



F. Douglas Powe, Jr. – Transforming Evangelism, & Moving from “Just Us” to Justice

Discussion Guide

This resource is designed to help your small group or college class discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways to understand the issues discussed in this video. You don't need to answer all the questions. Please allow time for discussion and response.

Materials

1. Person Interviewed: F. Douglas Powe, Jr.
2. Theme of Video: Transforming Evangelism, and Moving from “Just Us” to Justice

Preliminary discussion

Consider the questions suggested below to start the conversation for your small group or college class. They'll consolidate the content of the video, after you've viewed it.

1. What were the major themes in this video?
2. How do those themes relate to your life and context?
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?
4. Theological method: How is the interviewee's theology and outlook informed and shaped by their practical ministry and context? What approaches do they take in understanding God in the context of their daily life and ministry?

Explore and apply

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with the theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion. Apply the answers to these questions in your own setting. Ensure the discussion is specifically drawing on your local setting. Make sure the discussion is relevant to the lives of faith for your small group or college class. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

1. In the book Powe wrote with Henry Knight, "transforming evangelism", he says that the more aggressive and confrontational tactics have given evangelism a bad name. Doors are shut hurriedly, phone calls end abruptly, and emails left unanswered. How does Powe describe this American experience?
2. Why is it time to re-examine John Wesley's model of evangelism as a full, natural circle - where it's a communal beginning point rather than a solitary end?
3. Powe says that the central motive of authentic evangelism is: Having received a message that's made all the difference in our lives, we desire to share that message with others in the hope it will transform their lives as well. How does Powe describe this motive?
4. How does Wesley model an evangelism that reaches out and welcomes, invites and nurtures, and speaks to both head and heart?
5. How does Powe describe the deep connection between John Wesley's thoughts, Charles Wesley's hymns, scholarly thinking about evangelism, and biblical understandings of the gospel?
6. How do these things relate to the needs, concerns and hopes of everyday people?
7. In his book, Powe says that "Evangelism is about relationship. How we are in relationship to God, who can transform us into new beings. How we are in relationship to our neighbor, whom we must love like ourselves." How does Powe describe the importance of relationship in evangelism?
8. In "New Wine, New Wineskins", Powe suggests that the African American church, while once the bedrock of the community, is no longer on the radar for many. How does he describe this shift, and why it's happened?
9. How does this relate to what's happening in, say, Baltimore today, and other such conflicts?
10. In a new era, where their voices are critical, how can African American churches become more visible to their surrounding communities?
11. In "Just Us or Justice", Powe shows how Wesleyan theology and African American theology both make claims concerning justice issues such as racism and sexism. How do they perceive justice from a particular vantage that focuses on just-us (just our community or tradition), and effectively ignored each other's insights?
12. How does a Pan-Methodist theology, which will draw from the strengths of African American and Wesley theologies, move both traditions, and the broader church, from "just us" to "justice"?

Informing Community

Facilitate the space for your group to respond to the discussion. You might consider this section as a personal time of written journal responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging our group and me, to do?
2. In response to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask God for forgiveness in? How do I need to change? What does God want me to stand up for?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community, for us to better engage with the contextual issues of our community?
4. How can I gain a better understanding of the issues discussed in this video? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt.

Invite the ministry of the Holy Spirit to clarify, heal, and inspire change for your participants and communities.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Book: Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2016)