

Week 1: Sit with Christ

1. What stood out to you from the message this past Sunday? Was there anything that seemed timely or relevant to you? Was there anything which made you uncomfortable, or with which you disagreed?
2. Read Ephesians 2:4-10. This could be interpreted in very abstract, theological ways but discuss how it applies to you practically. In what ways have you and are you experiencing grace at work in you, making you alive? What areas of your life feel dead? Based on what you read here, what do you need to do for those areas to become alive?
3. Read Ephesians 1:17-23. What kind of enlightenment is the writer talking about here? In what ways do our eyes need to be opened and to what? What do you think it means that "Christ is seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly realms"? Given that the previous passage states that we are also seated with Christ, what are the implications for us and what kind of power is the writer talking about?
4. Read Philippians 2:1-11. How does this passage reframe power and authority? How did this kind of power play out in Jesus' life? How could it play out in our lives? What is appealing about this to you? What about this makes you feel uncomfortable and/or challenged?
5. Given what we know about what Jesus taught and how he lived, and given the early church writings (like the ones above) about power, why do you think so many church communities over the centuries have tended to become authoritarian, controlling, and even aggressive? What are ways to counter this?
6. Read Mark 9:33-37. Why do you think Jesus sits down in this story? In what parts of your life right now do you feel in competition with others? In what ways are you struggling to be first? On reflection what would you say is driving that competitiveness? How might being "seated with Christ" help you let go?
7. Break into smaller groups of 2 or 3 (or stay together as a larger group if that feels appropriate) and each share the one area where you feel most challenged to change based on the above reflections and discussions. Then spend some time praying for one another.

Practice for the week: Sit with Christ

Take some time each day this week to "sit with Christ." Center yourself by closing your eyes and focusing on your breathing. Let go of tension and intrusive thoughts and then read the passage overleaf. Just relax and let the reality the words describe flow into you. Don't try to force or convince yourself of anything, just let go of any resistance and receive the spirit of Christ as a gift.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19 (NIV)