



Sermon Discussion Questions

Sunday, February 5, 2012

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Michael Flake - Davidson

Series: Hope in a House of Blues

Sermon: HATE

Note to Group Leaders:

During Hope in a House of Blues, many of the questions and passages should stir places in a person's life that are sometimes really hard to deal with. So, you can expect two responses to many of the questions: 1) Silence-because they may not be ready to share those places; or 2) Deep, painful things to be shared and you not knowing what to do with that.

So, as you ask questions, be patient. Be ok with silence to give people time to think about how to answer. But also, look in our bulletin for the details of the "Forgiveness" Seminar that starts February 13 and encourage people with deep brokenness to consider being a part of that time.

Introduce it:

Robert Johnson was known as one of the greatest blues artist ever. Eric Clapton defined his music as "the finest music I have ever heard. I have always trusted its purity. I always will." But Johnson's music was birthed out of much loss and hurt. Growing up fatherless, then losing his first wife and child in childbirth, his 27 years of life were filled with blues. "A Man is like a prisoner: and he's never satisfied" and "I have pains in my heart, they have taken my appetite" were signature lyrics in "Drunken Hearted Man". Johnson was known as a man on the run, never letting anyone get close to him and turning to whiskey to deal with his hurt.

What are ways that you watch people deal with hurt? What are ways that you recognize in yourself in how you deal with hurt?

*Leader, this is a chance just to get people to explore ways of dealing with hurt. Drinking, addictions, close yourself off to others, consider yourself worthless and let anyone have you, anger, honesty, etc...

Revisit it: learn the passage preached on.

Read John 11:1-37

Describe everything we learn about Lazarus in the first verses.

*he was sick, from Bethany, brother of Mary and Martha, Mary is the one that poured perfume on Jesus' feet. He was one that Jesus loved.

What happens when Jesus arrives? (verses 17-22)

*Lazarus had already been dead for over 4 days, many were around Mary and Martha comforting them, Martha went to meet Jesus but Mary did not. Martha is mad at Jesus and blaming him that Lazarus is dead. But she has not given up hope on Jesus.

What does Mary say to Jesus when she sees him in verse 32? How is this different from what Martha said?

*She said same thing but without the hope of Jesus still raising him. She was just angry.

Many times we are afraid to show our anger to God, thinking that it means we don't trust him. What do we learn about the honesty of our anger about loss from Jesus' reaction?

*Jesus hates death as much as we do, even more. He hates what it does to our hearts, what it has done to our relationship with his father, it deeply saddens him. He understands it and weeps with us.

We, like the crowd, don't know exactly why Jesus wept. But we have our guesses. Why do you think he wept?

*Leader, not a right answer here but a time to let the group really think through what was going on in Jesus' head. He

could have wept because he loved Lazarus and knew what happened to him; or just sad to see Mary and Martha hurt; or hates what death does to us all and the pain he watched his friends go through because of it; or it could have been a realization of his own death and the pain it would cause.

Had Mary not been honest with Jesus about her hurt, what could her anger have turned into?

*Hate of others, hate of Jesus, hate of God, never understanding Jesus' heart for her brother as well.

The Psalms are our prayer book where we learn how to truly be honest with God about our loss and pain. Break up the following Psalms and have 2 people in the group read one together and then share with the group what they learned in this Psalm about speaking honestly, about hurt, loss, anger, and hate. Psalm 4; Psalm 5; Psalm 6; Psalm 7; Psalm 10; Psalm 12

Have them give scripture references when they share:

*Leader: this is a chance for the group just to explore the Scriptures together and learn. Make sure when they share that they share the verses they get their thoughts from. Make sure as well they are not reading what is not there. BUT only speak to what is in the passage.

At the Huntersville Campus, we talked about the practice of "Sitting Shiva". It's a Jewish custom that when someone dies, you come and sit with someone and you never say anything until that person speaks. You are just there, mourning with the person. When we see people lose someone or something, why are we so eager to speak? What do we long for our words to do?

*We want nothing more than to make the person feel better quickly. When we do this, we

What do our words often do instead? What are poor choices of words you have heard people speak to you or to others in loss?

Use it: don't just learn the passage but use it.

What are hurts in your life that you realize that you have never shared with anyone and have never named for yourself?

*Leader, this is a scary question for people. If they don't answer in the group, have them write it down on a piece of paper just to begin naming it for themselves. Don't make them share it but let them share it if they want.

As a community group, there will be people in this group that will go through very painful and hard places, hurtful places in our lives. How will we as a community group make a commitment to not let one another withdraw from the group? Why do you think this community group is the best place to come when that hurt happens?

*This is a time leader for the group to be proactive about committing to walk into each others lives even before something like this happens.

As a practical application, encourage people to attend the Forgiveness seminar that starts February 13.

Remember it: memorize a verse that helps you to remember and use it.

Memorize John 11:24-25

Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die. And whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

Write this on a piece of paper and put it on your mirror and in your car. Share this verse with your children to help them begin thinking about how God enters our brokenness! Begin now helping them see the importance of telling others about places they hurt.