



Heart Not Hype

Day 7: Double-Comm (Community and Commission)

Hey guess what? You made it day 7. Congratulations on stickin' with this deal. Hopefully you feel that it has been worth your time. I know it's been worth mine! Now before we wrap this all up with a pretty pink bow, we need to look at just 2 more things that are important to your continual growth and journey with Christ. Community and Commission. Let's do it.

First, lets tackle community. Today, I want to encourage you to think about churches that are in your community/city. Now with a few of those in mind, do you know anyone that is going to one of them? Maybe a friend or a relative? Possibly a neighbor? A former good-looking baby sitter? Anyway, the reason I ask is because it is super important for you to plug into a local church/ministry so you can connect with others that are on this same journey with Jesus that you are. Now I know that some of you are thinking that church is going to be boring, stuffy and full of people that will just look at you like you are some kind of weirdo that doesn't belong. And I am not gonna lie to you. You may feel like that at a church or 2. But keep searching until you find one that teaches the Bible so you can understand and apply and that feels like "home". That may sound crazy but when you find the right church, you'll know it. Even if the rest of the people there don't "look like you", still try and get connected because just as we talked about from the very beginning - you were not meant to walk this path alone. Your relationship with Jesus is a personal one for sure but it will help you be strong and feel encouraged when you are connected to a church. This isn't just me saying it either. Scripture tells us the same thing. Check it.

Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day (of Jesus' return) approaching.

Being a part of a church community through things like worship services and small groups is vital to you. It will be a lifeline to something that will keep you growing and thriving. It will encourage and strengthen you when trials and temptations come your way. Trying to find the right place (church) may prove to be difficult but it is one of the most important things you can do.

In **Acts 2:42-47** Paul (the writer) paints us this picture of what the church is to be: **They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers**

were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

What a beautiful portrait of what the Body of Christ is supposed to be like. But, there is one thing you NEED to remember: just as there are no perfect people, there is no perfect church. So give it some time. Check some out and find out where you can learn more about Christ, serve like Jesus did and have true fellowship (friendship) with others.

Ok, one more thing before we're done. The last line of that passage that we just looked is, "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." The cool thing about that verse is this: you have a part in that! It's true. Because you have come to know Christ as your Savior and you are now walking with Him, you now have what is known as a testimony (which is really just a fancy word for a story about how you came to know Christ and what difference He has made in your life). And the even cooler thing about that is that Jesus wants you to join Him in His work and share your testimony (story) with others. Radical idea heh? So radical in fact that this is the very last idea (actually more of an order), Jesus says to His followers before he goes up to heaven to prepare a place for you and me. He said this in the book of Matthew:

Matthew 28:19-20 - Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The gospel of Mark puts it this way:

Mark 16:15 - Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation.

That, my friends, is called 'The Great Commission' and it is for each one of us to join in. Now probably none of us are professional speakers that want to get up and share our story to thousands, hundreds...or maybe even tens of people. But here's the deal, no one else has your story of how you met Christ and what He has done for you, so if you don't share it, who will? In those verses, Jesus is basically saying to you, "You need to share your story!" By doing that, you will bring glory to God and you will be following God's plan. How amazing is that? Let me answer for you. Ridiculously amazing!

OK so now you're saying, "Alright, I get it. I am supposed to share but what am I supposed to say?" Well, let me make this real easy for you – You don't have to say that much. Really. Here's the break down of how this can look for you.

1. How you were before you met Christ (1 min)
2. How you met Christ (1 min)
3. How Christ has made a difference in your life (3 min)

Maybe it won't even take you 5 minutes to get through your story but the important thing is that you share how Jesus has forgiven you of your sins and transformed your life with as many people as possible. Of course it is crucial that your LIFE backs up your story so make sure that you are trying to live your life for Christ each day as well. It wouldn't make much sense if you said one thing and did another right? We all know people that are like that and usually we don't choose to hang out with or even trust them. So let's make sure that we do all we can to make sure our words match up with our lifestyle. God's grace and forgiveness covers us even when we struggle so why not "give it all we've got" and see what we can accomplish for God and the growth of His Kingdom? It's fun to think about how many people you could possibly lead to Christ because of first saying "yes" to Him yourself. I encourage you to dream big for God. His dreams are HUGE for your life so step out and get involved in the growth of His Kingdom. Walk across the street, talk with someone at the office, go on a mission trip. Whatever you do, GET ACTIVE – there are way too many people who don't know Jesus to just sit around and keep the Good News to ourselves.

Well, my friend, congratulations again for deciding to follow Jesus...and great job on sticking with this 7-day journey. Remember that discipleship (and our journey with Christ) is a life-long adventure. There will be great times and there will be trying times. The important thing is that no matter what kind of seasons of life you go through, good and/or bad, stay in God's Word, keep praying and enjoy fellowship with other believers. I also encourage you to come back to these studies in the future to remind you of the things that God has done for you and why your commitment to Christ is the most important decision you ever made. It can also continue to provide encouragement for you along the way. Feel free to tell others about this as well. Maybe it can help them in their journey.

Finally as we close, I want you to know that I am proud of you and more importantly, God is proud of you. Keep your eyes on Him and He will keep your path straight. I pray blessings and peace on you. See you in Heaven (if not before).

Here a few final questions to think about as we close up shop.

Some "Closeout" questions for you:

- 1. As you think about churches in your area, does anybody you know go to one of them? If so, could you tag along with them this Sunday? If not, is there a church that you would be interested in checking out?*
- 2. Is there anything that would keep you from going to church this Sunday? If so, what is it?*
- 3. When thinking about sharing your new faith and your story with others, does that make you excited or nervous? If you are fearful, how can you overcome that fear?*
- 4. Who is somebody that you know pretty well that you could share your new faith with and help you overcome the challenge of "the first time"?*

Thanks again for rolling all the way through "Heart Not Hype" with me. I would love to hear how this helped you out in your walk with Jesus or any other feedback you'd like to offer. If you are willing to do so, email your thoughts and stories to: tomh@restoregeneration.com.

Blessings on you as you continue to journey with Jesus and worship Him with your life!