

2022 Fall Spiritual Renewal

Redeemer Lutheran Church

Got Purpose?

Week 4

You Were Formed for God's Family

Opening Questions

1. What, if anything, really struck you from this week's sermon or Scripture reading?
2. Think about a close friend you've had or currently have in your life. What qualities go into making a healthy and good friendship? What friendship qualities does your church have?

Observation/Interpretation/Application

Read Acts 2:36-39

3. The book of Acts tells the story of the formation of God's family, the Church. In the verses from Acts 2, the blessing of Baptism is highlighted. What did Baptism bring into the people's lives? Who was included in this gift opportunity from God?

Read Acts 9:9-18

4. What does this account of the conversion of Saul tell you about who can be included in God's family? Look at Ananias' action in vv. 17-18. What did Baptism give Saul? Why did he need that?
5. In his book, Rick Warren says this about Baptism:

Baptism doesn't make you a member of God's family; only faith in Christ does that. Baptism shows you are a part of God's family.

The Purpose Driven Life; pg. 120

Compare Warren's statement to the following Bible verses about Baptism:

- Romans 6:3-4
- Galatians 3:26-27
- Titus 3:4-7

Someone once said that "faith is God doing His doing in our lives." How does that statement related to what Martin Luther wrote about Baptism:

What benefits does Baptism give? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this as the words and promises of God declare.

Luther's Small Catechism

Read John 3:5, 16

6. Jesus is making clear that Baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit with it makes us members of God's family. According to v. 16, what motivating factor prompted God to make us members of His family?
7. How have you seen that motivating factor of God in your life? Share an example.

Read Acts 2:44-45 and Acts 4:32-35

8. How did new believers reflect the nature of God in these verses? What distracts you from this life priority?
9. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, "You are called to belong, not just believe." Why is belonging to a community of faith important? Take a look at the list below of why a faith community is important:
 - A church family identifies you as a genuine believer.
 - A church family moves you out of self-centered isolation.
 - A church family helps you develop spiritual muscle
 - The Body of Christ needs you
 - You will share in Christ's mission in the world
 - A church family will help keep you from backsliding

Talk about each reason and how it applies to your life. How might these points help you reach out to unchurch or de-churched people in your life?

10. How is the following quote true for life in a small group?

We only grow by taking risks, and the most difficult risk of all is to be honest with ourselves and with others.

The Purpose Driven Life; pg. 140

How might a small group allow you to fully experience what it means to be in God's family?

Read Matthew 18:15-20

11. One of the greatest challenges of the Church is to live in unity. How does Jesus want His followers to solve relationship issues? What is the ultimate outcome desired?

Look at these steps to take toward reconciliation:

- Talk to God before talking to the person
- Always take the initiative
- Sympathize with their feelings
- Confess your part of the conflict
- Attack the problem, not the person
- Cooperate as much as possible
- Emphasize reconciliation, not resolution

Which of these above points do you tend to overlook during conflict? Where do you need to grow?

12. How does the Bible verse for this week apply to our discussion? John 15:12

Close in a circle prayer. Pray for unity in the church. Ask God to give you what you need so you can be freed from isolation to live a life of reconciliation and God-pleasing fellowship.