

TENSION

You can Enjoy CHURCH and You can Enjoy living in the WORLD

ICEBREAKER: What is your fondest memory in Church? What do you enjoy most, outside of Church?

Introduction:

Some people will say that Church is boring. They only go to church for weddings and funerals. Other people feel guilty for enjoying the outdoors, vacations, or an abundance of material wealth. Still others may suffer guilt, feeling as though we should experience destitution. Others have discovered that serving in church can be fun. Exactly what is it that God wants us to enjoy and what are we to avoid enjoying?

1. What do you think that God means by enjoy? (Psalm 73:11, 19; Ecc. 5:19; Acts 9:31)
2. How do you feel about church; is it boring or do you enjoy it? How can serving in church be fun?
3. What keeps us from serving? What is the value of serving in the church? What ministries would you enjoy serving in?
4. Why do you suppose some people would feel guilt over enjoying material wealth or things?
5. Apart from anything spiritual, what are the hobbies that give you the most joy?

Pastor Dave said "I'm not talking about the world system. I'm not talking about the invisible world system that is at war with God, promoting evil, gratifying earthly desires and taking God's rightful place in your heart. I'm not talking about the system that advocates destroying and devaluing people...I'm talking about the physical world around us."

6. How do you see the world system at war with God in today's world? How do you see the world's system promoting evil?

7. How does the world system compete for God's place in our hearts?

8. What does it mean to be in the world, but not of the world? How can we know when we are living, "of the world"?

9. How does the world system devalue people and destroy people and families?

I. The world of people, the world of culture, the world of nature! God designed it for us to enjoy!

Pastor Dave said the importance of this tension is that your kids are going to grow up and begin enjoying some things that you may not have defined as spiritual. It's okay to say to them, you can enjoy some things other than church! Pastor Dave also spoke of seeing God's handiwork through creation.

10. How can we as parents help our children love the things of God, as much as we do? (Gen 1:31)

11. How can you describe to your children, the difference between the world system at war with God and enjoying the world of People/Culture/Nature? (1 John 2:15,16)

12. How can we enjoy our people, culture and nature? What are the things that you think God values most? What does He want us to value most? (Rom 12:18)

13. What actions can we take to prevent the world from taking FIRST place in our hearts? (Matt 6:33)

14. What are the actions that we are to embrace to keep God on the throne of our lives? (Luke 9:23; Rev 2:4)

II. Don't get worried that you might like people who are not Christians.

Pastor Dave spoke of things we might like, that are not necessarily Christian, like listening to secular music, or watching sports. Remember God created everything. Don't make your kids choose between the church and the world in a crazy way.

15. How do you develop guidelines for your children's music, TV watching and entertainment? How do you handle struggles with children over music and TV choices? What can we do to help our children to come up with good convictions regarding music and entertainment for themselves? (Psalm 1; Prov 3: 5,6)

16. How do you encourage children in the love of God and appreciation for spiritual things? (Ecc 11:9,10)

Our role as Christians is to trust in the Lord and to do good. God is bigger than our church or our world. God loves sinners and wants to save them. There is enjoyment when the church is growing and on mission, loving people. If we lose heart for the lost, our enjoyment and the health of the church erodes. God has given us all things for us to enjoy, but do not ignore the sins of gluttony, drunkenness, greed, sexual immorality, or being controlled by something other than God's Holy Spirit.

17. What would you say is the biggest hindrance to our enjoying our relationship with God?

18. Do you think that the church is on mission and growing and loving people? (Acts 9:31) How can we enjoy growing and loving people more?

Westminster Catechism from 1648 AD, asks the question, "What is the chief end of man? Answer: A man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."