

Toolbox

Week 2 – September 20

Scripture: Matthew 14:13-33 & John 8:26-27

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Imagine you have a new piece of furniture to assemble. Do you read the instructions before you start assembly or do you ignore the instructions and jump right into assembly?

Read Matthew 14:13-33 and John 8:26-27 together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read. As you read think how Jesus engaged with people and consider the intentionality in every situation.

Discuss the following context:

Jesus didn't invite the disciples and community to follow Him, but to learn, grow and observe. We observe that Jesus didn't strive for balance, but for intentionality. He intentionally engaged and encouraged those around Him; He modeled the *basics of an intentional life*. What if we could be intentional with our lives in ways that create a rhythm that cultivates stronger relationships - our relationship with God, our relationship with other believers, and our relationship with the [one]. In doing so we can unlock the truth that the basics have the power to help us discover who we are becoming.

When we intentionally invest our time, energy, and focus into a few key tools we can have exponential impact. Let's look at two basic tools that can be a foundation for building stronger relationships.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. First, what gets in the way of us building an intentional life? How have "we unintentionally arrived at who we do not want to become"? Discuss this as a group.
2. One tool we use is a triangle. The triangle represents who we are cultivating relationships with. Read over these 3 types of relationships.
 - UP: relationship with the Father (engaging with God through prayer, scripture and listening)
 - IN: relationship with our community (Jesus spent time with his disciples, encouraging and challenging them)
 - OUT: relationship with the [one] (Jesus had compassion and looked for who those He was called to encourage that wasn't part of his direct community)
 - a. Which of the 3 relationships do you find strongest in this season? Weakest?
 - b. Who is someone in your life who made an intentional relational investment in you and how did it impact your faith journey?
3. A second tool is represented by 2 question marks. This tool is about listening to God. The two questions are "What is God saying?" and "What do I do?"
 - a. Think about someone who you would say is good at hearing from God and doing what He says. What do you think are some of the keys to their posture?
4. How can you leverage these tools to intentionally change your rhythms to build stronger relationship?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God for what He modeled for us. As rhythms cultivate relationships, ask Him to help you discover His power in the pace you pursue His presence. Pray that you create a pace allowing intentional space for people, listening and doing.