

# LIFE GROUP LESSON

## Moving the Needle - Week of January 7

### Introduction

It is hard for me to articulate my thoughts. All my life, it seems before I can share my heart, I feel obliged to first make disclaimers to *what I am about to say*. My husband, however, Charles Kyker, has always been a good talker. The moment I met him, I remember thinking: "This man is not without opinion. And he never seems to be at a loss for words." In this weekend's message outline Pastor Charles tells how when he was seventeen years old, he somewhat jokingly shared with some of his peers and adult youth leaders that he was called to preach (remember he likes to talk). But no one laughed at his 'joke' and he thought, "Oh my, maybe God really is calling me to be in ministry." Charles recalls how soon after, a man approached him and said: "God's hand is on you." Charles remembers laughing. But he could not shake the sincerity of the man's words, and began to realize the Lord had prompted the man to say what he did.

Have you ever felt God moving in your life and yet, there was a hesitancy in you? Perhaps someone spoke words of affirmation over you once upon a time, and something inside of you wanted to look around and ask: "Are they talking to me?" Maybe you laughed at God. There are times we may laugh in disbelief at something God wants to communicate, yet there is no denying: the grander purpose we glimpse on those occasions when God speaks his truth – his purpose – God's word is no laughing matter. Although we may initially laugh out of nervous faith, we won't be able to shake God's call over our lives. We must take the necessary steps to move our faith into action if we are going to be faithful; for active faith is the only thing that will move the needle to register active progress in our journey home.

### Read Genesis 17:15-22 and Genesis 18:1-15

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

Notice Abraham laughed before Sarah did (Genesis 17:17). Sometimes we think Sarah was the only one who laughed (Genesis 18:12). Why did Abraham laugh? Why did Sarah laugh?

What assignment is God calling you to do? There is a time to stop laughing and start acting. Where is the needle in your active faith barometer?

Still laughing

No longer laughing; in a time of discernment

Living and active faith

2. What are you going to do about it?

Excuses to put off God's assignment may include *I'm too old; I am too young; I am not pretty enough; I am not good-looking; I am not trained; I have no experience in this...* But prayer and fasting will begin to move the needle. Share with God your concerns, your deepest needs. He won't laugh. The Lord wants to hear from you. The question is: Are you going to be faithful?

3. How can we help you?

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says: God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him. For the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs (Matthew 5:3). Do you realize your need for the Savior. Jesus said unless we become like little children, we will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven at all. Childlike faith is active faith. It moves the needle because when Daddy God says: *Let's go. We're doing this together!*... the little child believes, trusts and minds. It is childish behavior to pout, make excuses, and refuse to join Daddy's work because our feelings are hurt. We tend to take things way too personal. Address the problem, yes, but then press on. Faith says *Get over it. Get to work*. Jesus said: God blesses those who work for peace; they will be called the children of God (Matthew 5:9). Are you acting like a true child of God?

## Reflection

If we truly love our heavenly Father, we will love his children. Love is not easy. No one ever said it is. Love is hard and it is active. There is little use praying *May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven* if we are not willing to first surrender our kingdom. Where is the needle regarding your attitude these days? God calls us to walk in forgiveness. It is not a matter of feeling like it; it is a resolve to say (and live): "In Jesus' name you are forgiven." In praying the Lord's prayer, we are agreeing that God will forgive our sin, our trespasses, as we forgive others. Has someone trespassed all over your life, talked ugly about you, walked all over your heart and reputation?... slandered your name and smeared you with lies? Jesus says forgive them and give them to me. Love them. Pray for them.

*"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matthew 6:14-15).*

Close in a time of honest prayer and reflection.  
Pray together The Lord's Prayer.

## One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

**January 07:** Genesis 16:1-18:15, Matthew 6:1-24, Psalm 7:1-17, Proverbs 2:1-5  
**January 08** Genesis 18:16-19:38 Matthew 6:25-7:14 Psalm 8:1-9 Proverbs 2:6-15  
**January 09** Genesis 20:1-22:24 Matthew 7:15-29 Psalm 9:1-12 Proverbs 2:16-22  
**January 10** Genesis 23:1-24:51 Matthew 8:1-17 Psalm 9:13-20 Proverbs 3:1-6  
**January 11** Genesis 24:52-26:16 Matthew 8:18-34 Psalm 10:1-15 Proverbs 3:7-8  
**January 12** Genesis 26:17-27:46 Matthew 9:1-17 Psalm 10:16-18 Proverbs 3:9-10  
**January 13** Genesis 28:1-29:35 Matthew 9:18-38 Psalm 11:1-7 Proverbs 3:11-12



**Text: Genesis 17:15-22 & 18:1-15**

## PLAIN TRUTH

Laughing is \_\_\_\_\_ faith, yet \_\_\_\_\_ faith  
\_\_\_\_\_ the needle.

### Principles to put in action in order to move the needle:

1. Pray and fast \_\_\_\_\_ your deepest \_\_\_\_\_ believing that God is not to be \_\_\_\_\_ at.
2. Love God through \_\_\_\_\_ - respect and \_\_\_\_\_ that God deserves.
3. Pray that God's Kingdom will \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ your neighbor.
4. We can't move the needle when we are \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.
5. You can't move the needle without \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Fasting and \_\_\_\_\_ will begin to move the needle in your life, your family and your church.

### Four reasons why it's time to Move the Needle in your life:

- a. You will be close to the \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. You will be \_\_\_\_\_ on your \_\_\_\_\_ and when you \_\_\_\_\_ on your faith, you \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- c. You will begin to see God move through \_\_\_\_\_ prayer and nothing \_\_\_\_\_ the needle in your life like \_\_\_\_\_ prayer.
- d. You will begin to be the person, the spouse, the parent, the family member that God intended you to be and people will notice that the \_\_\_\_\_ needle has moved in your life.

**January 7, 2024**