Group Questions – Week 2: Unlearning Religion

11/1/26 – Pastor Kirby

Getting to Know Me Questions:

- What is your favorite and least favorite Halloween candy?
- What is one thing you learned in your past church experience that seems more "religious", and less about a relationship with Christ? (examples: appearances, behavior, by-laws, etc.)

Into the Bible Questions:

- What's something from this week's teaching that you learned, stood out, was interesting?
- Summary: "Half of learning something new is unlearning something old. Often, we have to backtrack on what we thought was right; avoiding wrong turns, and following the path laid out in Scripture, so that we may know the truth in God's Word." This week's conversation focused on God challenging us to "AIM HIGHER". Jesus Christ gave the Sermon on the Mount, not just for information, but for transformation. While the Pharisees of today and the world have dangerously raised and removed the bar God has set for how we should live, the power and grace of God through Christ lifts us over the bar. Instead of settling for less than, we aim higher to reach a place of blessing, growth, and healthy relationship with God.
- Pastor Kirby gave us the big idea for the discussion that says…
    - Religion about God is ARRIVAL.
    - Relationship with God is IN FLIGHT.
    - Respond to these two ideas. What connects; doesn't connect; push back
- In order to aim higher, you have to GROW through stuff. This starts by digging into areas that may feel uncomfortable to face.
    - Are there areas in your marriage, parenting, health, finances, career, or faith where you feel "stuck"? Are you willing to share and be vulnerable with each other?
    - What do you think about when you hear the word "settle"?
    - Do you perceive "settling" to be more positive or negative when applied to some of the life choices you have made?
    - Do you have areas of struggle where you feel angry, hurt, resentful, bitter, sad, lonely, shamed, etc. whenever circumstances bring you face-to-face with them?
    - What changes are you willing to make moving forward to aim higher and being set free in God's grace from these struggles?
- The role of the Church is not to judge, but to introduce people to Jesus Christ. It is not the place of arrival but a place of in flight.
    - Have you ever felt that you had to have it all together when you're around Church people? How can we remove this struggle for people?
    - Where do you think the line is between relying on God's righteousness but not becoming a pharisee valuing rules and preferences over relationships?

- Most people in flight with a relationship do whatever they can to build it until it has arrived. The danger in having an attitude of arrival can lead us into settling with a spirit of complacency. This spirit is destructive and stagnates our growth, and we stop building and nurturing God's whisper to aim higher.
    - What are the positive and negative thoughts regarding being in constant process of flight?
    - Talk about a time where you had the attitude of arrival (ie. I've made it, I can relax). What was the outcome? Spiritually, relationally etc.
- Take time this week to think on areas of your life where you may have settled for less than God's best for you. It could be in your marriage, parenting, career, school, competitions, health, finances or your relationship with God. Pray for discernment and direction to begin working on these things. Ask God to reveal any areas where you have developed a spirit of arrival, and where God specifically wants you to aim higher in this season, you're in. Remember, as Christ followers, we are in constant state of growth. It is in the perfect love and grace of Jesus that we grow into His image and live the holy lives He's gifted us through His death and resurrection. Christ did not go through that sacrifice for us to merely settle.

Application Questions:

- Church is the "Gym" for faith. It's where our character, marriage, relationships, parenting and such get help and coaching to get "spiritually fit". Instead of being a place of judgement, it's a place of encouragement and Godly love. IT's a place we share being in flight and in tender grace, help each other to aim higher in our pursuit of God and faith. To live above the bar with Jesus.
    - Small groups are a great way to connect and grow. How much of yourself do you pour into really embracing the benefits it has for you?
    - Do you honestly and openly share hardships, joys and more with your group? What makes it hard to go deeper and being open?
    - What areas of your life are you pushing back on God where you being challenged to Aim Higher?
    - In order to keep us from settling below God's bar we must <u>learn</u>, <u>grow</u> and be <u>challenged</u>. Which of these 3 are the hardest for you to do?
- READ: Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 18:9-14; Galatians 6:1-2
    - Ask the Holy Spirit to give you fresh eyes and an open heart to really hear these verses.
    - REFLECT: What words or phrases stick out to you? Write them down.
    - Pray and ask your loving God to give you strength and desire to allow someone to help remove the specks from your eye and help you grow.