

House Group Notes

7th March 2017



Ichthus Values, Characteristics & Distinctives Session 5:

Ice-breaker idea

BEFORE revealing the topic for this week, ask people how they would sum up Lee Green in three words/phrases.

Did you know that we have a Lee Green motto of three things? Any ideas of what it might be, or does anyone know?

Lee Green's Motto: Love, Hope & Following Jesus

This is our motto! These are three things that we want to characterise our congregation inwards, and to reflect outwards. They flow out from our Ichthus values, and tie in with our series on our values, characteristics and distinctives as an Ichthus congregation. Let's look at each one!

LOVE

We've looked already at love as one of our core values as an Ichthus congregation. We looked at love being the heart of everything: the heart of God towards us all, the heart behind our attitudes (remember 1 Cor. 13!) and our heart towards people both inside and outside of the church.

READ John 13:34-35 Love for one another is how the church of Jesus should be, and is how it should be recognised.

Discuss:

- How do we show love for one another at Lee Green? (e.g. being inclusive, serving each other, supporting each other through good and bad, not giving up on one another, time together, meals together etc etc etc... Hopefully this won't need spelling out!)
- How do we show love for the wider community? (e.g. evangelism, free events open to all with a relational, loving focus, catering for community needs through toddler group, Live Lounge)

HOPE

Last week we looked at the good news of Jesus - it is a message of hope! (Remember Luke 4:14-21!). We truly believe that the good news of Jesus is for everyone, and that He is the answer to everything. We also know how it all ends - with Jesus coming back, with heaven coming to earth, with all things being made new (Revelation 21). Hope is what spurs on our evangelistic heart!

However, it is not always easy to feel hopeful!!

READ Roman 8: 24-25.

Discuss: What do you think this verse means for us in our church fellowship and relationships?

We choose to look at each other with hope! Hope that sees beyond what we are now, with all our flaws and shortcomings and failures, hope that sees the potential each of us has in Christ, the firm hope that we will all become more like Jesus and fulfil what He created each of us for. We

persevere in looking at each other with hope! We also choose to look at ourselves with hope. When there are disappointments, we hold on to Jesus our hope.

READ Romans 15:13

Discuss: What does this tell us about hope?

(It comes from God! It comes through the Holy Spirit, it brings joy, peace & faith as we keep hoping).

Discuss: What does this communicate to people outside the church looking in?

A hope that is contagious! Hope is what gives us a purpose, a future, it fuels positivity and transformation. People should recognise in us a deeper sense of joy & peace than can be found elsewhere, because of the hope we have - a hope in God that does not waver.

FOLLOWING JESUS

Ultimately, none of the above means anything unless we are following Jesus!! Jesus is the source of all love & hope, and we follow His example in all things. If we are not following Jesus, what are we following? Then we are just another nice social club with nothing different to offer. With Jesus at our centre, shaping us and leading us forward then we have the greatest gift ever to offer! All of our meetings have Jesus as our focus - we come together to be with Jesus together in relationship with each other.

READ John 6:66-69. Nothing in this world can offer what Jesus does, there is no-one else like Him.

Discuss:

- How do our beliefs show that we are following Jesus?

(e.g. we believe that Jesus is who He says He is! We look at what Jesus said and did as the starting point for all our understanding. We trust that His death & resurrection are enough to save us, we believe that He is the way, the truth & the life! Etc.)

- How does our behaviour/actions show that we are following Jesus?

(e.g. Jesus is our example in how to treat people & respond, we follow His instructions, we turn away from things that don't line up with His example, we want to become like Him so we expect to have to change!)

- How does our sense of belonging/church family life show that we are following Jesus?

(e.g. Relationships based on pointing each other towards Jesus! We talk about Jesus together, encourage & challenge each other to become more like Him, to keep following Jesus through ups & downs, startrite/walkrite, we ask Jesus to help us love each other, we pray for each other etc.)

Discuss: How do we show the world around us that we are following Jesus?

(e.g. We name Jesus in our motto, so that everyone knows who we are following! We do COTS to tell people about Jesus, we talk about Jesus and reflect Jesus at our events, etc)

PRAY:

- For us to have "love, hope & following Jesus" at the centre of who we are and what we do
- For us to reflect our motto to the world around us
- For more people to find Jesus' love and hope through us, and to choose to follow Him as a result.