

**Week 4 CFC - Growing Together as a Gospel-Centered Community**  
**“Becoming Increasingly Intentional with Others while Growing More God-Reliant in the Process”**

John 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... <sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth

1. As we more and more embrace our calling to move intentionally into each other's lives in serving one another, we are **actively remembering** in so doing we are **bearing His image**. This means Christ is surely with us as He promised He would be, and the feeling we are all alone is fraudulent.
2. While they model what they teach, It's the Calling of Pastors and Staff to **Equip us to Minister** to Each Other, **MORE** than it is to do it themselves

Ephesians 4: 11-13 <sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> **to equip the saints for the work of ministry**, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,..... <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love

3. While I'm taking the initiative in reaching out to another person, I have to remind myself The Holy Spirit is with me working His will (much of which I won't see), and that means this encounter is a part of **worship** according to Romans 12:1.

Romans 12:1 I URGE you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship (NASB).

The question you have to ask yourself when you serve someone is: am I doing this as an offering to God or am I doing this as an offering to this person? A good way to know is your inner reaction if the person doesn't appreciate you for it. (we make offerings **to** God, and merely **toward** the person. )

4. If people walked away from Jesus Christ disappointed in his answers and unwilling to embrace the love and wisdom that came from His perfection, you have to see it as a part of His plan for You to become like Him by sharing in His sufferings (Phil 3:10)

Mark 10:17-22 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>18</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.' " <sup>20</sup> And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." <sup>21</sup> And Jesus, looking at him, **loved him**, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." <sup>22</sup> Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

5. What makes moving toward each other with increasing intentionality and God-Reliance difficult is sin and the battle of our flesh against the spirit (Gal 5:17). But it's an opportunity to become more God reliant by crucifying our flesh and walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16)

Gal 5:16-17 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do

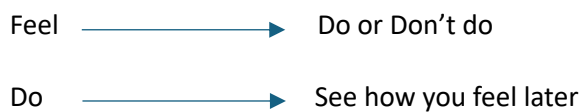
Being intentional means I will have to accept that there will be times I want to initiate with others and times I don't want to. When we don't want to we must be suspicious I'm possibly in the very battle Paul is talking about in Galatians 5:17

Matt 16:13-17 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

Matt 16:21-23 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

You have to remember when thoughts come into your head they're not all worth listening to, because some are from God and some are from the old nature which is actively opposing your new nature. Remember Christ's Spirit is in you guiding you in His truth, so you can exercise the choice to listen to some thought and dismiss others.

Walking by faith includes both of the following:



#### 6. Practical Ways to be Intentional With Others:

- a. Confide in someone about your current life circumstances and/or how you are feeling as of late

Welch, Edward T.. Side by Side (p. 67). I had been keeping my recent fears to myself. ... a good rule of thumb is that when you are stuck in hardships or sins, you keep enlarging the circle of those who know until you are no longer stuck... My wife and I were out for a meal with some friends when they asked, "How are you?" In the most casual way possible, I said, "Oh, I've been experiencing some odd fears lately." Our friends stopped, as if to put all other conversations aside, and considered my fears with me for the next half hour. Then they prayed for me. Why was that so helpful? Good helpers, such as these friends:

- are present, which is a good thing when fears arise;
- listen, really listen; draw you out;
- avoid being impersonal teachers;
- never minimize, are never trite;
- remember.

Those are qualities of Jesus himself, ... And, on that particular evening, I don't know exactly what these ordinary people did that was most helpful, but they did have impact. My fears lessened from that meal on. One thing I do know is that my helpers were qualified by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit

- b. Disciple one another Informally
- c. Practice Hospitality focusing more on the people than the environment