**The Power of Connecting (2/18/24)**

**Discussion Questions**

**Summary:** We are called to connect in Christ (Heb. 10:23-25), but what does that look like? What does it feel like? Larry Crabb wrote a prophetic exhortation to the church in 1997 called *Connecting*. After 25 years of Christian counseling he made the bold claim that most counseling would not be needed if the church would just be the church. Crabb’s vision boils down to two questions: 1) when you see something sinful and messy in a brother or sister in Christ do you still believe there is *good* inside them? 2) when someone comes to you for help do you believe there is *power* inside of you to help them? When the power of the Holy Spirit in you meets the goodness of Jesus in them you both experience the miracle of connecting.

**The Power of Connecting**

Ephesians 1:1-6, 15-23

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:23-25

**Presenting Problem:** addiction, anxiety, depression, anger, disrespect, over-eating, under-eating, over-working, under-working, pride, selfishness, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Treatment Options:**

1. Fix what’s **Wrong** through therapy to resolve psychological issues
   * The new priestly class of professional **Counselors**
2. Do what’s **Right** through effort, exhortation and accountability
   * Trading one expression of **Flesh** for another (from self-focus to self-reliance)

**Baseline Diagnosis:**

1. There is **Good** in everyone because the **Image of God** is imprinted on us
   * This makes us rational, relational and moral beings who long for **Connection**
   * *“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion…’”* Genesis 1:26
2. There is **Bad** in everyone because the **Corruption** of Adam is embedded in us
   * This infects every part of us: heart, mind, soul and body. We suffer from **Disconnection** and aggravate that pain in others.
   * *“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”* Rom. 1:21

**A Better Way: Connecting**

“Connecting is a kind of relating that happens when the powerful life of Christ in one person meets the good life of Christ in another… Connecting is the actual life of God, the energy with which the Father and Son relate to each other, a set of inclinations put in our hearts by the Spirit and kept alive by his presence. It is a power that is most fully released as we develop a compelling and awe-inspiring vision of who another person is and what he or she could become because of the gospel.” ” Larry Crabb, *Connecting* p. 66

* **Do you believe there is Good developing in every follower of Jesus, no matter what you see on the surface?**
* **Do you believe there is Power in YOU to help your brother or sister, no matter how incapable you feel to address the problem?**

**The Good in You because of Jesus:**

1. In Christ you are a **Saint** (v. 1)
2. In Christ you are **Beloved** (v. 4-6)
3. In Christ you are **Growing** (v. 15-16)

**The Power in you because of Jesus:**

1. The Spirit of **Wisdom** (v. 17)
2. The Revelation of **Hope** (v. 18)
3. The Power of the **Resurrection** (v. 19-23)

“The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one.” John 17:22

**Get Started:**

1. If you could have any super power, what would it be? Why?
2. Do you believe there is power in you to help a brother or sister in crisis? Why or why not?

**Dig In:** Read Ephesians 1:1-6

1. What stands out to you in this passage?
2. What spiritual blessings in Christ do you most appreciate right now?
3. What does this passage tell us about the GOODNESS that is in every follower of Jesus, even when they have screwed up royally?
4. Read Ephesians 1:15-23. What stands out to you here?
5. What does this passage tell us about the POWER that is in every follower of Jesus?

**Move Forward:**

1. Which is harder for you today - believing there is good in everyone or believing there is power in *you* to help anyone? Why is that?
2. How can we as a C-Group or D-Group experience connecting like this more often? How can we be more open and honest with one another?
3. How can we be more proactive in calling out the good in each other and restraining the bad?
4. Get a partner and pray Eph. 1:16-19 over them. Use the actual words and personalize them for that person.