

life groups' sermon guide

welcome home



Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for the life application of the Core 4 elements of worship, grow, serve, and share.

Never celebrate until you are really out of the woods. They might be behind the last tree.

Anonymous

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

1 John 3:1a

God throws a party when we come home

We've been talking all month about how the Father rejoices when the prodigal son comes home and how in the same way all of heaven rejoices when a single child of God gives their lives to the service of the King. And as I considered this I was put in mind of how a parent feels in the frantic moments after they realize their child has wandered off if even for just a moment. The sinking, pit of your stomach feeling...followed by the almost euphoric feeling of finding the lost child. How much more does the Father rejoice when one of his children 'comes home'.

Q: Have you ever lost something that sent you into an all out search? How did you feel when you realized the item was lost? How did you feel when you found it (if you did find it)?

It's time to come home

If you have attended Kingsway for any length of time, you have no doubt heard John C. say "Don't wait for a mythical tomorrow to make the decision you need to make today." Scripture tells us, "for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2). So the matter of salvation is something of some urgency. As Christians we acknowledge that Christ could return at any time, but for many Christians, I think 2000 years of waiting for Christ's return has lulled them into a false sense of security.

Q: If your doctor told you that your heart was a ticking time-bomb and there was nothing you could do about it, what kind of impact would that have on how you live your life from day to day?

Q: If we truly lived our lives as though Christ would return at any moment, what would that look like? Would you live your life any differently if you lived it in the light of His eminent return?

Repent, be baptized and invite more people to the party

Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

Christ told us what he wanted us to do just before he ascended into heaven. “Go and make disciples of all the nations.” Obviously we are not all called to be missionaries in far off lands, but we can support those who are called. In addition, we must also acknowledge that there is a mission field in our own back yard. While the majority of Americans claim to be Christians, there are huge numbers of Americans who do not have a saving knowledge of Jesus, much less a personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe. We are called to make disciples of ALL nations...even our own.

Q: So what does that look like for you and for me? How can we be intentional about reaching the lost in our own back yard so that we can invite them to join the eternal party that is being prepared for us even as we ponder this question?

Do you have a story to share?

One of the first steps in being prepared to share your faith with someone is being prepared to tell your story...think of it like answering these questions in a story form...Where were you in your life when you met Christ? How did you first realize you needed Christ in your life? What did you do when you decided you needed Christ in your life? How has giving your life to Christ made a difference in your life?

Write your story down on paper. Read it over and over until you can tell your story from beginning to end without hesitation. When you know your story backward and forward, you'll be amazed at the opportunities that the Lord will give you to share your story. Sometimes you may have the opportunity to only share part of your story, in fact, it may be a rare occasion that you have the opportunity to share your whole story, but we should be nonetheless prepared. Scripture tells us to be prepared to give a reason for the hope we have.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

1 Peter 3:15

We are a church who never stops reflecting God's heart

So, what does that mean? What is the desire of God's heart?

Matthew 18:14 tells us “In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.”

The desire of God's heart is that all of his children would come to saving faith in Jesus Christ his Son. God is not willing that any of his children should perish or be separated from him for eternity. It is God's desire to “seek and save the lost”; the very purpose for which Christ was sent to us.

In the movie “Fireproof” there is a scene where the lead character in the story, who is a fireman, is responding to a fire and he risks his life to save a little girl from her burning home. Once inside he becomes trapped and both he and the little girl are in peril. But the fireman doesn't give-up, he breaks a hole in the floor with his ax and drags the girl to safety through the crawl space under the house as the house begins to cave in all around them.

In many ways, as Christians, we are spiritual firemen and God is pleading with us to rush into a very hostile environment (our world) and save as many of his children from the fire as we can. Many may refuse to be saved. They may not even be aware that the house they're in is on fire. But many more are scared and confused and desperately waiting for

someone, anyone to rescue them. It's up to us to allow the Savior to use us to save his children.

Are you willing? God is pleading. Will you rescue them?