

COMMUNITY

IS OUR MIDDLE NAME

Connect

What's something you enjoy that would be impossible, or at least a lot less enjoyable, if you had to do it completely by yourself?

Review

Take a couple of minutes to review some of the main ideas from the sermon:

1. **Our Shared Calling:** As followers of Jesus, we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God's special possession. These are collective identities we share. God has blessed and called us as a people so that we can bring the blessing of knowing Jesus to others.
2. **Our Shared Proclamation:** We are called to declare together the praises of Jesus, proclaiming how he has called us out of darkness and into his wonderful light. We reach together by creating welcoming spaces, inviting others into our church community, and participating in outreach where people can encounter the Good News of Jesus.
3. **Our Shared Goodness:** Our lives and our church should make the Good News of Jesus visible through both our character and our good deeds. When we live with kindness, generosity, and a willingness to serve others, our shared goodness can draw people toward Jesus and ultimately bring glory to God.

Read 1 Peter 2:9-12

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. 12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Make Observations: After reading 1 Peter 2:9-12 out loud, give your group a few minutes to make observations on their own. Then go around the group and share the things you observed and discuss them.

Discuss

1. Peter describes Christians as a “chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, and God’s special possession.” What stands out to you about the fact that these descriptions are given to us collectively rather than just individually? How might seeing yourself as part of a people change the way you think about reaching others?
2. The sermon emphasized that God blesses his people so that they can be a blessing to others. Where have you experienced God using another person, or a group of people, to help you take a step toward Jesus?
3. Pastor Jim shared a quote attributed to Gandhi: "I like your Christ, but I don't like your Christians." Is there an area of your character where the gap between your life and Christ's example might be pushing someone away rather than drawing them in? What are some things we might unintentionally do that make it harder for people to come to Christ?
4. Do you find it challenging to invite others to come to Christ Community? If so, what kinds of personal barriers make it difficult (e.g., fear, busyness, not wanting to seem pushy, etc.) to invite others in?

Apply

Break up into smaller groups of three, and respond to this question:

- Think of one person that God has placed in your life who you want to see come to know Jesus (e.g., neighbors, coworkers, friends, etc.). What is one intentional step you could take to help draw that person closer to Jesus? How can our group help you do that?

Pray

In your groups of three, pray for the people who don’t yet know Jesus by name. Ask God to give you opportunities to demonstrate the gospel through your character and deeds, courage to proclaim the good news, and wisdom to consider how you and your Community Group can reach them together.