

If you know, you know - Week 3

How to change the world - Ben Foote

June 5, 2022

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation--encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Ephesians 4:22-5:2; 1 Timothy 4:7-16; 2 Timothy 2:23-24, 4:2,5; 1 Peter 3:15.

// Message Summary

This Sunday, Pastor Ben Foote led us through the third message in the series, *If you know, you know*. This series has been focused on what we can learn from the relationship of Paul - an elder statesman of the faith - and Timothy - his younger mentee and someone powerfully influenced by Paul. In a world of social media and polarization, we can be tempted to think that our influence comes from winning arguments against those we disagree with. But a consistent theme that we see in Paul's letter is this: our influence comes from treating people how Jesus treated people. Paul encouraged Timothy to be an example (despite his youth) through the things that he says, how he lived his life, how he loved others, walked his faith and maintained purity. Jesus' influence did not come from winning arguments, but from being a voice of hope to the hopeless, and our calling is to imitate His ways. This is how we are called to change the world.

// Biblical and Historical Context

The apostle Paul is a towering figure in Christianity. Known as Saul of Tarsus before his dramatic conversion, Paul was initially raised to become a Pharisee (a member of the strict Jewish leadership) and he regularly persecuted the early followers of Christ. After his conversion, God used him powerfully to become the greatest contributor to Christian thought in history. Through his prolific writing (14 letters of his went on to become Scripture) Paul unpacked the life, teaching and nature of Jesus, in a way that has allowed the church to understand and develop their faith over the last two thousand years. His most important teaching is likely to be "justification by faith": the truth that humans are saved (justified) through faith in Jesus, as a gift of God's grace, and not through obedience to the law or a lifetime of good works (see Ephesians 2:8-9).

// Community Questions

How much do you use social media? In what ways do you think it helps or hinders your life?

// Discussion Questions

1. Together, read Ephesians 4:22-5:2. How would you summarize what Paul is saying?
2. What does Paul mean when he says we have an “old self” and a “new self”?
3. Pastor Ben said: “People aren’t asking what makes us (Christians) different anymore. Could that be because we just aren’t very different anymore?”

What does this statement make you think?

4. Paul wrote that we should:
 - Speak truthfully
 - Be quick to forgive
 - Work hard and honestly
 - Think before we speak
 - Cultivate kindness and empathy

Choose one of these that, if you committed to it, would make your life better (and would make the lives of those around you better). What would life look like if you committed to improving in this area?

5. If our church all committed to being better followers of God’s example, how would that change the way our friends and family thought about God?

// Challenge

Think about your response to question four, above. Commit to making a step forward in one of the areas. Every time you get an opportunity this week, act and respond in a way that follows God’s example.