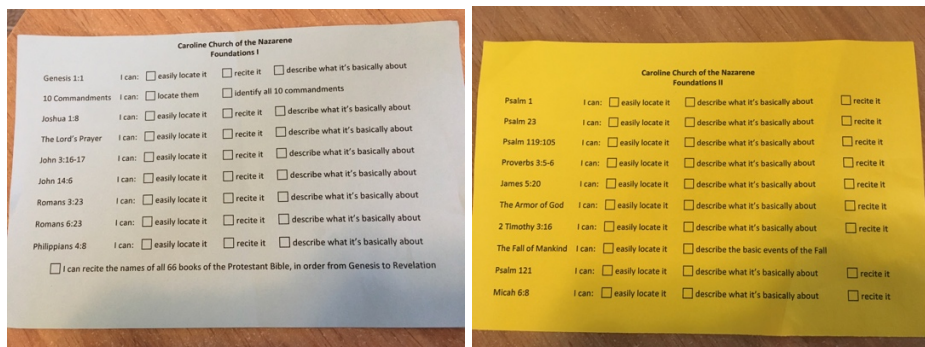


Compendium of Local Church Exercises to Help us Grow in the Lord

What We Just Ought to Know?

What: One Sunday, during the regular message, I swung our big platform white board around to face the congregation. This question was posed to them: “What do you think every follower of Christ just ought to know?” People began to respond aloud and their suggestions were recorded on the white board. Lots of ideas came forth. Good ideas! They said “we ought to know: the 10 commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, John 3:16-17, John 14:6, the Fruit of the Spirit, Proverbs 3:5-6” etc. The list that was developed by the congregation that Sunday morning totaled almost 40 items. I added a few that I thought should also go onto that list, and this brought the number of items/passages up to an even 40. Then, the 40 were divided into 4 sets of 10. Each September to mid-November we have taken a 10 week stretch to explore a fresh set of 10 items from the original 40; each item is used as the basis of a week’s sermon. During the series, people are expected to learn to locate each of the 10 targeted passages in the Bible, memorize them if they can and be able to describe what each passage is basically about. We have created half-page handouts to correspond with the set of 10 in focus for that September to mid-November period.

Pictures:



Why: The rationale behind implementing this 4-year exercise is manifold: to help people to know what they “just ought to know”, to try to increase people’s interaction with scripture, to help people to grow in knowledge and depth of understanding, to help improve biblical navigation, to help hide God’s Word in hearts, to help people live out what they are learning about God’s Kingdom etc. As Christ followers we are not called to dwell in ‘steady-state’. Rather, we are called to grow up in our faith...to be ever moving towards maturity. People moving towards maturity have a deep and increasing desire to know our Savior whom we serve; an excellent way to get to know him is through his inspired word. This exercise sends a signal to all of the seriousness of growing up in our faith.

How: The basis for this exercise was developed by our congregation itself. Many responded to the question: “What do you think every follower of Christ just ought to know?”. Their excellent suggestions became the bulk of the 40 targeted passages that then formed our mini-catechism. The result is that this congregation has a degree of ownership of this exercise. Breaking the 40 items into 4 sets of 10 has been helpful to not overwhelm people with all 40 at once. Examining 10 each year keeps the focus on these critical 40 passages but it does so in a more digestible manner. For us then, September marks the start of a fresh 10 passages. However, before we launch into the new set, a review of the previous sets helps people recall those valuable passages that we “just ought to know”.

Resources available: We can supply our 4 sets of 10 [Foundations I, II, III and IV] can be emailed to you [however, it is far better if your congregation gains ownership in the exercise by developing their “just ought to know” list of passages themselves].

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