Welcome to week one of our Fall growth group!

- If everyone doesn’t know everyone else, go around the room taking turns telling the group: 1. Your name  2. About your immediate family.

Pick one of these questions to let the group know a little about yourself:

- Tell the group about the scariest or most horrifying moment of your life you can remember (i.e. a time when you experienced stage-fright, starting a new job, that time when your brother jumped out from behind the door and screamed when you were passing through, etc.) - or -
- Has anyone ever entrusted you with a task or responsibility that you feared doing?  What was the task or responsibility?  Why did it raise fear in you?

Read Ephesians 2:1-2. In the beginning of this week’s message, we saw a movie clip from M. Night Shymalan’s movie The Sixth Sense. In the movie clip, Cole Sear makes this statement to child psychiatrist, Malcolm Crowe: “I see dead people... walking around like regular people.  They don’t see each other.  They only see what they want to see.  They don’t know they’re dead.”

- Connecting the idea from the Ephesians 2:1 that people without Christ are dead in sin and transgression with Cole’s gift for sight, do you think this is an accurate description of the world in which we live?  What evidence do you see that this is the case?

Take turns and read John 11:1-6, 11-15, 17-27, 32-45. Some of us may recognize this passage as the one containing the shortest verse in the Bible, “Jesus wept.”  But what we often miss is the true reason for which we see tears in Jesus’ eyes.

- Connecting the idea from Ephesians 2:1, who are the dead in the Lazarus scene?

- What evidence is there in this passage and/or others to support the idea that Jesus was not actually weeping for Lazarus?  (Did Jesus believe Lazarus was gone?)  For whom or what or why is Jesus weeping then?

- Twice John states that Jesus was “moved in spirit” (vs. 33, 38) and once adds that he was “troubled” (vs. 33).  Why is Jesus troubled?

- The big question for this week: how moved are you by the dead who walk among us? (Who only see what they want to see.  Who don’t know they’re dead.)  Are you troubled?  What would it take for you to really care enough to share your faith in Christ with someone so they could have new life and be saved?

If time permits Read Matthew 8:5-13. As an example of a man who had great courage in connecting someone with Jesus, our message used this story of the Roman Centurion.

- Do you think it took any amount of courage for this man to approach Jesus with a request for Jesus to heal his servant?  Why or why not?  How might making this request have affected his own pride as a ranking officer in the Roman Army?

- Why do you think Jesus was so amazed with this man and his request?

- What can we learn about introducing others to Jesus from the Centurion’s example.

Conclusion:

- Over the course of the Not Ashamed of the Gospel sermon series, we have heard about several practical things that we can do to demonstrate that we are not ashamed of the gospel.  What were some of those things?  What are some other ways in which we can share our faith in Christ?

- Go around the room and share the first names of friends, family, neighbors, etc. who you hope would find new life in Christ.  Take 5-10 minutes to pray for these people and for courage and the right opportunity to share the gospel with them.