

MORE THAN EVER

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Those of us who have invested in Southside Church shouldn't settle for the prospect of this community being merely *healthy*. Instead, let's shoot for *amazing*— because Jesus brought the kingdom of God to Earth, and *everyone* is invited to participate. In fact, this church exists to inspire people to follow Jesus by engaging them in the life and community of our local church. We think the easiest way to invite the people around us to get involved is by acknowledging that life is complicated, they want to get it right, and we want to help.

Start Talking

1. Most human beings seem to struggle with appreciating the present. Are you typically more tempted to live with your mind stuck in the past, or looking ahead to the future?
2. What are the first words, images, and emotions that come to mind when you hear the word, "church?"
3. How do you think the Christian church in general is perceived by most people who aren't involved? What about Southside, in particular?

Looking Back

1. Where did you find it most difficult to surrender control in relationships this past week?
2. Did you have any success intentionally relinquishing control of these areas of life to God? How did you approach it?
3. How did you deal with disappointment this week? Did your attitude toward frustrating people and circumstances improve?

What About You?

4. When you mentally project forward through the remaining seasons of your life, what would you like people to line up at the end of your time on Earth to thank you for?
5. Review your daily responsibilities and interactions. Where do you have influence with other people?
6. How do you feel when you imagine inviting people to church? Why?



7. When you think of the church as a whole, what do you wish it was known for?
8. When you think about the message of Jesus, what comes to mind? How is it different than your mental associations with, "church?"
9. What would have to happen in order for the church to be considered an essential part of every community?
10. What would need to change in order for people who are skeptical of what we believe to become envious of how well we treat others?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: Luke 16:16

11. We typically define "the good news of the kingdom of God," in a pretty narrow sense. If you think about the entire trajectory of Jesus' life and ministry, what all does he seem to mean by that phrase?
12. Jesus summed up his ideal reputation for the church this way: "everyone will know that you are my disciples by your love for one another." While it's tempting to envision love as just vaguely positive feelings towards each other, how can we unpack his statement even further?
13. When you think about, "the good news of the kingdom of God," what elements do you think are most attractive to people who don't yet believe?
14. Andy said that the gospel, when presented clearly, is compelling to just about everybody. In what ways do you think we tend to clutter this message up?

Putting It All Together

1. Andy talked about intentionally evaluating what we hope people will remember us with gratitude for after life is over. How did you answer that question? And what would need to change about your life to make it happen?
2. As you think through the people around you in terms of what this message called, "The 3 Nots," (people who are not in church, for whom things are not going well, or who are facing circumstances for which they were not prepared,) does anybody in particular come to mind?
3. Would you be willing to intentionally extend the invitation from today's message? ("Life is complicated. You want to get it right. We want to help. Come sit with me?")
4. What can you do to identify the best recipients and interactions for this kind of invitation?
5. What do you think tends to make people on the receiving end of invitations to church feel like "projects" (rather than people)? How can we avoid causing that misconception?

