

But First...

Part 2: Authenticity

WEEK OF JANUARY 16, 2022

There's something inside of all of us that longs for authenticity. But how do we achieve it? The secret to experiencing a truly authentic life may surprise you.

MESSAGE NOTES AND HIGHLIGHTS

- "Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we are supposed to be and embracing who we actually are." | Brené Brown
 - People value authenticity. We want it from others, and we pursue it ourselves.
 - The depth of our relationships is limited by our willingness to be open and honest.
 - The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? | Jeremiah 17, v.9
 - I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve. | Jeremiah 17, v.10
 - We need freedom to discover our uniqueness, within the guidance of a wisdom that's greater than our own.
 - Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe. | Proverbs 29, v.25
 - "If you live off a man's compliments, you'll die from his criticism." | Cornelius Lindsey
 - God-centered authenticity is humble. It seeks God's guidance because it recognizes that God knows me better than I do, and He'll shape me into who I'm meant to be.
 - I John 1, vv.8-10
 - Authenticity requires us to admit that we sin.
 - I can be honest with God because when I confess, God is faithful to forgive me.
 - There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. | I John 4, v.18
 - Our biggest barrier to transparency is fear of rejection. God doesn't reject us.
 - Honesty with God allows us to truly know ourselves and become who He created us to be.
 - Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. | Psalm 139, vv.23-24
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When, where, or with whom do you find it most difficult to be authentic? Why is that?
2. In what ways have you noticed that you try to impress others, present a different version of yourself, or even lie to yourself?
3. The quality of our relationships, starting with our relationship with God, depends on how open and honest we are. How can being open and honest with God first and foremost affect the rest of your relationships as well?
4. What is a next step or a practice you can develop to be more authentic with God and with others?