

Keeping the Main Thing, The Main Thing!

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Acts 9:31

August 21, 2011



SETTING THE SCENE

- » Share a time when you started something (a project, a hobby, a job, etc) that you didn't finish like you wanted to. What were the circumstances? What did you learn from the experience? What would you change if you could go back in time and get a "do-over"? Do you tend to finish what you start or do you struggle to finish well? Why?
- » Why do you think the average American has such a short attention span (about 20 minutes)? Do you think this is a factor of our culture or just human nature? Do you tend to persevere when things in life get tough or do you look for the quickest way out? Why? Do you wish you were different? Why?

THE STUDY

- » Share your overall thoughts and impressions from the sermon this morning. What things stand out to you? What did you learn? Where did God most challenge you? What questions do you still have about the passage or the sermon?
- » Read **ACTS 9:31** out loud as a group. What is your initial reaction to this verse and why do you think the teaching team elected to teach on this one singular verse? What do we as a church need to learn from this passage? What specifically do you need to put into practice?
- » Given what the early church had gone through up until this point in the book of Acts (Pentecost, standing before the Sanhedrin, internal sin, Stephen's stoning, mass persecution, Saul's conversion), do you think they had every right to start grumbling and maybe even give up? Explain your answer. How do you think you would have responded if you were in the same situation (be honest, not noble)?
- » In the sermon this morning Ray taught is that *A Thriving Church Will Have a Passion For.....*
 1. **UNITY** (1 Thessalonians 3:16)

What does it really mean for a church to have unity? What doesn't it mean? How do we make sure we're in unity? Do you think Pinecrest has a sense of unity or not? Why or why not? What needs to change for the better?
 2. **PERSONAL GROWTH** (Romans 14:19)

Why is it so important for God's people to keep growing in their faith? How does that happen? In what are of your spiritual life do you need to grow the most? How do you think that should happen?
 3. **GODLY OBEDIENCE** (Psalm 111:10)

What does it mean to live "in the fear of the LORD"? Do you feel that's how you're living? Why or why not? Do you think Pinecrest is obeying God's direction? If so, give an example. If not, why do you think this (be specific)?
 4. **SPIRIT-LED LIVING** (Romans 15:13)

How do you think we are "encouraged by the Holy Spirit" in our daily lives today (again, be specific)? What happens to the church when we aren't allowing God's Spirit to lead us? Have you ever seen this happen? Explain.
 5. **EVANGELISM** (Romans 1:16)

Why is sharing Christ with others so important to the vitality of the church? What happens when the church isn't sharing Christ with others? Is that happening here at Pinecrest? Discuss your answers the potential implications. How do you think this early church saw such rapid growth? Is it because it was new or something else? What are the implication for us today? What should we be doing that we aren't doing? What are we doing that we should stop doing?
- » What one thing from this morning has stuck with you (maybe even something we haven't covered yet)?

APPLICATION

- » Place a “+” by the church passion that you think is *Pinecrest’s* strength; then place a “—” beside the passion you think we need to work on the most. Then take some to discuss as a group how the church as a whole can improve. How can you personally improve?
 - Unity
 - Personal Growth
 - Godly Obedience
 - Spirit-Led Living
 - Evangelism
 - » Which of the five items above do you personally need to work on the most? How can you do that and what can the group do to help you in that process? What’s your strength and how can you continue to improve in that area?
 - » Do you think *Pinecrest* suffers from apathy, laziness, or lack of faith? If so, explain your answer and how that needs to change. If not, what do we need to change in order to keep growing and impacting the Kingdom of God positively?
 - » Share any unanswered questions or comments you have as a result of the group discussion or sermon...
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PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- » Next week Peter is back in the limelight in **ACTS 9:32-43**. Read this story and discuss the key lessons in the story. Why do you think Luke included these events in his narrative? What’s about to happen in the story that makes Peter’s journey to Joppa (and the miracle he performed) so important?
 - » What one thing stands out to you personally in this passage? What do you want to learn more about?
 - » Spend some time reading through this story during the week. As you read it through several times, what patterns start to emerge? What surprises you? What is God trying to teach you through this passage?
 - » Write down any questions you have about this verse and be prepared to discuss them next week (after the sermon).
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CARING COMMUNITY

- » **SHARE** with the group how God has been speaking into your life or challenging you this past week (this may be as a result of the sermon or something in your personal journey). Is there anything from this week’s LifeGroup discussion you need to work on?
- » Are there any **NEEDS** you have coming up in your life that the group can help you with (this may include spiritual needs, life needs, pretty much anything...)
- » **PRAY** for one another. Share your requests and praises with one another. Write them down here. If you commit to praying, please be sure you do it...