

River Valley Notes

OASIS

Part #4: The Gravity of Grace

February 11, 2007

The Big Idea:

1. The Church is called to function like an _____.
2. _____ functioned as an oasis for dry, depleted people.
3. We are the present-day expression of the mission and _____ of Jesus... the body of Christ.

We become an oasis church as we collectively own and embody a shared set of deeply held core values and defining practices.

Core Value #3: Outward-Focused

The Captivating Question: How could the Church today become as _____ as Jesus was to people who are spiritually unconvinced?

"Spiritually unconvinced": A person who is not yet convinced that Jesus is worthy of their whole-hearted, surrendered _____.

Basic assumptions...

- 1) Jesus was extremely attractive to unconvinced people.
- 2) The church _____ be as attractive to unconvinced people as Jesus was during His ministry on earth.

Jesus & The Gravity of Grace:

1. His _____ among observers: One who embraced and _____ the unconvinced.

Matt. 11:18-19

For John the Baptist didn't drink wine and he often fasted, and you say, 'He's a demon possessed.' And I, the Son of Man, feast and drink, and you say, 'He's a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of the worst sort of sinners!' But wisdom is shown to be right by what results from it." (NLT)

2. His _____ upon the unconvinced: _____ attraction.

Luke 15:1-2

Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such despicable people—even eating with them! (NLT)

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3. His _____ upon His followers: He propelled them into friendships with the unconvinced.

Mark 2:15-16

That night Levi invited Jesus and his disciples to be his dinner guests, along with his fellow tax collectors and many other notorious sinners. (There were many people of this kind among the crowds that followed Jesus.) But when some of the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with people like that, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" (NLT)

Now, it's our turn...

John 20:21

He spoke to them again and said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (NLT)

What would have to be true of _____ in order for an observer to report these kinds of things about _____?

Apparently Jesus...

- 1) Practiced _____
- 2) Radiated _____
- 3) Was _____ and at ease with Truth
- 4) Had an inside-out view of _____
- 5) Was able to speak the same _____

My homework:

Ask & answer the following questions, then ask, "Why?"

1. What sorts of people seem to be most attracted to me?
2. What sort of people am I most comfortable around?

We believe the community of believers should be irresistibly attractive to spiritually unconvinced people. As the Body of Christ, we will continue the ministry of Jesus in a manner consistent with the personality of Jesus. We will pursue & embrace not-yet-forgiven people in order to portray the goodness & mercy of God. The gathered church will be a place of acceptance & common ground, where the message of ultimate hope through Christ is presented with respect. We strive to make the redeeming grace of God emotionally & intellectually accessible to those not yet familiar. The ultimate purpose of our community is to invite outsiders inside.