

The Jesus Revolution - Equality

Genesis 1:26-28; John 3:16; Mark 2:13-17

Reconnecting

1. *Where have you experienced encouragement this week?*
2. *What are some things that we take for granted in our culture today?*

Create a Sacred Space

Take a moment of silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Then pray:

Dear Jesus, you embraced simplicity so that you could accomplish your Father's will; that work brought about our salvation! Loosen the world's grip on us. May we learn to love God and others as you did, with heart, soul, mind and strength. Amen.

Introduction

Whether we gather in person or online, our goal remains the same: to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus. His life and teaching are our example and our source of truth. Remember the commitments we make to each other to foster safety and freedom as we pursue spiritual growth together:

- Whenever possible, please listen to the sermon prior to gathering (Sunday or online).
- While we are meeting (even online), commit to focussing rather than multitasking. Be all here.
- Give everyone an opportunity to share, even if it takes time to form or finish their thoughts.
- Be respectful and non-judgmental.
- Honour sharing boundaries (only what you have permission to share, no gossip) and guard confidentiality (what we share here stays here).
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue; point one another to the truths of the gospel.

Listening to God's Word

There are several ideas that have been influenced by Christianity within our culture. Equality is an ideal that many of us would agree is an important concept to be supported within our society. The first pages of the Bible exemplify equality. Found within the creation narrative, we can discover that from the beginning, God created humans with immense value and equality! When did we forget to attribute this Christian value to the one who created us?

Small Group Discussion

- *Have you ever considered why we as a culture have begun to emphasize the importance of equality?*
- *How important do you think are documents such as the Charter of rights and freedoms?*
- *In what ways have you seen society's emphasis of equality been used for good? For bad?*

Read Genesis 1:26-28. Then discuss together:

- *What immediately stands out to you after reading this text?*
- *What do you think the phrase 'image of God' implies (v. 27)?*
- *Why do you think both 'male and female' are purposefully mentioned as being 'created in' it (v.27)?*
- *How have you witnessed/experienced equality as being a part of the Church?*
- *How have you experienced the failure of the Church's ability to uphold equality?*

Read John 3:16. Then discuss together:

- *How much does God value humans?*
- *How does this impact the way we interact with each other?*
- *What do you think are the differences between a secular emphasis of equality and one presented by Christ?*

Practice (How should I now live?):

As apprentices of Christ, we are not called to fix the world. We simply are called to live in obedience to Christ and embody his love in all aspects of our life. Christ inaugurated God's Kingdom and now his Kingdom spreads through the Holy Spirit's transformative work in our lives.

Spend a moment in quiet and invite the Holy Spirit to open your hearts and ears to his words of life.

Have one person read Mark 2:13-17. Afterwards, spend another moment of quiet and then invite the Spirit to now reveal what living out equality may look like for you. Read Mark 2:13-17 one more time.

Think about this question before you give a response: "What is one thing you can do to elevate the value of others in your life?"

- *E.g., Resist the urge to treat others like they need improvement*

Is there anything from the above discussion your group wants to lean into this week?

Caring for One Another

- *Pray for the strength to follow through on elevating the value of others.*
- ***Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***

Using **the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)** as a guide, based on what you've shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.