

Discussion Guide

Bad Ideas for a Good Church – Week 1

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Bad Idea: We Can Be United Around Personalities

Getting Started

1. When you hear the phrase “*favorite voices*,” what comes to mind for you in church, online, or in everyday life?
2. Why do you think it’s so easy for churches (and people) to organize themselves around personalities rather than principles?

Understanding the Text

3. Paul appeals for unity “by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 10). Why do you think Paul begins there instead of asserting his authority as an apostle?
4. The Corinthians were saying, “I follow Paul... Apollos... Cephas... Christ.” What do these slogans reveal about how identity was forming in the church?
5. Paul asks, “Is Christ divided?” How does division in the church affect our witness to who Jesus is?

Reflecting on the Message

6. Billy emphasized that **unity is not uniformity**. What’s the difference between the two, and why does that distinction matter?
7. In what ways can appreciation for leaders slowly turn into misplaced allegiance?
8. The text suggested that even saying “I follow Christ” can become problematic when it’s used to claim spiritual superiority. Have you ever seen or experienced this? What did it look like?

Personal Application

9. Reflect honestly: *Am I following Jesus or am I following my favorite voice about Jesus?* What helps you tell the difference?
10. Are there teachers, leaders, or communities that strongly shape how you think about faith? How can those influences be helpful and how can they become limiting?
11. Paul connects unity to baptism. Why is it important to remember who we were baptized *into*?

Church & Community Application

12. What are some subtle ways personality-based unity can show up in churches today?
13. How can a church celebrate gifted leaders without centering its identity on them?
14. Billy mentioned this progression:
Division → Compromise → Confusion → Loss of witness
Why do you think division is so spiritually dangerous?

Looking Ahead

15. This sermon is the first in a series about “bad ideas” that can take root in good churches. Why do you think Paul starts with unity and allegiance?
16. What practices, personally or as a church, help keep Christ at the center rather than preferences, personalities, or platforms?

Prayer Prompt

Take a moment of silence and ask God this simple prayer:

Jesus, is there anything, or anyone, that has slowly taken Your place at the center of my faith? If so, gently lead me back.