

Week 3 – Radical Inclusion

COACHING VIDEO: bit.ly/FComWeek3

Introduction (12 min)

DEBRIEF THE WEEK (5 min)

Last week we discussed how sacrificial love is at the foundation of the flourishing community.

Share in pairs: Did you do the action step(s) from last time? What did God show you? How was God at work in you and through you?

VISION + OBJECTIVE (1 min)

Today, we'll study idea of radical inclusion. Our community should be one of welcome, where all can be seen, heard and honored in the fullness of who God has made them to be.

ICE BREAKER (6 min)

In pairs, share experiences of being the "new" person. How did it feel? In what ways did you feel welcomed or out of place?

Pray to transition.

Biblical Reflection (25 min)

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

- The early church grows despite persecution, and the good news of Jesus is reaching Gentiles (Acts 10-11). Jewish believers disagree on whether Gentiles should be circumcised, an outward sign of their identity as the chosen people of God (Genesis 17).

READ ACTS 15:1-35

Observation:

- What is the conflict, and what is at stake?
- What are God's actions in the passage? How does that compare/contrast to the various leaders' actions and assertions?

Interpretation:

- What stands out to you about Peter and James' comments? What key words or phrases get at the heart of their message?
- What do you learn about God's intent for his people from this passage?

Application & Listening Prayer:

- What are the unspoken expectations of your community that might be barriers for new people or those exploring faith? Consider this question from a racial/ethnic lens. What costs might non-majority students bear?
- What would help students from different communities feel welcome and included?
- How is God speaking to you and inviting you to respond?

Response (28 min)

ACTIVITY (18 min)

To truly be a welcoming community, we need to better understand one another. Cultural Values give language to principles, beliefs, or norms of a community (and are often, but not always shaped by nationality or ethnicity). Look at the list of Cultural Values (photo summary). For each value pairing, rate yourself from 0 to 5, picturing it as a spectrum with 0 being the left column value and 5 being the right column value.

Read off each set of cultural values and have participants show, "fist to five" with their hand, which values they identify with. Invite 1-2 people to share about their numbers each time.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you notice about your own values and those of the community?
- Where are potential places of conflict or tension based on varying cultural values? What are some opportunities?

ACTION STEPS (5 min)

- **Collective:** Brainstorm ways your next online gathering can be more welcoming and inclusive. Connect with the leaders of those spaces and volunteer to implement 1-2 of those ideas at the next gathering. If your community doesn't have a regular gathering, host a gathering and invite friends! Jackbox, anyone?
- **Personal:** Say "yes" to how God is inviting you to respond to Acts 15.

PRAYER (5 min)