
Entering In: (Ice breaker question)

Share an experience with the others in your group of a time when you received a “wake-up call” because you were living in denial about something.

The Context:

The church in Corinth is living in denial about several issues concerning the Christian life. It's true of all people that we do not by nature have the mind of God, but rather we need someone outside of us who can bring us into sync. Paul does this for the Corinthians. He writes to them in order to set them straight and help them have the understanding of the Holy Spirit in discerning truth.

Going Deeper

Two forms of denial are addressed by Paul

1. Denying one's own significance – a sense of humility that says because I am not ____, I am not worth anything. (1 Cor. 12:14-20)

What influences in our lives (family upbringing, culture, church, experiences, etc) contribute to this denying of one's own significance?

Read aloud the following “I am significant because...” statements and the accompanying verses (have each person in the group read one). As they are being read, consider which one or two are the most amazing and/or the hardest for you to accept.

I am significant because...

I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life.

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. John 15:5

I may approach God with freedom and confidence.

in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Ephesians 3:12

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.

You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. John 15:16

I am God's temple.

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 1 Cor. 3:16

I am a minister of reconciliation for God.

¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ¹⁸ Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm.

and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:6

I am God's workmanship.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

Pastor Glenn said, "Just because you think and feel like you are worthless, doesn't mean you think and feel correctly." What are ways we can incorporate the truths expressed in the scriptures above into our lives so as to counter the lies we so often think and feel?

2. Denying significance to others. (1 Cor. 12:21-26)

Usually when we deny others significance we also give certain people higher significance. What roles or services in the church do you consider "more important" and which ones do you consider "less important"?

Ultimately, why has God combined the members of the body to function together? How accepting are you of the ministry of the “prophets” and “teachers” in your life?

3. The church, local and universal, is God's body at work in the world (1 Cor. 12:29-31).

Why is it important to affirm both the universal and local church?

Why is it problematic to be a part of different churches for the benefit of being fed by the various ministries? Shouldn't we try to take advantage of all the options out there?

Do you feel that you are so connected to the body at Calvary that you can “rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn” (Ro 12:15)? What are practical ways that you and/or the church body can strengthen that connection? What are ways to help others in the church who you see are also less connected?