

How's Your Community?

"Now that you have purified yourselves
by obeying the truth
so that you have sincere love for your brothers,
love one another deeply, from the heart."

1 Peter 1.22

Let's face it, there are very few people, if any, who go through life without wounds. Whether in friendship, in marriage, at work, or in church, we've all come face-to-face with relational struggles in our own lives and in the lives of those we love.

That's the bad news. But the good news is that at the core of Christianity is a God who is in the process of restoring broken people, not just with himself, but with each other. Jesus, himself, said in John 17 that he came to bring the same kind of unity among his followers as he has with the Father. Now that's intimacy!

So let's check in...how's your community? I mean by that 2 main things:
How 'safe' are the people around you?
And equally important, how 'safe' are you for others?

Taking some cues from the book "Safe People" (Cloud and Townsend), check out this list of personal traits of unsafe people:

Unsafe people...

1. Think they have it all together instead of admitting their weaknesses.
2. Are religious instead of spiritual.
3. Are defensive instead of open to feedback.
4. Demand trust instead of earning it.
5. Avoid working on their problems instead of dealing with them (they say they are sorry without changing behavior).
6. Are stagnant instead of growing.

Questions for Reflection:

1. How do each of these traits make a person "unsafe"?
2. What's the difference between being religious and being spiritual?
3. What is it like to be around people who exhibit these traits as a regular way of relating?
4. Take an honest look...how have you been exhibiting some of these?
5. Take another honest look...how safe/unsafe are the people closest to you?
6. How safe is your church/ministry/leadership/staff?
7. What kind of environment are you creating?
8. What are some ways you'd love for God to transform you? Your staff/team/ministry?

*Spend some time thanking God for the grace in Christ to grow and change.
Ask him to forgive you. Ask him to help you forgive others.*

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