

Growth Group Homework

For the week of September 29, 2013

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. When it comes to music we liked in our past, most of us have a few songs or artists we'd be embarrassed to tell people we still listen to (think Bee Gees, MC Hammer or *NSync). What are some of your favorite musicians or music groups from junior high or high school that would fall into this category?
2. What did you think when you heard Chris say, "the hardest thing about surrendering is no longer being in charge" and "the best thing about surrendering is no longer being in charge"?
3. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This weekend we were reminded that we don't own our life, we simply manage what God has given us. The following parable gives insight into how God reacts when we follow his plan or follow our own. Read Matthew 25:14-30 and answer the following questions.

Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Bags of Gold

- 14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.
- 19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'
- 21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
- 22 "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'
- 23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
- 24 "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

26 “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

28 “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ [NIV]

While God does not necessarily give us money to invest, he does give each of us talents, skills, and strengths to use for his purposes. How could God’s reaction to how the three men used their “talents” motivate someone in their walk with God?

Can you think of any talents, skills or resources God has given you that you’d like to use differently, or more effectively?

2. One of the hardest parts of surrendering to God is letting go of the unhealthy people, places, habits, etc., we cling to for comfort. How can the following Scriptures give reassurance to someone who’s struggling with the fear of letting go of a known thing (person, place or habit) for what could feel like an unknown thing (God’s future)?

Psalm 37:3-9

3 Trust in the Lord and do good;
 dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
4 Take delight in the Lord,
 and he will give you the desires of your heart.
5 Commit your way to the Lord;
 trust in him and he will do this:
6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
 your vindication like the noonday sun.

7 Be still before the Lord
 and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
 when they carry out their wicked schemes.
8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
 do not fret—it leads only to evil.
9 For those who are evil will be destroyed,
 but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land. [NIV]

Proverbs 3:5-6

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart
 and lean not on your own understanding;
6 in all your ways submit to him,
 and he will make your paths straight. [NIV]

Proverbs 16:3

3 Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
 and he will establish your plans. [NIV]

1 Peter 5:7

7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. [NIV]

Author and Holocaust survivor, Corrie Ten Boom looks at the issue a little differently and says, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." How do you see the truth of this statement in the passages above?

3. Often times our surrender to God can be seen in our relationships with other people. How do the following verses help teach ways of surrendering even in our most challenging relationships?

Proverbs 25:21-22

21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat;
if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

22 In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head,
and the Lord will reward you. [NIV]

1 Peter 3:8-9

Suffering for Doing Good

8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. [NIV]

1 Peter 4:8

8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. [NIV]

What are the benefits or challenges of putting these verses into practice?

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back at "Surrender: Whose name is on your pink slip?", what's one way you could more effectively surrender to God on a daily basis?

Prayer Requests:

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