



What do you really believe?

1. Lost people matter to God.

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the **sick**. I have not come to call the righteous, but **sinner**s to repentance." *Luke 5:31-32*

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the **lost**." *Luke 19:10*

2. We needed to be more relevant .

People became more important than our preferences .

"People are not theologically aware until they are environmentally comfortable." Doug Fields

I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might **save** some. I do all this for the sake of the **gospel**, that I may share in its blessings. *1 Corinthians 9:22-23*

3. We needed to be more authentic .

"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with **love** and **compassion**, he ran to his son, **embraced** him, and **kissed** him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.' But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest **robe** in the house and put it on him. Get a **ring** for his finger and **sandals** for his feet. And kill the **calf** we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the **party** began." *Luke 15:20-24*

"Because of this I don't need to apply spiritual cosmetics to make myself presentable to Him. I can accept ownership of my poverty and powerlessness and neediness." Brennan Manning

4. Transformation is expected.

"God accepts you as you are, but has no intention of letting you stay that way."

A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is **fully trained** will be like his teacher. *Luke 6:40*

For Group Discussion

Answer these questions prior to your Small Group meeting this week.

Introduction

Not so long ago, as a result of some difficult times, Emmanuel Church was forced to answer the question, "What do we really believe?" The answers to that question ignited amazing growth. As people bought into the vision, they brought others to hear the message of Jesus and many lives were changed for eternity.

Discussion Questions

1. Around 10 years ago, the people of Emmanuel Church felt that change was necessary in order to be more effective for God's kingdom. Share a time when you realized you had to change something in your life.

2. The people of Emmanuel Church decided to be more relevant. When you are inviting someone to attend a weekend service with you, how do you describe the kind of experience they will have? What are the important elements you include? Why?

What does it look like for a church to be relevant? Read 1 Corinthians 9:22-23. Why is it important for us to find common ground with those who are far from God?

3. The people of Emmanuel Church decided to be more focused on people who are far from God. Read Luke 5:31-32 & Luke 19:10. How would you describe the spiritual condition of the people you spend the most time with? What leads you to this conclusion?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. What does it mean to be an "ambassador for Christ?" What can you do to maintain this mindset on a daily basis? What are some ways you can encourage others toward a relationship with God?

4. The people of Emmanuel Church decided to set an expectation of transformation. Pastor and author, Max Lucado, wrote, "God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way." What does it mean to be transformed?

If there is one area of your life that God wants to transform right now, what is it? Read Luke 6:46-49. How would your life be different if you were able to stand firm because you had been transformed in this area? How could your life collapse and crumble if you choose not to transform?

What steps do you need to take this week to continue the process of transformation in your life?

OUTREACH: GROUPS IN ACTION

- As we approach Easter, we will need extra hands for each of our services at all three campuses. If your group or any of the individual members would like to volunteer for that weekend, email Leah Torrison at ltorrison@eclife.org for more information.

- Help support two of our local mission partners, The Refuge or The Haven, and engage in a fun event at the same time. Register for the Rock the Block 5K or 10K Walk/Run on April 22 and indicate which of the local mission partners you wish to support. A percentage of all of the registration money received for the race will go to benefit each of the local non-profits chosen by the participants. Register to run, walk, volunteer, or even "sleep-in" at RocktheBlockRun.org.

Action Step

Fill in the blanks below for this upcoming week.

My action steps are _____

I'm accountable for _____, and their action steps are _____

My memory verse is _____

This coming week, I'm praying for: _____