

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Bigger on the Inside - Week of September 28

Introduction

There is an acronym popular among kids on social media: FOMO – “fear of missing out”. Do you ever feel like you are missing out on something important, something special and fulfilling? This week Christ Church focuses on the fifth and sixth spiritual disciplines of our six-fold covenant: **praying** and **serving**.

Too often, many of us do just enough to ‘get by’ – we meet the requirements, perform the task, but don’t really give it our all. This is dangerous and may cause us to miss out on what could have been our best, bringing out the best in others and making a lasting difference.

Can you relate? When it comes to being part of the church, are you doing just enough to get by? Showing up late, missing the first couple of songs, checking out mentally as the pastor gets up to speak, leaving early just about the time the pastor is ready to pray the closing prayer ... because, hey, you have things to do and places to be. But ... What if you wanted to change? What if you said:

‘I really do want to get bigger on the inside. I really do want to pray more intentionally! I want to attend worship regularly! I want to trust God with the tithe! I want to deepen my faith by learning and being a part of a Life Group! I want to begin inviting one person each week to come with me to church, perhaps serve alongside me in a ministry! I want the trajectory of my life and that of my family and friends to be better and greater. It’s time I _____ man up and stop playing church. Lord, by your grace, I’m ready.’

Read Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-16

Would you like to know how to pray? The Lord Jesus shares the template for prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT):

“Our Father in heaven...”

1. We call upon God as ‘Our Father’. Only through Jesus are we given the high privilege of calling God *Abba, Father*. The possessive plural pronoun ‘*Our*’ reminds us how no one has a corner on God. All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Salvation is for all who come to God, believe, receive, and participate in his salvific work in the world.

“...May your name be kept holy...”

2. The LORD told Moses: “I am the LORD who rescued you... You must not misuse the name of the LORD your God” (Exodus 20:2, 7). We are to live and speak in such a way that God’s name is revered and honored, *hallowed* – kept *holy*.

“... May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...”

3. When Jesus sent out his disciples, authorizing them to minister in his name, he told them to announce ‘the Kingdom of Heaven is near’ (Matthew 10:7). After this, “When Jesus had finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, ***he went out to teach and preach throughout all the region***” (Matthew 11:1, italics/bold added).

In other words, Jesus lived into his own prayers and teaching. When Jesus shows up, the King is in the room and where his Kingdom reigns, his will is done. Daily, we must invite the King to reign in our homes. We give him first place joyfully... in our schedules, mindset, priorities, finances, goals – for the over-arching purpose of aligning our lives to reflect heaven. GOD’S WILL IS DONE IN HEAVEN. When heaven comes into our homes, we choose God’s will over our own preferences.

“... Give us today the food we need...”

4. The Lord knows our physical needs, and he promises to provide just enough daily, as he did with the manna in the wilderness. Christ is true food, true drink (see Matthew 4:4, John 6:33, John 7:37-38).

“... and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us...”

5. In the same breath we ask for daily sustenance, Jesus teaches us to walk in forgiveness. Choosing to ***forgive*** is life-giving and just as important as eating. It means *life* for us and the other party or individual. We cannot expect to be set free and live life to the fullest if we refuse to forgive our brother or sister from the heart (Matthew 18:35).

“... And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”

6. In Psalm 23, the psalmist speaks of how the Shepherd guides us along right paths, bringing honor to His name (Psalm 23:3). Though trials and times of testing come our way, the Lord can keep us from giving in to sin if we seek him and trust him (see 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 1:12-18). Christ alone holds all power to strengthen us and is able to deliver us, on a daily basis, from evil. Ultimately, he has the power to keep us and welcome us home the day we enter the portals of eternity (please see Colossians 3:1-4, 1 Peter 3:22, Jude vv24-25, Revelation 1:4-8).

Prayer is important for it increases unity between us and God and between us and fellow believers. This is one reason why the Overflow prayer service is so important (Sunday’s 5:00 pm Mountain View Campus). In corporate prayer, as concerns are expressed from the platform, we pray with one heart to one God who hears and answers every request according to his will and divine purpose.

Then, as an overflow to all weekend worship across Christ Church campus-wide, we roll up our sleeves and serve others in Jesus' name. Whether it is within one of our campuses or outside the walls of the church, serving grows us bigger on the inside. Serving changes our perspective on many levels and prepares us for heaven (see Matthew 20:25-28). It keeps us humble and fosters well-being; deepens our faith; causes us to empathize with others; reduces feelings of isolation and loneliness; breaks the cycle of *just getting by* ... the pattern of showing up late/leaving early; *and* helps develop skills and a sense of purpose that fuels a greater good... the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

In Closing

Look over the Joshua Menu as a Life Group. Where is the Lord leading you to serve this coming year? Challenge: commit together as a Life Group to serve regularly in some area of ministry together!

Close by reading together **Matthew 20:25-28**

Write down one specific step you will take this week to more faithfully commit to:

Praying

Serving

As we commit to the six-fold covenant of Christ Church – Worshiping, Inviting, Learning, Tithing, Praying, Serving – we will not live in FOMO (fear of missing out). For Jesus will be in our midst and when he shows up, everything changes. He is first! And when Christ has first place in our hearts, homes, and church, the things of this world fall into proper place.

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

September 28: Isaiah 54:1-57:14, Ephesians 6:1-24, Psalm 70:1-5, Proverbs 24:8
September 29: Isaiah 57:15-59:21, Philippians 1:1-26, Psalm 71:1-24, Proverbs 24:9-10
September 30: Isaiah 60:1-62:5, Philippians 1:27-2:18, Psalm 72:1-20, Proverbs 24:11-12
October 1: Isaiah 62:6-65:25, Philippians 2:19-3:3, Psalm 73:1-28, Proverbs 24:13-14
October 2: Isaiah 66:1-24, Philippians 3:4-21, Psalm 74:1-23, Proverbs 24:15-16
October 3: Jeremiah 1:1-2:30, Philippians 4:1-23, Psalm 75:1-10, Proverbs 24:17-20
October 4: Jeremiah 2:31-4:18, Colossians 1:1-17, Psalm 76:1-12, Proverbs 24:21-22

BIGGER on the INSIDE

Text: Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-16

PLAIN TRUTH

Through _____ and _____ we
grow _____ on the _____.

1. _____ brings _____ to the body of
believers as we _____ our focus with God's
plan.
 - a. Call him _____.
 - b. Give God _____.
 - c. Trust your _____ to _____. Pray thy _____ be
_____.
 - d. God loves you so _____ your _____ and
_____.
 - e. Release your _____ so God and _____
you.
 - f. Name your _____, so God can give you
_____ over them.
2. _____ enables us to live into the _____
_____ - _____ your _____.



Scan the QR code to learn about
areas of ministry to serve in
or to fill out the menu online

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