



WONDER US

Week 3

BREAKING THE ICE

What was the best part of your week last week?

What was the worst part of your week last week?

What do you think could have made your week better?

Where did you see someone with high integrity this last week? Where were you able to practice integrity in the last week?

- For more ice-breaker questions go to crosspoint.tv/wonder to see the questions Pastor Kevin referred to in the message.

MAIN CONTENT

This week, Pastor Kevin continued our series on wonder. Over the last two weeks, we have talked about having humility and integrity in our lives in order to live a life of wonder in our relationships with God and others.

Eugene Peterson says, “Wonder is an astonished willingness to stop what we’re doing, to stand still, open-eyed, open-handed, ready to take in what is more and other.”

1. How much wonder do you have in life right now? In your relationship with your family (maybe your spouse)? What about wonder in your friendships? What about your wonder in your relationship with God?

Wonder is a part of every relationship. When we become familiar, stop asking questions and stop listening to others, we can lose wonder. But, when we sit with people, ask questions and really listen, we are prone to wonder. Just like we sit with people; God wants us to sit with Him and ask questions about what He has for us. When we take time to sit with Him, it reignites our wonder in our relationship with Him.

Read Psalm 139: 17-18

2. In this Scripture we see how much God thinks about us. What can you learn from this Scripture about how to think and be curious about others?

We can miss moments of thought and wonder because we are distracted. This week, Pastor Kevin recounted the story of Moses and the burning bush (Exodus 3: 2-6). God wanted Moses to be aware of everything God was doing. God wanted Moses to be sensitive to Him, undistracted so that nothing separated Moses from God.

Just like God wanted to be connected to Moses, He wants to be connected to us. God sent Jesus so that we will never be separated from Him (Hebrews 4:14). Jesus is sensitive to everything we have gone through and empathizes with us in the midst of it all because He also experienced it all.

3. Where have you felt empathy with Jesus? Where do you need Him to empathize with you right now?

Empathy is described as the ability to feel what someone else is feeling, to enter into the experience with another person. Jesus is the most empathetic person who has ever lived.

Read Romans 12:9-15

True love has empathy. John Ortberg says, "The Golden Rule of Intimacy is when we rejoice with others and mourn with others". Empathy develops when we are acutely aware of other people's feelings and we rejoice or mourn with them accordingly.

4. Who is the most empathetic person you know? How have they practiced empathy with you?

Empathy takes time, attention, energy and prayer. When we are attuned to those around us, we can feel what they feel. When somebody listens, pays attention, hears our heart and feels what we are feeling, it's powerful and wonderful.

Sometimes we aren't feeling love and it can be hard to show empathy. When we are having a hard time sincerely loving and empathizing with others, we need to go back to Jesus. We can pray, "Jesus you love them and you love me, will you love them through me?"

5. Talk about a time when you worked through loving someone that was hard to love. How did your heart change toward that person? What are some steps you took in order to open your heart to them?

When God gives us the love we need for others it's a good thing. He teaches us to love sincerely and our heart changes. No longer are we jealous, but we will rejoice with others. When you love someone sincerely you want only good things for them, nothing harmful or evil. This sincere Christ-like love is filled with integrity and purity, which ultimately leads to empathy.

How do we use empathy in our lives to lead us to wonder? First, we ask God to give us His eyes and His heart. We want to see others as Christ sees them and love them as He loves them. Second, we prayerfully imagine what it's like to be in someone else's shoes. This is also called intercessory prayer, when we know how to pray for others we can empathize with them.

6. Who is someone specific in your life you need to pray and ask God to see them how He sees them? How can you intentionally pray for them this week?

The third thing we can do is to practice the Golden Rule of Intimacy. When we rejoice and mourn with others, the kingdom of God is near.

7. Who has been a good example of someone who has rejoiced and mourned well with you? What are some things you have learned from that person that you can start practicing in your own life?

The fourth thing we need to practice empathy is to intentionally ask questions and listen. Practice being fully present with others and take the time to connect with them. Giving people our time and attention is love.

CLOSING PRAYER

God thank you for thinking of us more than we can ever imagine. The way you think and love us is an inspiration. Please help us be more like you. When we feel jealous and focused solely on ourselves, convict us and remind us of the empathy and love we have through Jesus. Surround us with friends and family that we can practice empathy with. Help us have the relationships you desire for our lives. Amen.

ACTION STEP

+ Go to crosspoint.tv/wonder for some intentional questions you can ask your friends, co-workers and family members this week. Ask these questions, listen to their answers and practice empathy with those around you.

+ Ask God to have His eyes and Heart for others this week. Pay attention to who and what He shows you. Pray and intercede for those things and take note of how your heart softens to what God shows you.

+ Write a note to someone who has been empathetic with you and has been a good friend. Tell them what you see in them and how that has affected your life.