

Growing Deeper

Next: Lean in, Step up, Break out

Week Four – Take Our Campus to the Next Level

Leviticus 19:30-34

Spend FIFTEEN - Day One

1. In a church mission statement, which would you prioritize more: strengthening believers or reaching unbelievers? How would you support your answer?
2. Depending on how you answered the first question, how would the church allocate its financial resources?
3. Read Leviticus 19:33-34. In the midst of God's instructions for holiness, how do these commands about foreigners relate?
4. Who do you think is the equivalent of foreigners in our own day?
5. This command is an example of the Bible's focus on hospitality. In what ways is your church hospitable to new visitors?
6. How has church hospitality affected your church experience?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN by thanking God for always having a focus on foreigners because, without that focus, most of us would not be believers today. Ask Him for His help on paying His graciousness and hospitality forward to others.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two

8. If you suddenly find that guests are coming to visit your home in 15 minutes, which room do you clean first and why?
9. Why do you think there is such a strong connection between hospitality and the attractiveness of your home?
10. When hosting at home, we want to put our best foot forward. It's sometimes hard to see that church operates the same way. Andy Stanley says, "Every Sunday people walk onto your campus and determine whether or not they will return the following week before your preacher opens his mouth. And that's not fair. But it's true." What would be the church equivalent of cleaning up your living room before guests arrive?

11. Skim Exodus 40:1-33. How much care and energy did Moses put into setting up the tabernacle, the place of worship? How does that compare to the effort we put into setting up our church to receive people for worship?
12. Think about some of the aspects of a church service that routine worshipers no longer notice. What are some of the little things that help contribute to a smooth and hospitable worship environment?
13. Brainstorm a list of ways that you could help contribute to a thoughtful and welcoming worship environment at your church.
14. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer, asking God to use your church as a welcoming and hospitable environment for people who are searching for Him.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three

15. If you've ever seen cathedrals in Italy, they're gorgeous, with interiors covered in gold and fine art. This means the doors are generally locked to prevent thievery. What problem would this present for a church's mission to the lost?
16. In our country, churches often go to the other extreme; they're plain, undecorated warehouses. What problems might that pose for being a welcoming place for unbelievers?
17. Take a few minutes to reflect on Psalm 84:1-12. What feeling about the place of worship is evoked in this psalm?
18. What guiding principle for decoration or luxury does this passage give for designing the place of God's worship?
19. The psalmist "faints with longing" to enter the place of God's worship. How often do you feel that way? How does the design of a sanctuary hinder or enhance that feeling?
20. What could be different about your own place of worship to help evoke that feeling for a guest who has come to worship God?
21. As you finish your FIFTEEN, thank God for the desire that He has placed in His people to worship Him. Ask Him to help you "shout with joy" in your worship of Him.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four

22. Start today by reading John 2:14-17. For background information, the temple courts from which Jesus drove people was probably the Court of the Gentiles, a part of the temple designated for non-Jews to worship. Knowing

this, what might have been Jesus' problem with using those courts for money changing?

23. If the Jewish believers at the time were no longer concerned with welcoming foreigners into worship of God, how would this have interfered with God's stated plan? (See Isaiah 49:6 for help answering this question.)
24. In the temple of Jesus' day, there was a wall of hostility dividing the places where Jews and Gentiles could go. How do you think that made foreign believers feel about being part of God's people?
25. Now read Ephesians 2:11-14. What major change did Jesus' death and resurrection make in the worship of God?
26. How can we break down any perceived walls of hostility in our church environment that might keep people from becoming part of the body of believers?
27. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer, thanking God that He broke down the barriers between Him and us because of our sin. Ask Him to use you to break down any barriers between people struggling to find His grace and mercy.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five

28. When you have people in your home, how do you want them to feel about their experience when they leave? How does that goal drive the actions you take while hosting?
29. One of Stephen Covey's habits of effective people is to "begin with the end in mind." What do you think this expression means?
30. For Christians, what do you think is the end in mind?
31. What things in church do you think we do out of habit or tradition, rather than because we've evaluated them with the end in mind?
32. One possible answer is 2 Corinthians 5:11-15. Read the passage. In your own words, summarize what Paul is describing as a Christian's goal? What benefit is Paul talking about in verse 13?
33. What is Paul willing to do to achieve that benefit? What might that look like, specifically for him? For us today?
34. How can we rethink some of the ways we do church in order to persuade others of our sincere belief that Christ

will raise those who believe in Him from the dead?

35. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer, asking God to help you be intentional in your goal of being an ambassador of reconciliation to people who need to experience His love.