



## ***Brian and Crystal Boecker - June/July 2020***

### **Getting Uncomfortable**

I was meeting with a couple that was desiring to work on a pattern of not experiencing intimacy and connection in their relationship. One partner expressed the contradicting desires of both wanting to connect but also wanting to be comfortable. When conflict would start rising, this person would defer to the more controlling desire of being comfortable- disconnect and then shutdown. The impact to the other person is to feel dismissed, abandoned, and unwanted.

I have to admit that I am pretty committed to being comfortable. I have viewed comfort as part of the abundant life of Christ. When my comfort is threatened, I also have well worn paths to trying to restore again a sense of comfort. Defensiveness, Detachment, Reactive Anger, Sarcasm, Dissociation.... All ways to quell the threat to my comfort and return me to a calm place of ease. All bringing about disintegration to the relationships around me.

These past few weeks have brought a lot of turmoil around the unjust murder of George Floyd. I have been stirred to take a harder look at racism and my own complicity in that, as well as pathways of healing and hope. I listened to a Video with Bryan Stevenson (author of "Just Mercy") and Tim Keller discussing the topic. I watched some documentaries and listened to some authors about their experiences as African Americans. I felt a great sadness for their experiences and the degree to which they experience life as being treated as "other" or less

than. I also felt a growing sense of that same discomfort.

One author I listened to – Austin Channing Brown – made the note – there won't be change if you don't get uncomfortable. There is something that rings really true in that to me. Not just get uncomfortable – but stay in it – press into it – seek to hear and understand the other, let their story and experience be part of God revealing our own deeper need for the gospel in our own lives and hearts.

Crystal and I have been watching a series called The Chosen. A fictional extrapolation of the disciples as they were called to Jesus. Nicodemus is one of the compelling story lines. You see his world turned upside down and he begins to wonder who this Jesus really is. At one point he asks his wife, "What if everything is different than we have known?" She replies by saying that would be blasphemy. Definitely uncomfortable. You see something stirring in Nicodemus- Not quite sure what to do with the discomfort but also not ready to push it away.

Can I allow another person's experience be part of shaping, challenging and changing me?

To make me uncomfortable and to stay with them – engage with them?

This ultimately is what intimacy is – this is ultimately what community is – this is love.

**Join us in getting uncomfortable.**

*Brian Crystal*

**Updates**

**April/May**— Crystal had the continued opportunity to be part of virtual conference for women serving around the globe. This has also extended to opportunities to lead **spiritual formation/ exercise classes** for women around the globe as well.

We were also invited to **debrief** a number of missionaries that have been in transition—both due to restrictions in their country as well as COVID. It was a great opportunity to help them process and recover from accumulated trauma.

**June**—Brian was part of leading a leadership renewal course for leaders in Asia virtually. Over 35 nationals were able to take part.

***Pray as we look to fall and continue to adapt for and plan our schedule.***

Thanks for all the ways you pray for and support us in all these endeavors!

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