

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Outside The Box

Part 1 - "Understanding What's In It"

Small Group Material

July 23rd, 2017

Leader Guide

Bottom Line: *The first step in getting outside your box is understanding what's in it.*

Study Verses: *Acts 2:37-47, Matthew 28:18-20, Matthew 5:13-16, 1 Peter 4:10*

Define The Win: *Participants would understand the danger in letting convenience, comfort, and routine dictate their faith. They would pinpoint places where they are going through the motions in their faith journey. Each member would begin to explore how to live "outside the box" by recognizing the gifts God has given them and how they can use them to serve others.*

Key Points

- *God is capable of doing things in and through us that are beyond our capabilities.*
- *If we live life with a consumer mindset, we'll also view church as just another big box store - a place to shop for the fulfillment of our consumer-oriented, spiritual desires.*
- *The church was birthed, in part, to be active in the world around us.*
- *By learning from Jesus, the church was meant to think outside the box.*
- *Beyond our walls is a world in need and the needs are great.*

- *In order to be yourself, you must know yourself. Knowing yourself begins with knowing the ONE who created you.*
- *God is currently on a mission. His mission is to redeem the earth. God has written you into the same mission.*
- *In the places where there is the greatest tension lies the places God can do His best work in us.*

ENCOUNTER

- **How does one know when they are just going through the motions with their faith?**
- **What are some warning signs that point to a church body being stuck in a rut spiritually and having a consumer mindset? What happens to the community when this occurs?**
- **In terms of your faith, what comes to mind when you are urged to live "outside the box"? What are some ways one can display this mindset?**

FORMATION

- **Read Acts 2:37-47. In what ways did the early church live "outside the box"? How did their lifestyle cause others to take notice and respond to what they were seeing?**
- **Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 5:13-16. What mission has Christ given the church? How is this mission accomplished? What makes you answer in the way that you do?**
- **Read 1 Peter 4:10. Why is it critical that we understand what's inside our box and the gifts we've been given?**

EXPRESSION

- **Where are you letting comfort, convenience and routine win in your faith journey? Why are these qualities prevailing in your life?**
- **In order to be yourself, you must know yourself. How aware are you of the gifts and talents God has given you? What are you doing with the gifts you've been given?**
- **Where have you felt an urge to step out of your comfort zone and serve others? What would it look like to live "outside the box" in this area?**

LEADER INSIGHT: *We have become a culture of people dependent on speed, comfort, convenience, and routine. We live in a world of big box stores and one-stop shopping. In some ways this can be a good thing, but having this mindset can negatively influence our faith and the relationships we have with others. Inside the big box of Sunday we worship, pray, study God's Word, and connect with others who are seeking to know God better.*

If we live life with a consumer mindset, chances are, we'll also view church as just another big box store—a place to shop for the fulfillment of our consumer-oriented, spiritual desires. The more streamlined our lives become and the more we settle into the comfort of the routine, the greater the chances that what happens inside this box of church on Sundays will stay here.

This is far from what the original intent of the church. Throughout the book of Acts, we see the early church living their faith "outside the box." Their actions and words were so counter-cultural that it caused others to take notice. People marveled at what God was doing through them.

God was doing things that were beyond human ingenuity, that were miraculous. They were not acting as consumers, they were generously involved with others. They got outside of themselves. They worked beyond the walls of their lives. Church wasn't just the places where they gathered, but more about a lifestyle they lived out in the world around them. These followers went beyond the comfort of their community and continued to share the message of the Gospel to all who would listen.

By watching and learning from Jesus, the church was meant to think outside the box. The church was birthed, in part, to be active in the world around us. Beyond our walls is a world in need and the needs are great, and the needs are many. God sent His Holy Spirit to equip us to do things in this world that are needed to be done that are beyond our human capabilities alone.

God is currently on a mission. His mission is to redeem the earth. God has written each one of us into that same mission to use our relationship with Him for a purpose. He gave us the Spirit and His power so that we can tell His story through our own. With the acquisition of His Spirit we acquired gifts and abilities that are to be used as tools for this cause. And the call that God has for us, is to use them to be a light to this world.

The first step in getting outside our box is understanding what's in it. We must be aware of the gifts and talents God has equipped us with and begin to explore ways we can use them to serve others. In order to be ourselves, we must know ourselves. Knowing ourselves begins with knowing the One who created us.

We are encouraging every person who calls PC3 home to take a gifts assessment to help them pinpoint where they've been equipped. The survey takes 10-15 minutes and can be found by visiting portcitychurch.org/box.