

THE BIG IDEA CURRICULUM

Authenticity

Sermon 22.8.09

Tim Hope

Small Group Study for Week of Aug 22-27

Big Idea: Tim focused on two aspects of authentic Christianity - authentic prayer and having God with us all the time, not just on Saturday.

This can be as confronting as we allow it to be. We need to ask ourselves where we are in our Christian walk and ask ourselves the questions “are we authentic Christians?”, and “what steps can we take to be closer to God?”

Group Reads: 1 John 3:23

Discuss the two parts of the command in this verse.

***Question 1:** Can these two parts be separated, or must the two work together? Why or why not?

***Question 2:** What would John say to that person who claims to be a Christian but lives a selfish, unloving life?

Group Reads: 1 John 3:16

***Question 3:** How do we know that God loves us?

***Question 4:** What images do you think were in John’s mind when he penned those words?

***Discuss** the concept of laying down our life for our brothers. Does this seem extreme? What do you think it means? Who are you giving your life to?

Group Reads: 1 John 4.10-11

John seems to repeat himself often in this letter.

Question 5: Why do you think he keeps coming back to the theme of loving one another?

Question 6: What reason does John give for us to love other people?

Question 7: What’s his definition of love?

***Question 8:** What connection does John make between what we ask for and how we live? Finish this sentence, “God is attentive to the prayers of...”

Comment: John says we can receive anything we ask. How?

Discuss what John means. Is he saying if we obey God’s commands and then ask for a million dollars, He’ll give it to us? Why or why not?

***Question 9:** Is it possible that if a person lives an obedient and loving life, he or she may ask God for different things? Discuss what loving, obedient Jesus followers ask for in their prayers.

Discuss the difference between knowing, hoping, wishing, thinking or guessing that you have eternal life. Which describes you? Do you know that you have eternal life with God? (1 John 5. 13)

***Question 10:** How is a person who is consumed by God's love more apt to ask God for things "according to His will"? What types of things would a person who is consumed by love pray for? What types of things do self-centered people ask for?

***Question 11:** What are you praying for most these days? What is your group praying for? What do your prayers reveal about your heart?

***Question 12:** How are we showing the people around us that we follow God every day of our lives and sharing our Christian life with them?