



Week 15 | January 27 Sermon

Community: [Continued from last week and for the next few weeks]

This is a good season in which to start intentionally sharing stories together. No doubt you have at least picked up on bits and pieces of each other's stories as discussion and growth have taken place. Now it's time to be intentional, giving each individual significant time to share his/her story with the rest of the GROUP. This can include as much or as little as any given person is comfortable sharing. As leaders, model this by going first! Consider establishing a "schedule" so that each person knows when it will be his/her turn and can come prepared. This will take you several weeks and will be the focus of our community time together between now and Lent. Here are some key points to consider when sharing:

When people tell their faith stories, five things appear over and over again—five things God uses to grow our faith. They're ways of recognizing how God is already involved in each of our lives. It's a great way for you to think through your own story.

Practical Teaching Studying the Bible and listening to sermons make Scripture seem alive and relevant in our daily lives. They show us who God is, who we are, and who God wants us to be.

Providential Relationships God uses the people in our lives to influence us in extraordinary ways. He speaks to us through others—whether lifelong friends or short-term acquaintances. Even difficult relationships can be used by God for our good.

Private Disciplines Things like prayer, personal time reading the Bible, fasting, and solitude deepen our relationship with God. They get our hearts in synch with His.

Personal Ministry Jesus showed us that we find life by giving our lives away. When we serve others. We are privileged to partner with God in what he's doing in the lives of those we serve.

Pivotal Circumstances When big things happen, good or bad, they change the way we interact with God. Circumstances often cause us to pay attention to what He's doing in our lives.

As you think about your own story, consider how the five things have played a part in your journey with God. You don't have to talk about all five things, but chances are there are significant things to be shared within at least one or two of these categories to let your GROUPIES get to know the real you.

"Community" by Andy Stanley

Auditorium Discussion Questions::

In the second part of Acts 11, the early believers finally started to evangelize to the Gentiles, even though Jesus had given the Acts 1:8 command ten years earlier. When was a time you knew you were supposed to do something, but didn't follow through? What were the ramifications for you in this procrastination or disobedience?

The first people who started to evangelize to the Gentiles were unnamed men from Cyprus and Cyrene. What does this show us about the Kingdom of God?

Barnabus was a bridge between the early Gentile followers and the Jerusalem establishment. When was a time in your life someone played a bridge for you?

Does it surprise you that Saul/Paul was in Tarsus for seven years after we last heard from him in Jerusalem? What do you think he was thinking at this time in his life? How have you handled times of waiting on the Lord?

God is weaving His story to bring the Acts 1:8 vision to reality. What does this mean for our story?

Sanctuary Discussion Questions::

Please read Acts 11:19-30. What does the Holy Spirit draw your attention to in the text? Why?

Review Acts 8:14, 11:1-3 and 11:22 to be reminded of the seemingly ever present challenge of favoritism/bigotry/prejudice to Kingdom Sending (cf. Acts 1:8). Has this ongoing concern surprised you?

If so, why? If not, why not? Are we still facing this challenge in our community in 2019?

Dr. Luke emphasizes two important ideas in 11:29-30:

#1- The role of the unidentified in Kingdom Sending

#2- The power of encouragement in Kingdom Sending

Why are these important ideas then, and now?

How do you see each of these ideas in our kingdom community called Third Church?

Please dig into 11:23-24. What does the text reveal to you, personally? How might you become the kind of person described in 11:23-24?

Could you spend some time encouraging and then praying for each other as you live as one who is "kingdom sent" this week?

*Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. **Hebrews 10:24-25***

GROUPS