; like our GroupLife motto says -> "Life change happens best in circles not rows"

4) Acts 2:44 says the believers held all things in common – in other words, they truly shared life together in authentic relationships. What does this look like in our everyday lives? How can you strive to have more of this?

- True intimacy begins with giving someone complete access to your life. Be sure to point out that this is not meant for "lots" of people, but only a small few. This is where true accountability and support comes from.
 - The tough thing is, we don't naturally drift this direction. We are only able to be accountable to the level in which we are open/vulnerable with each other.
 - This is so important because we need others to have our back when we're attacked by the enemy (see 1 Peter 5:8). Remember, isolation = assassination.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

1) Do you currently have authentic relationships? If not, why not? How can you begin to pursue authentic relationships this week?

- Start with your relationship with Jesus – how authentic is it?
- Do you have deep/intimate relationships that offer accountability and support?

2) Acts 2:47 says that God gave the believers favor and added to their number daily when they lived with authentic relationships. How have you seen this play true in your life? Is this something you are ready for?

- Our initial response might be, "Well yeah!" But we have to realize, authentic relationships will cost us and stretch us. They will pull us out of our comfort zone, and will possibly change the trajectory of our lives – it sure did the early believers.
- Are you ready to be a part of a church that strives for these types of relationships? We know this is what is going to take for us to accomplish the mission God has given us. Are you in?