

## **IMAGE -Real or Managed?**

Ignite Series #2

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Intro:

My space is a place where people want to be "something".

We all want to be "known" for something. (Even if they lie.)

Whether it's for being successful or influential or for something else that we see as "impressive". We **spend a lot of time and energy projecting an image** of ourselves that we think will gain us acceptance from others. But that is not who really are, and if we aren't careful, we'll end up going through life without being truly known by anyone.

**And this will rob us of ever knowing true acceptance.**

\* **So we learn to COVER UP, to PRETEND.**

\* **All these are EMBARRASSING- so we hide, make up things, and lie.**

It may **be your heart**, your **behavior**, a **habit** or **even a secret**. ALL of US!

\* **This may shock you but that is EXACTLY what the LOCAL church is supposed to provide.**

\* **A COMMUNITY a place where sinners & broken people who KNOW that there is a DISCREPANCY a GAP in their lives can come and find believers and be honest in dealing with their gaps.**

\* **Christians are FORGIVEN- we have been given a second chance.**

\* **A place where couples / singles can come and be HONEST with their IMAGE-reality.**

\* Why you have to figure out where you are going to do LIFE - NOT IMAGE management.

SO TODAY we'll look a several scriptures - most just inspirationally principles...

### **1. James 5:16 Become vulnerable to others. Be open**

"Confess *your faults* one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

\* We all have some "faults" that we need healing for on the inside.

- Don't just tell God- **tell somebody**... what will they think?

- **That you are like everyone else.**

- **They think you are honest**

? Who is praying specifically for you because of your "gap" / fault?

### **2. Hebrews 10:24-25 Provoke/encourage others to love & to good works. Be confrontational**

"And let us consider one another to **provoke** unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but **exhorting one another**: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

### **3. Galatians 6:1-3 Humbly Restore & Bear burdens of those that stumble Be available**

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; **considering thyself**, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

\* Who is helping you carry the burden of your gap? (not wallowing in it with you)

But rather **call them every (day /week)** (whatever it takes to bear those burdens)

\* **Nothing in your gap (what you are & what people think) should be carried by yourself.**

\*\*\* SO central the NT

\* If you are **trying to carry it by yourself**- probably not doing a very good job- or you would have solved it by now. Closed the gap.

\* The **church** should be preeminent the **ENVIRONMENT** & **Christians** should **be the GROUP!**

#### 4. **Romans 15:7 Do life together by practicing Acceptance- Be Loving**

"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God."

**Roman 14:1** "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations."

**How did Christ accept you? Just as you are.**

Why did God accept you the way you were?

Not with condemnation because He placed your condemnation on Christ.

\*\*\* **Because He knew something that we hardly ever figure out... that acceptance paves the way to influence, and He knew that to influence you He had to accept you.**

- **Instead of CONDEMNATION (as He put it on Jesus on the cross)** so I want you the Christian to treat others like I have treated you!

- (1) And Mike I want you to extend that same kind of acceptance that I showed you to others.

(2) And Mike I want you find a group of people that will accept you & bear your burdens.

#### **NOTE:**

That is why we **don't have adult Sunday school** - a place to act spiritual, but not get real.

That is **what we are after in our small groups.**

Hopefully it will be a place where you can be real & honest and others will discover that we are all in the same boat.

\* Why we are **turning up the heat** for **small groups & discipleship.**

\*\*\* Because we all have a gap between reality & imagination of whom we really are.

\* **This the core of the church** - where all age groups will experience real intimacy & honesty & reality! (For children thru aged adults.)

#### **Some say well you are trying to make a glorified AA group.**

\* But in reality **we are all ADDICTS to our IMAGE Management.**

(Addicted to covering our GAP)

\* Why not **take a risk** and be open to a group of people that love you instead of it comes out anyway to a group of people that DON'T love you.

\* SO why not **get involved in a small group- & get real & close the GAP of your IMAGE** & your REALITY.

**As your pastor I want you to DO LIFE not just sit in rows.**

**CONCLUSION:** Who are you doing life- we know we are all doing Image Management?

This is where life-change takes place- when you are open & vulnerable.