

WEEK ONE - Authenticity

Scripture Passages:

Psalm 139:1-6

1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me. 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. 3 You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. 5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Luke 15: 11-24

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. **16** He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. **17** But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" **20** So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' **22** But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; **24** for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you from Dr. Van Dyk's reflections?
2. Why is authenticity essential for our lives?
3. What does authenticity mean to you as an essential element of a worshipful life?
 - a. How do we create intentional spaces for authenticity?
 - b. What barriers to authenticity exist in our church communities?

4. Dr. Van Dyk states in the video that people come into worship “with all their fears and failings and hopes and dreams.” What do you think about this statement? Is this true to your experience?
5. What stands out you in Psalm 139 as well as in Luke 15? What similarities do you see? How might they relate to our theme of authenticity?
6. In both Psalm 139 and in Luke 15 what do we learn about God?
7. The theologian Stacy Johnson writes this which is a paraphrase from the theologian John Calvin. He writes, “the only authentic way to know ourselves is to be in relationship to God...This means that knowing God enables us to see ourselves as we truly are.” What do you think about this statement?
8. How does “authenticity” shape your understanding of living a worshipFULL life?