

Personal Liturgy

Week 11: The Doubting Thomas in All of Us

"[To refuse cynicism] means that we turn the tables, that rather than doubt God's active work in the world, we doubt every thought that doesn't account for God's active work in the world. It means that we're cynical about cynicism, that we are determined to always assume more is happening than meets the eye, that God hears every prayer, that Jesus is truly reigning and coming again, and that, if we're serious, we're not idiots for thinking so."

- Jonathan Parnell

Catch Up On Life:

This is when we update each other on the day in and day out happenings of our lives. As church family, we care about each other's lives: what we're celebrating, what we're mourning, what decisions we're praying through, and everything in between. (1 Thessalonians 2:8, Romans 12:10 and 15)

- **Celebrate the wins** - where have you seen Jesus at work in the last week (in you personally or in the people God's put around you)?
- What (if any) life updates do you need to catch us up on (positive or negative)?

- **Pray:** Take every opportunity to pray and thank God for the good He's doing in our lives, and ask for help and healing anywhere there is pain.

Review the Mission:

Just like God the Father sent Jesus on a mission of reconciliation for us, Jesus sends us as ambassadors of reconciliation. We are called to make disciples wherever we go. (John 20:21 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

Proactive Mission:

- Who are the people we are intentionally living on mission with (Neighborhood, STC partner or specific demographic in Columbia)? What are our upcoming plans to love, serve and build relationships with this group?

Reactive Mission:

- Who in your life can we join you in praying for? Who has God put around you that shows spiritual interest or is hurting and could use some love from our group?
- Are there any rhythms already planned, or an extra rhythm we could plan to create a way for these friends to connect with our group?

Pray: Prayer is the fuel of God's mission. Let's pray for our people by name; pray for their needs, and opportunities to have spiritual conversations that help them take next steps toward Jesus.

Sermon Discussion:

God uses His Word to help us know Him, to equip us, to show us our sin, and to strengthen us as we follow Him. We preach the Word on Sundays and apply it as a LifeGroup throughout the week. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 1:9-12 and James 1:22-25)

Primary Passages: John 20:19-30

Related Passages: Romans 15:4 and 13

Read and Recap: Have someone read John 20:19-30 and recap the highlights from this week's sermon.

- Cynicism is “a posture of skepticism that leads you to doubt God’s presence and activity in your life.” Where do you see examples of cynicism in your life?
- Part of cynicism is the impulse to explain life’s events as purely natural. Can you think of times where God answered prayer but you downplayed it as “it probably would have happened anyway”?
- Are there any ways you are distancing yourself from God or church family because you are anticipating disappointment or as a safeguard to protect from past pain?

Read John 20:26-29. What stands out to you about how Jesus engages with Thomas in the midst of his doubt? How does this interaction encourage us to doubt our doubts and repent from cynicism?

Read Romans 15:4 and 13. How does God intend to use reading Scripture to re-enchant our lives and open our eyes to the supernatural world all around us? What keeps you from reading Scripture regularly?

Pray: Cynicism kills our view of God’s power and presence in our lives. Ask God’s Spirit to open our eyes to see cynicism in our lives, call it what it is and to repent in joyful hope and faith.

Engage the Heart:

Jesus calls us to walk in the light as we follow Him, confessing our sins to God and each other. God’s Spirit works through our humility, honesty and community to spur us on toward repentance. (Romans 3:23-24, James 5:16 and 1 John 1:5-10)

- What sinful thoughts, actions or words from the past week do you need to confess? Specifically, has God convicted you regarding cynicism through the sermon?
- How does the gospel specifically address and free you up in this area? (Rest of LG speak into their lives: How does the gospel address and free him/her up?)
- What steps of repentance do you need to take? How can we help you walk in repentance?

Pray: James tells us that a community that regularly confesses sin and prays for each other will see a lot of healing. Confess your sins in prayer and pray for each other.