



12-10-17 Sermon Discussion Guide “Game On!: Presence”



Context

Advent is here! During this season of the church calendar, we remember Jesus' coming at Christmas and we await Jesus' second coming. This year, our Advent sermon series is called "The Christmas Presence." Throughout these coming weeks, we'll discuss the importance of presence. In Jesus, God is fully present. Therefore, we follow Christ's example and seek to be present in the world around us. So in this season that is normally so busy, we pause to consider the importance of presence – God's and ours.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

Consider today: How you feel about this day. Was it a good day? Was it bad? What made it so? What was the best part of the day? What was the worst part about the day? What gave you energy and excitement today? What gave you dread or anxiety today? Did you live today on purpose?

Discussing the Text – Acts 20:24, Philippians 3:7-14

1. What does Paul say his purpose in life is in Acts 20:24?
2. What do you think Paul means when he says "the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" in verse 24? What is this "good news" and how do you think Paul testifies about it?
3. What kinds of "gains" that Paul describes in Philippians 3:7 do you think he's considering loss for the sake of Christ? Why would he do this?
4. Why do you think Paul has lost all things for the sake of Jesus Christ?
5. What goal is Paul pressing on toward in verses 12-14 of Philippians 3?
6. In Philippians 3:11, Paul says that he wants to know Christ, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings. At this point in his life, Paul has been serving Jesus for roughly 20 years. Do you think he already knows Christ and the power of his resurrection? What more could Paul be talking about? Simply knowing Jesus more, or something else?

So what?

1. What does it mean to you to "be present" in a situation?
2. Do you think we are called to clarify the purpose of our lives to the same level of specificity as Paul can in Acts 20:24 and Philippians 3:7-14? Why or why not?
3. How might knowing your purpose in this time of your life be related to your ability to be fully present and engaged in your life?
4. How can you gain a clearer understanding of God's purpose for you in this season of your life?
5. Where is God calling you to be more present in your life this week?

Prayer

Share something you are thankful for and/or something for which you need support. Have the group ask God to help them make the most of every moment this week, to be fully present, living life on purpose.