

sermon notes

THRIVING
IN THE THICK OF IT

Lesson 5

Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed--that exhilarating finish in and with God--he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God.

Hebrews 12:2 MSG

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

John 19:28-29 NIV

Be human enough to _____ your need.

ROADBLOCKS TO BEING REAL

✓ *The fear of being _____.*

When I kept it all inside, my bones turned to powder, my words became daylong groans. The pressure never let up; all the juices of my life dried up. Then I let it all out; I said, "I'll make a clean breast of my failures to God. Suddenly the pressure was gone.

Psalms 32:3-5 MSG

✓ *The fear of being _____.*

Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it."

Psalms 139:14 NLT

✓ *The fear of being _____.*

We refuse to wear masks and play games...Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see.

2 Corinthians 4:2 MSG

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

1 John 1:7 NIV

BE TRANSPARENT

1. *Establish a* _____.

The Church is a _____.

Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.

Ephesians 2:20-22 NLT

2. *Enact a* _____.

The Church is a _____.

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Ephesians 4:16 NLT

3. *Enlist an* _____.

The Church is a _____.

“So don’t be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.”

Luke 12:32 NLT

4. *Embrace being* _____.

The Church is a _____.

You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian.

Ephesians 2:19 LB

I can be me, when I'm _____ to those who _____.

Consider and Discuss:

This week, we learned another way to thrive in the thick of it by observing how Jesus handled His worst day. After hours of suffering on the cross, Jesus showed His humanity by addressing His need for help with the words, "I am thirsty." The fact that He, as the Son of God, asked for a drink demonstrates that none of us are so self-sufficient that we can survive a bad day without the help of those around us. We need to acknowledge our needs. Asking for help doesn't make us weak; it makes us human. While it is natural for us to try to hide our needs to avoid being hurt, rejected, or exposed, we need to remove our masks and simply be ourselves. The church is the best place for people to grow, heal, and change. Here, we can find support through Godly friends, grow as part of the body of Christ, gain protection by being a part of the flock, and embrace the love of our church family. When we are connected with people who love and believe in us, we are free to be ourselves and confront challenges head-on, knowing we are supported by others.

- Is it difficult for you to admit when something in your life is not going well? Discuss reasons why we may put on masks and refrain from asking for help when we need it. What role does fear place in keeping you from being real and transparent with others?
- Discuss the importance of being connected in a church family. What is the value of having a group of friends to help you make it through difficult situations?
- Share an experience you've had where you opened up with a friend about a difficult situation. How did being transparent help you

