

Getting To Know You

1. What is your understanding of suffering for Christ? Explain.
2. What are some ways that you actively/practically Make Jesus Known/share your faith?
3. Timothy Keller said, "The problem is that contemporary people think life is all about finding happiness. We decide what conditions will make us happy and then we work to bring those conditions about. To live for happiness means that you are trying to get something out of life. But when suffering comes along, it takes the conditions for happiness away, and so suffering destroys all your reason to keep living. But to "live for meaning" means not that you try to get something out of life but rather that life expects something from us. In other words, you have meaning only when there is something in life more important than your own personal freedom and happiness, something for which you are glad to sacrifice your happiness." Thoughts? Agree? Disagree?
4. Timothy Keller said, "So suffering is at the very heart of the Christian faith. It is not only the way Christ became like and redeemed us, but it is one of the main ways we become like him and experience his redemption. And that means that our suffering, despite its painfulness, is also filled with purpose and usefulness." Thoughts? Agree? Disagree?
5. Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Digging Deeper

1. Why does Paul rejoice in his sufferings? Explain. Who is the beneficiary of Paul's plight? Why is Paul willing to endure what he did? Would you be willing to do anything similar to it? Explain.

What does Paul mean when he says, "I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions"? What is your understanding of this? What does this not mean? Explain.

2. What was Paul's mission/purpose/calling? Where did it come from? How was it going to be fulfilled?

What is ours? Yours? How far was Paul willing to go to fulfill his calling? How far are you willing to go?

What is the mystery that was hidden for ages? When was it revealed? Who was it revealed to?

3. What did Jesus do to tear down racial barriers? What was the racial divide in Jesus' day? How did Jesus speak into the issue? What are some texts that speak to how Jesus dealt with it? Does racism or injustices have any place within the body of Christ/Church? Explain.
4. What is the hope of glory that we have? Where does it come from? Is this something that you routinely think about? Explain. What does that hope do for you? Who needs to experience that hope?

5. How do we mature as believers? What was Paul's desire for the Church at Colossae? How was this going to be achieved? What are you doing to develop your maturity? Explain.

6. Where does our power come from? How often do you try to operate in your own individual strength? When you do, what are you able to achieve? What are the limitations? When we are empowered by Christ, what are we able to achieve? Explain. How do we receive it? How can we ensure that we are working and walking in His power? Explain.

Growing Closer

1. Who is someone you shared the gospel with this week?
2. What have you been reading in your quiet times?
3. What has God been teaching you?