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Review week 1 - We see 7 essential characteristics in scripture that provide a dashboard for telling us how we are doing as Jesus' church. Last week was essential 1 - **Abide**

Essential 2 - Reach the lost

Luke 19:10 (NIV) "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

We are people who have compassion for others and share the good news with those who don't know Jesus.

History of Real Life – Who we are: <https://bible.org/illustration/life-saving-station>

Real Life began with the Biblical promise and purpose for the church to be a Priesthood of Believers.

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NIV) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- Peter uses this text to remind us that through Jesus, we are chosen to be Kingdom people, serving in the King's family and expected to tell the world about Jesus the King.
- As we continue seeking to be Jesus' church, each year it's important to evaluate where we are with each essential.

What gets in the way of us reaching the lost?

1. I'm too distracted or busy

Revelation 2:4-5 (NIV) Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. ⁵ Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

2. Fear of what to share

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

3. I don't want to offend them

Romans 1:16 (NIV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

4. I don't care if they are lost, they deserve it!

Romans 3:23 (NIV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- *Grace* is the undeserved favor of God for our salvation
- *Mercy* means that God has withheld what we truly deserve.

Where do we reach the lost?

In each of our relational spheres of life.

- It starts in the abide sphere - Pray for God to give you a heart for the lost. Start praying for the lost in your spheres of life.
- Church- Invite friends and neighbors to church. Help position them to hear truth. Get them connected in environments to meet others. Invite someone to your life group.

Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV) Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

- Home - Is your walk and talk consistent for your family to see? Create a warm, loving safe environment where ideas and questions are safe to discuss.
- World - Your work place is a great place to develop relationships with unbelievers. Do your peers know you are a committed Christian? Do your neighbors see you as caring and kind? How do you behave at the store? Remember you are on display as the light of Christ.

1 Peter 2:11-12 (NIV) Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

How to share with the lost

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

Sharing Christ *starts with a heart change* - in other words you have to care about what Jesus cares about. This only happens when Jesus gives you a new heart.

- Be in relationship with non Christians. Relationships take time, be patient.
- Remember where you were before you were reconciled to God, giving grace because you were once in the same position. Be authentic and transparent about your own life.
- Look and listen for opportunities. What you observe, what you hear them say.
- Pray for God's wisdom and favor.
- Approach your relationships with a servant's heart, not that of a consumer.
- Come in humility, with gentleness and respect.
- Ask questions to understand. Empathize with another's circumstances.
- Try to answer the actual question they ask. If you don't have answers, get back with them when you find out.
- Learn how to share the good news. Share your story of how you came to faith. Come to our membership class, because you'll learn alot about the gospel.
- Above all, show that you care for them! *"I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care."*

Conclusion:

- In your prayer time, ask God what area of reaching the lost you can grow in?
- Take some time this week to ask God to show you who you need to reach out to.
- Pray for an opportunity to share, God will answer your prayer!

For Small Group Discussion:

Scripture: Romans 1:16, 1 Peter 3:15-16, Luke 19:10

Questions:

- Who have you shared your faith with in the past? How was it received?
- Besides sharing the truth of the gospel, what other elements are helpful for reaching someone who is lost?
- What tactics of sharing the gospel have you seen or experienced that have been ineffective?
- When you were lost, how did God reach you? Who has been significant in your story of coming to know and growing in your relationship with Jesus?
- Who is someone God has put on your heart or in your path to reach?
- We are all called to be ready with an answer for the hope that is in us. How can you personally develop this skill/practice telling your testimony? How do you utilize the resources available to you?