

“What’s going on?”

+ Saturday, August 17th at 8:00pm Horizons will be hosting their annual Moonlight Ride for Hunger. The Moonlight Ride for Hunger is a family-friendly bike ride that benefits the Horizons Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. The routes take you through different parts of Quincy, but all of them include a trip over the bridges! Check out Horizons' Facebook page for more details!

+ Back 2 School Bash - August 18th 5pm-8pm at LifePoint, all families with children preschool through high school age, come join us as we kick off the school year right!! Tons of games and activities to enjoy!

+ Our Be Love campaign comes to a close Sunday, August 25th. We've destroyed last years total and currently stand at 600 gallons collected for Horizons Food Pantry. Make sure to bring those last few gallons by August 25th!

+ Our church offices will be closed on Monday, September 2nd for Labor Day.

MATTHEW 5 : 33 - 37

ICE BREAKER

Question: What was the biggest lie you told or got away with as a kid?

Question: Have you ever told a lie “for the greater good?” What are some examples?

CENTERING FOCUS

As a way to center our focus, go around the group and share one thing that is on your mind and/or burdening you. Let your sharing be a way of letting it go, surrendering it to Jesus, and allowing other people in to pray and care for you.

Afterwards, have one person pray to begin your time together.

LAST WEEK’S CHALLENGE

Last week we started our journey on the road to simplicity. The spiritual discipline of simplicity helps us to cut out the things in our life that is distracting us from the first and most important thing: the Kingdom of God.

Question: Were there any steps you took to live more simply this past week? How was that? In what ways did it free you up to seek the Kingdom of God more fully?

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION

Question: Do you think withholding information is the same as lying? What about “stretching the truth”? Why or why not?

Question: What is a white lie? Why do people tell white lies?

Question: When you make plans are you more likely to stick with them, even if you don’t want to, or flake? What are your reasons for making those decisions?

ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:33-37 (ESV):

“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.”

Question: “Swear” is not as common of a word anymore. What does it mean to “swear falsely”?

Question: What do you think it means to *“perform to the Lord what you have sworn”*? Why do you think this might have been a helpful command?

*In New Testament times people used oaths like “I swear by heaven, or by earth, or by Jerusalem, or by my head.” They did this to give weight to their words, while avoiding breaking the third commandment of taking the name of the Lord in vain. Jesus said that all of these things are actually taking the name of the Lord in vain.

Question: What are some examples of things we “swear by”? Why do we feel the need to give particular weight to some of our words?

Question: Why do Judges make you swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth when you're a witness? Why do we think we need others to swear an oath? What does "swearing by God" do to a person?

Question: Jesus said that anything other than plain and simple honesty is from evil. Why do you think that is?

John 8:31-32 (ESV): *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

Question: Have you ever had to keep track of a lie? Is it easier to keep track of a lie or keep track of the truth?

Question: What does it feel like to carry the weight of a lie? Have you ever felt a lie begin to corrupt you from the inside out? Has a lie ever destroyed your life or the life of someone you know?

Question: Have you ever told a truth that was super scary to reveal and afterwards you felt lighter? Why do you think telling the truth did that?

Question: What keeps us from telling the whole truth about ourselves to others?

Question: What are some things we could do in this group to promote a safe environment for us to be honest with ourselves and each other?

NEW CHALLENGE

As we journey on towards simplicity, this week we are going to focus on pursuing simplicity in our speech. This week we will practice using no apologies, no excuses, and no exaggerations, when it comes to our speech. Like we learned this week in our passage, Jesus tells us, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no." Often our speech is clouded with busyness that we use to avoid honesty and vulnerability.

For example: If someone asks you to go to dinner with them and you are busy, just tell them you are busy. There is no need to apologize for being busy. If someone asks you to dinner but you don't want to go, but tell them (kindly) that you do not feel like going, whether you are tired, needing rest, etc.

This week as we pursue simplicity, let your speech be simple, and practice taking out anything that hinders you from being true and honest. Seek first the Kingdom of God, even in your speech.