

# CHURCH ON THE MOVE

*Acts 17:22-34*

## **BIG IDEA**

Our theology, processed through the Word, Spirit, and people of God provides us the discernment through which we determine how to live our daily lives.

## **ICE BREAKER**

A heart of discernment is vital. Discernment is the ability to tell the truth from a lie and it tells me what I should and shouldn't do in light of this. In this pandemic we are all discerning how to live well. We want to discern theologically. Each person makes decisions based on discernment and something drives this discernment. Something inside of us causes us to choose.

1. During the context of this pandemic, discuss which decision has been hardest for you to discern: whether to wear a mask or not, whether to go work, deciding how much news to watch or something else? What made it tough to discern what to do?

## **NEXT STEP**

Not given today.

## **ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

We have to apply discernment to our daily lives. Each day we get up and make choices. How does theology impact this and how do we make our theology active in our life? Do we just hear it and do it? It's not that easy. We acknowledge God's ways are true but don't do them. Why? What's going on? Well there is a step in between, namely, our imagination.

Our imagination has to embrace truth. Until a truth is embraced in our imagination we don't believe it and it doesn't reach the level of changing our behavior. As adults something has to rattle us in order to open the door to our imagination and this occurs through two doors: **fear and hunger**(think desires). We have our hunger and fears that we need to discern but we also need to tune in to others' fears and hungers so we can discern both how to build redemptive relationships and to share the gospel. So, in our

current pandemic situation people are scared and very hungry. Both of these open up people's hearts to Christ.

1. Much that is happening in us and around us is driven by fear. There is fear of sickness, fear of losing our constitutional rights, economic fears, and the dominant fear of death. Share with the group specific fears you and your family have faced. Share what has helped you in this battle and/or take some time to reflect on some verses that speak about trusting God and rejecting fear. He wants to engage with us in our fears.

2. Next we have to think about the fear and hunger of those around us. Take some time to reflect as a group on your neighbors, friends and coworkers and think about what they are facing. Take some time to pray for them as a group and ask God if there is a step you can take to enter their fear or hunger in a loving way.

3. My theology tells me about death. Even if we get beyond this virus we will die of something. We need a deeper hope than getting past the virus. Reflect on this quote: "Death silencing the noise of affluence." What is God inviting you to with Him in regard to some of the fears you have had to face recently? (reflect on where we ultimately get our security, where we find peace when circumstances are not peaceful etc.)

Group leaders: consider praying together again. Come into His presence together and invite Him to draw each fresh to security and peace in Him. Use some of the Scripture passages you referred to earlier in regard to fear and worry. God's Spirit moves in suffering and we desire Him to pierce our hearts for the needs of others in this pandemic.

## NOTES AND QUOTES

**Review:** a church on move is all based on a pierced heart. We own and confess sin and stay in this pierced condition so we have a heart for God and for others.

Our deepest need is for Christ because our deepest need is forgiveness from sin and deliverance from hell. Because we have pierced hearts we can be bold and we can live with grace under pressure and with good discernment.

Theological clarity is not an exercise for obscure thinking. Theology must be processed humbly and courageously through the Word, Spirit, and people of God because it is the framework for understanding ourselves and how to move through life.

The conflict in Acts regarding circumcision and the law was resolved through discernment. Together they discerned truth through the Word of God, the Spirit of God and the people of God.

In Athens Paul discerns hunger in the people, namely, a hunger for the unknown god.

Psalm 111:10 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding.. To him belongs eternal praise.”