



SOUL CRAVINGS: Topic #5:

Our Call to Discipleship

This is the last of 5 weekly topics for individuals or small groups @ South Abbotsford that introduces a creative approach to relational evangelism in partnership with Power to Change

WELCOME: (10 minutes)

If you had \$100 dollars in your pocket, and had to use it today for something other than your own personal needs, what would you do with it?

REFLECTIONS ON DISCIPLESHIP: (60 minutes)

Read & meditate on Acts 2:46-47 and Ephesians 2:19-22 as a group or personally.

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”...“you are no longer foreigners or aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.”

There are a couple inescapable truths that we discover in the NT:

1. God doesn’t just call us to conversion, but to life-long devotion to Jesus as disciples.
2. Coming to Christ for salvation, always means coming into His family: the church of God.

Over and over in the NT, we see in both Paul’s theology and practically in his missionary journeys the same principles: When people were saved through the power of the gospel, it propelled them towards dramatic change. They became radical followers of Christ. This transformation always happened within the context of relationships: covenant communities of faith in each locale who had identified with Christ- the church.

Dave Harder, MB church-planter in Ottawa puts it this way:

We take seriously the call to make disciples. Discipleship is about helping people grow in three simultaneous relationships: (1) our relationship with God through worship, trust, and obedience; (2) our relationship with fellow believers through love, edification, and accountability; and (3) our relationship with unbelievers, conveying the gospel message in word and deed to the end that they would become disciples of Christ.

WHAT DOES SOUL CRAVINGS HAVE TO DO WITH DISCIPLESHIP?

Soul Cravings is a great tool to opening doors to conversation about what matters most to us. Soul Cravings can be a gateway to open doors for the telling of our own story (SC #4). Our prayer is that this would propel us forward in connecting with people and sharing our faith with them. But even as we do, we must remember the bigger picture:

1. **Soul Cravings Prequel is not itself a gospel presentation.** Though it introduces Christ in a way that engages the Post-modern mind, it makes no attempt to present a clear Biblical understanding of the gospel. When our contacts come to the place on the Engel scale where they are wide open to Christ, we can walk them through the central truths of the gospel. These include the nature of God, the nature of man, the reality and consequence of sin, the person and work of Christ, and concept of grace, and the essentials of

repentance and faith for salvation. Some of us may be able to lead someone to faith because of past experience and our familiarity with the Scriptures. Others will find tools like *The Bridge* (Billy Graham), *Evangelism Explosion*, or *Knowing God Personally* (Campus Crusade) helpful.

2. **Leading someone to Christ is only the beginning.** Our call is to discipleship. One of the greatest joys of the Christian life is helping others become devoted followers of Christ, in obedience to the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus showed us that discipleship is done in the context of relationship. May the Lord give us many opportunities to personally disciple those who come to faith in Christ as we show, mentor and teach them what it means to follow Christ.
3. As we saw earlier in the Scriptural texts, **coming to Christ means coming into the family of Christ: the people of God.** That doesn't mean necessarily bringing them to a Sunday gathering of the church. But the sooner they are exposed to the loving relationships of those who love Jesus, the better! One of the best places to enfold new believers is in one of our Life Groups. These provide natural bridges to your own covenant community in the non-threatening environment of our homes. Life Groups give them a small group of friends who can immediately welcome them and demonstrate for them what it means to be the family of God.

ACTION POINTS:

1. We have not designed any set of questions today- but as you consider the Scriptures and the notes on discipleship above, feel free to discuss the implications for you personally or as a group.
2. Go back to the "Friend List" you made in earlier weeks. How are the relationships developing? Take time to **pray together** for these friends. Create a compiled list that is distributed to everybody to take home and pray over daily.
3. **Has anyone had a chance to pass out *Soul Cravings Prequel* this week?** Has anyone had a chance to share their story of how Christ has met your cravings? Share together.
4. Your Life Group may want to **invite people to a 3-week exploration of the cravings themes in your home!** If you should chose this direction, when you give out the books to your friends, just let them know that you they are invited to discuss together the themes of intimacy, meaning and destiny at the dates you choose! You can provide a book for everyone who comes, and go through the chapter on these topics or use a video clip of Erwin McManus from the website www.icravechange.com. We hope to get some fuller length DVDs in the church office that can also be borrowed.

PLANNING AHEAD:

- Keep in mind that the **Soul Cravings Prequel** are available for you to distribute to others at a cost of \$3 each from the South Abbotsford Church office.

Life Group Leaders: Next week we will return to our normal LG Topic format based on the preaching series in Ephesians.