

April 4/5, 2015

BIG IDEA: Jesus came to us and did the unexpected.

GROUPS VISION

We desire everyone at Valley Creek Church to be in a small group. Groups are where we take Next Steps together on our journey with Jesus and where Group Leaders develop their Next Leaders to carry the vision to others.

KEY VERSE

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

Make it a point this week to take your eyes off of where you're hiding and re-direct them to the resurrected Jesus. Read the resurrection account in Matthew 28:1-10. Then thank Him for cleaning up your mess so you can have His cleanliness.

MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

1. We're conditioned to think that God wants us to pay for our mistakes, but He responds with the unexpected. When Peter was faced with his guilt from denying Jesus, he returned to that which gave him comfort - fishing. But Jesus comes to us before we've done anything right, and after we've done everything wrong. **(John 21:1-13)**
2. Most of us think we're in a game of hide and seek with God. But we're the ones who are hiding and He is the One who is seeking. **(Luke 19:10)**
3. Jesus overwhelmed the disciples with His kindness. In that moment, He implodes our belief that we get what we deserve. At the cross, Jesus got what we deserved so we could get what He deserved.
4. Love is not something God asks us to have faith for, because God freely puts His love on display. **(Romans 5:8, 1 John 3:16, 1 John 4:10)** Love on display changes our hearts and draws us to Jesus.
5. While having breakfast with Peter, Jesus validated the words He spoke on the cross: "It is finished". **(John 19:30)** In doing so, He declared that there was no more distance between God and man. **(Hebrews 8:12, Psalm 103:12)**
6. The Easter message is this: Jesus comes to Peter, puts His love on display, brings him into His presence, and empowers him with purpose. Jesus doesn't do any of the things we expect from church (shame, guilt and judgment).
7. The residue of our mess is so great it gets on everything we do. But Jesus cleans our mess **(2 Corinthians 5:21)** and invites us to rest **(Matthew 11:28)**. He becomes our mess so we can have His cleanliness. It's in our moments of greatest failure that His love is most clearly displayed.

DISCUSSION

1. What do you expect from other people or from church when you mess up in life? (See points #1 and 6)
 2. When you sense that you have failed, where do you go to find comfort? Where do you go to try to hide from God? (See points #1 and 2)
 3. Where have you experienced God's unexpected love on display? (See points #4 and 7)
- **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**
 - **What is your Next Step?**
 - **How is God moving in your life during our Awaken Challenge?**

Do you have a story of someone taking a Next Step or a Leader developing a Next Leader?
Share with us at groups@valleycreek.org