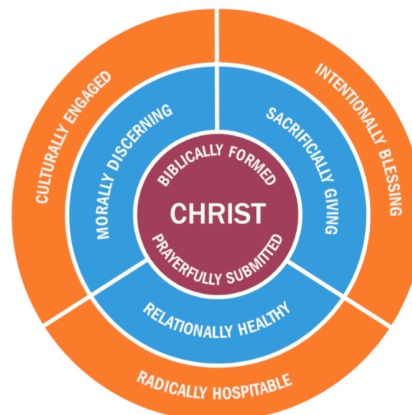


Bullseye: Aiming at Christ // “Relationally Healthy”

Week 3 | October 21, 2018

Sermon Summary: As we continue on in our *Bullseye* series, we transition to the next layer of the bullseye image below. This image is what we’re calling “The Aim of a Disciple”. We’re reminded that at the center of this aim is Jesus. All of the other sections of this image will get a turn to be unpacked in this series. But Jesus isn’t one of the weeks. He’s all of the weeks. We start with Him at the center. If we don’t, everything else just turns into moralism or trying to be a good person.

Each color of the image also represents the three different layers of our church mission statement. At Willowdale, we Love God (the red center of the aim), Love Each other (the blue layer), and love the World that Jesus, through His people (His *disciples*) is working to restore. Today, we transition to the blue layer with the topic of being *Relationally Healthy*.



When talking about relationships, it’s important to establish that relationships are incredibly important to God because He is a relational God. Christians believe that there is one God who is made up of three distinct persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit make up the Trinity. Humans were created in the image of God: “Let *us* make mankind in *our* image” (Genesis 1:26). At the beginning, when this happens, everything was perfect. There were four perfect relationships established: The relationship between God and People, People and Creation, People and Themselves (internal), and People and People. It doesn’t take a genius to realize that we don’t live in that perfect world anymore. Just look at the relationships between people and people. Relationships with people at work are hard. So are relationships between friends and family. We have lifelong friends who split and don’t speak anymore. Siblings turn into enemies. Parents divorce and families break up. We don’t have a lot of great models when it comes to being *Relationally Healthy*. That’s why we turn to Jesus.

When it comes to relationships, Jesus takes an important position: That of a servant.

At the Last Supper, Jesus washes His disciples' feet. This was a job of a servant – not the teacher and master. Not only does Jesus wash their feet, He tells them that they should do the same for each other. This means that the position of a disciple who follows Jesus is that of a servant.

Washing someone's feet was disgusting back when Jesus and the disciples were alive. Feet were barely covered while walking about. Dirt, dust, mud, animal waste, etc. would cover people's feet. Jesus was willing to go and do what no one else was willing to do. The disciples were too busy arguing over which one of them was the greatest. They weren't about to wash each other's feet. But Jesus shows us a different way. To be *Relationally Healthy*, you have to be willing to get into hard stuff with people. You have to be willing to go where no one else wants to. It takes a lot of love, service, hard conversations, self-examination, and trusting that working through the hard things is really important. But why?

It's important because the way we treat our relationships models to others our relationship with Jesus. We have been reconciled to God through Jesus. This means that relations have been restored between us and God because of Jesus has done. We're told that we have now been given this same message of reconciliation. God is making His appeal to the world through us (2 Corinthians 5). How we handle our relationships shows each other who Jesus is and what He's like. I don't know about you, but that seems like a pretty big deal to me. This is why, as much as it depends on us, we're called to live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18).

Discussion Questions

1. When it comes to being *Relationally Healthy*, how would you rate the key relationships in your life right now? Family, Friends, Work. On a scale from 1-10 (1 being poor and 10 being excellent). Why?
2. Jesus models for us and also invites us to take the role of a servant in relationships. How can this model help your current relationships? Do you think it could hurt them in any way?
3. It's not uncommon for relationships to end or hit a snag. The easy thing to do is to walk away or maybe even pretend like nothing happened. Sometimes, people even just confess to God how they've wronged someone else and move on. Read Matthew 5:21-26. How does this change the way you view your relationship with others in specific regards to how Jesus is involved? How does this change the way you see the importance of relationships between people here on earth now?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. As you read, look for the things in this passage that talk about our relationship with God because of Jesus. What are they? At the same time, look for the things in this passage that change the way we live because of what Jesus has done. How do these things apply to you being *Relationally Healthy*?
5. Read Romans 12:9-21. How would living in these ways change your relationships? Think about this from the perspective of your relationships with other Christians AS WELL AS people who do not yet know Jesus.