

SESSION TWO

FORM

— Introduction

The early church was formed by more than shared ideas, they were formed by what they did together - how they lived together - day after day. Teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayer - these rhythms produced a people who belonged to one another, and who belonged to Jesus.

We'll explore the rhythms and practices that form us over time, not as spiritual disciplines to be managed, but as the ordinary means by which the Spirit reshapes us.

Answer with whatever comes to mind quickly - try not to attach judgment or advice to others' answers. The intention here is to do some honest reflection and connect the idea of our practices forming us - for better or worse.

Opening Question:

- What are you spending your time and energy on these days? And how do you think that's affecting you?

5-6 Mins

The Word: *Lectio Devina* 15 Mins

Read the following passage three times, following the Lectio Divina guide from the introduction.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

- First read, followed by 30 sec silence - *What word or phrase caught you?*
- Second read followed by 30 sec silence - *Where does this touch your life right now?*
- Third read followed by 1 min silence - *What is the nudge? What is God inviting you toward?*
- Share briefly out loud what came to mind or heart during the reading.

Conversation *25 Min*

Keep this dialogical, follow the flow in the room.

- Paul says ‘be transformed by the renewing of the mind’. Transformation is not something we do to ourselves, it is something that happens to us as we offer ourselves. What does it mean, practically, to offer your body as a living sacrifice this week? And what gets in the way? What are you conforming to without having consciously chosen it?
- In Colossians 3, we get some specific things that are meant to be part of community formation: bearing with one another, forgiving, letting peace rule, letting the Word of Christ dwell richly. Which of these is the hardest for you to practice consistently, and why?

Formation Practice 20 Min

This week's practice is identifying one small **rule of life** that you can adopt for the remainder of your Be Group experience. Something that is small, sustainable and practiced.

- Step 1: Silence and Honest Inventory (5 min total - quiet reflection) Sit with these 2 questions: What is one practice that forms me toward Christ that I find difficult to do consistently? What is one thing I'm giving my attention to that I suspect is forming me away from him?
- Step 2: One Practice (5 min total - Done Individually) From your honest inventory, name one small practice you will commit to for the next 3 weeks. It must meet two criteria:
 - a) it points toward Christ, not just toward self-improvement
 - b) it is achievable (Some examples: ten minutes of listening to scripture before the day begins each morning, one meal a week without any distractions, a brief prayer of gratitude before sleeping, one weekly act of generosity.)
- Step 3: Break into groups of 2-3 (10 min total - Small Groups) In your smaller group, have each person share their practice along with one sentence explaining its purpose.
- Step 4: Pray for one another (5 min - Small Groups) While in your groups, pray for one another a simple prayer, nothing long.
- Sample prayer: Lord, we offer these small things on behalf of _____, form yourself in them. Be patient with us, and keep bringing us back to this practice. Amen

The Examen 10 Min

Close every session with the two questions below. Each person answers briefly. Then the host or another volunteer prays for each person by name. This can be done in smaller groups of 2-3 if it makes more sense.

- Question 1: Where did you feel most alive this week?
- Question 2: Where did you feel most drained, or most absent from God?

Carry into the Week

This week: Praying through your to-dos
Make a list of daily tasks (or use your existing to-dos if you're a list-maker!) could be items at work or home.

Pray over your list, offer these tasks - big or small,
important or mundane - to God.

Ask Him to help you both prioritize and let go.

This is the practice of **surrender**.