

I Belong to Something Growing

Questions for Groups Week of August 13-19

Hosts – This week we find ourselves in the fourth sermon in the I Belong series. We have focused on I Belong to Something Bigger and the fact that Christ-followers are a part of the universal church and the local church. The second sermon in the series focused on I Belong to Something Safe and the fact that at FCC one's soul is safe, but not our sin. We are willing to come alongside and help us become more like Christ. The third week we heard I Belong to Something Ancient. Probably the pivotal point of last week's sermon was the "homework" of writing Forgiven or Condemned. Many have shared how that exercise was incredibly meaningful to them. This week we focus on I Belong to Something Growing. You will want to review these with your group or ask them if they remember where we have been in the I Belong series. It is always good to allow group members to work through some of the previous sermon's thoughts and points.

This Week's Passage – 2 Peter 1:3-15

"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things."

2 Peter 1:3-15

Be sure to read this passage as you prepare and then read (or have it read) this passage in the group.

Ask, What are your thoughts about yesterday's sermon? (Allow time for responses. At this point, do not add much yourself. Just allow what the group members to share to be enough for now.)

Say, Michael made this statement based upon this passage. Faith is not a supplement. It is the "thing".

Ask, Why is faith "The thing?"

Say. With faith being the foundation, the following are supplemental. Virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, love – they are all supplements.

Ask, What happens when we try to live off of supplements and not the essential? (allow time for response)

Say, supplements are meant to complement and add to, not to be "the thing". When we try to live off of the supplements of morality and Christianly things, we miss the heart of the Gospel and that is faith in Christ is "the thing". Supplements were never meant to be the thing and actually can deceive us by placing our full trust in Christ and try to do "good works" to better position ourselves.

Say, Michael mentioned that We want to start with love but actually faith is the foundation. While love is an incredible thing, love outside of Christ is hollow and ends up being self-satisfying and is not love for others.

Michael's four sermon points are:

1. In **breadth** – At FCC, we are thankful for and celebrate that we come from different backgrounds, varying education levels, multiple ethnicities.

Say, Michael mentioned preferences and our desire for our preferences to be met. While preferences are normal, preferences will seldom be completely satisfied and can be selfish and sinful if our preferences go beyond biblical truths.

Ask, how have you learned that all of your preferences don't have to be met to still be part of the body? Say, many times when we relinquish our preferences we show great strides in spiritual growth and maturity, which leads to Michael's second point.

2. In **depth** - discipleship, spiritual maturity, knowledge of God's grace and our sinfulness, His character and attributes.

Ask, how have you been challenged to grow spiritually through our community group and/or through the sermons? (Allow time for a few to respond. They may share things that do not fit the points of the I Belong series, but allow them to articulate/share some of how they have grown spiritually.)

3. In **surrender** - this is foundational in a believer's life. **Say**, Surrender and faith go hand in hand.

Ask, How has God led you to surrender your time, talents, and treasure in the last few weeks? (Allow time for response.)

4. In **service** - sacrifice to others and our community.

Say, FCC has a great history of service to others in our community and for that we are grateful. We will continue to learn how to serve our community and to serve one another.

Ask, does anyone have a short story of how someone else serving you impacted your life here at FCC. (Ask the question this way instead of, How have you served someone else here through FCC? We are flipping this question around for your group member to focus on how they have been served by someone else at FCC and what they meant to them.)

Close the time in prayer, reminding participants that FCC is committed to serving the Kingdom and to make much of Christ through the way that we share the truth and grace of the gospel. Take time for participants to share prayer requests this week as they pray rather than sharing requests and then praying for those requests. It may seem a little odd but may focus more on the requests and not just the back story of the requests. Use your own judgement on how you want to lead the prayer time.

Thank you for preparing and serving each week. Do me a favor if you would and after you have read and prepared for your group this week, shoot me an email with **I Got It** to paul.turner@achurchforyou.org