

Essentials Group,

It was great to get us all together and map out a bit of where we are going, and get us started on that road. Here is a little recap and some things to prepare for next week.

ORIENTATION

We made the point that many, if not most, people in the church today are not very prepared for tough Christian worldview questions, nor are we very equipped to go search out Scripture on our own to find those answers. Solution: the Church must equip followers of Jesus better.

LESSON 1

How has the Church equipped believers throughout history?

We spent time developing a very entry level idea that there “traditions” and “instructions” that were handed down directly from the Apostles who learned from Jesus to the churches they started or lead. We also noted that there were “traditions of men” that contradict God’s Word and that we are to guard against that. Two verses that show both types of traditions: Paul’s “tradition” 2 Thessalonians 2:15, and “traditions of men” Colossians 2:8.

The big piece we spent time on was how these “traditions” were “delivered”. Now, I am putting quotes around “traditions” and “delivered” because they share the same root word in their original language Greek. For you linguistic and/or bible nerds (like me) the words are paradosis (tradition) and paradidomai (delivered). Why is this important? The answer was the point of the night: the teachings that were given to the church (traditions) were taught to them in a particular way (delivery). The structure of teaching (delivery) was as important to the apostles as the content (traditions). Here is a great passage that uses both words together.

1 Corinthians 11:2

Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain **the traditions even as I delivered** them to you.

We closed the night talking about how we have lost a good solid tradition of discipleship in the modern church, and we have lost the delivery system used by the early church. Our goal is to regain that today.

LESSON 2

How important was the actual process of grounding the churches in the apostles traditions and instructions, and how did they guard the truth in those churches?

READING

To prepare for lesson 2, here is what we need to read: Acts 11:19-26, Acts 14:21-23, Acts 15:36 - 16:4, and Ephesians 3:1-13

QUESTIONS

After reading the four short passages above, think through and write down some ideas about the following questions:

- How important was it for the Jerusalem Church to get leaders out to Antioch, and why?
- Why did Barnabas and Paul go back to the cities/people they had already proclaimed the gospel too? What was their goal?
- Based on the passage in Acts 11 and Ephesians 3, what was the first theological challenge the early churches and apostles had to overcome?

Bring your Bibles and notepad (paper or digital) and your minds! I am excited for us to get together Sunday evening at 6pm and uncover some new ground.

LOOKING FORWARD

Lesson's 1 and 2 are like pouring concrete solidly so that you build you house on a strong foundation. If you do these lessons well, then lesson 3 will be the best week ever. The first Sunday was good, next Sunday will be even better, but when we get to the third week and actually dissect gospel passages and apostolic teachings it will get really good!