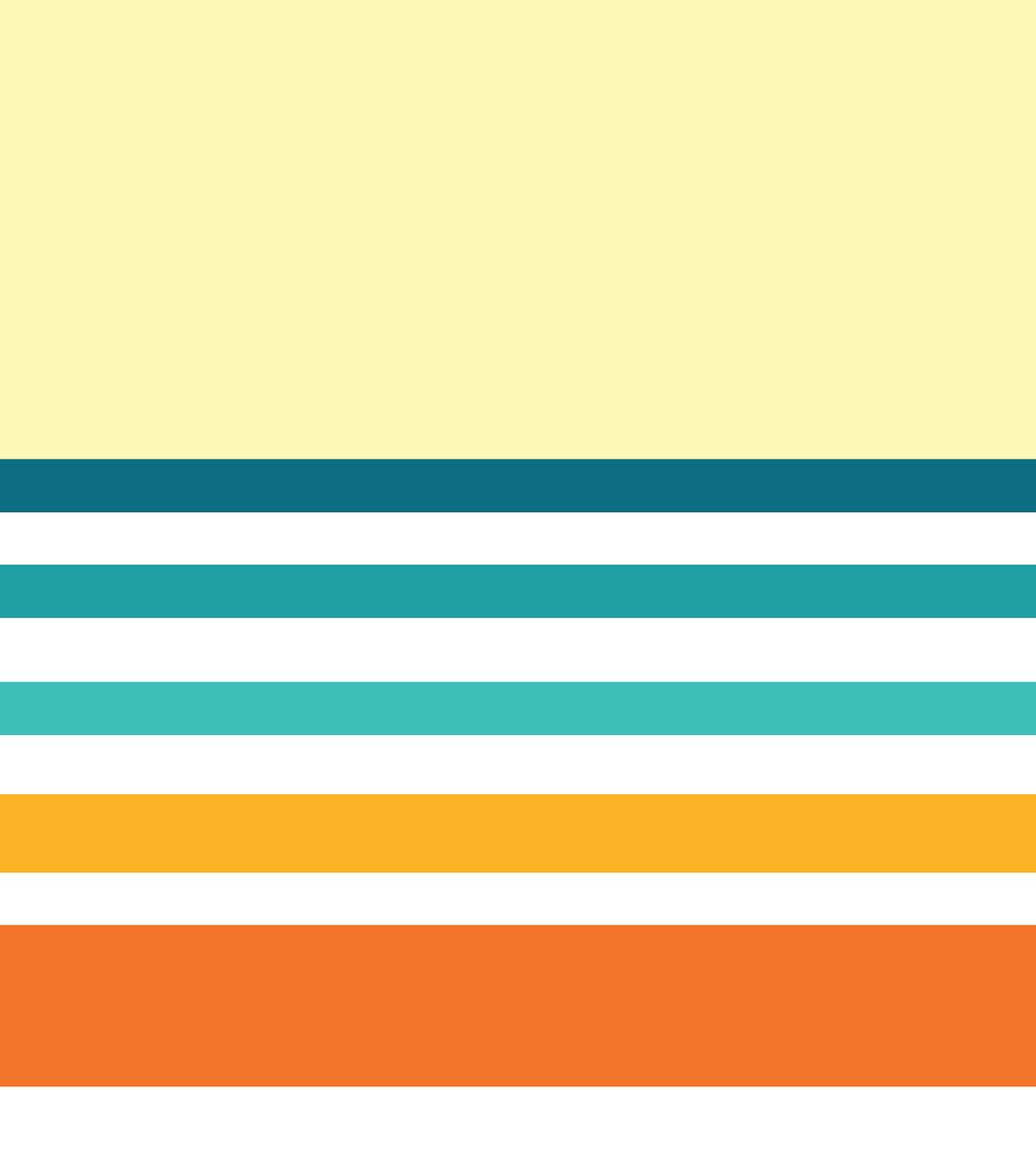


4 WEEKS

living
my best

LIFE





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SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Who was responsible for telling you about Jesus?

Big Idea:

Many new year's resolutions are about taking a step of faith to do something you've never done before. What if your step of faith was sharing your faith?

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 16:24

"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Acts 4:12-13

"There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus."

Acts 4:29

"And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word..."

1 Corinthians 2:9

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."

Revelation 21:1, 3-7

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared... I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever. And the one sitting on the throne said ... "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children."

Discussion:

1. Have you ever outright shared your faith with someone? What was that like?
2. What do you think stops you from more boldly telling others about your faith?
3. Read Matthew 16:24. How do you think this passage applies to sharing your faith with others?
4. What are some ways you already share your faith?
5. Read Acts 4:12-13. Who's someone you recognize as a person who has "been with Jesus." How so?
6. Read Acts 4:29. How would you like to become more bold in sharing your faith? What do you think it will take?
7. Read 1 Corinthians 2:9 and Revelation 21:1, 3-7. How does knowing what believers will experience in heaven empower you to go and tell?

Wrapping It Up:

Who's your one? The one person you will commit to praying for and to telling about Jesus this year? Share with your group and begin praying together for each person's "one" and that you each may have great boldness as you go and tell.

Memory Verse:

"And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word..."

Acts 4:29



SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

If you could be the Greatest of All Time at one thing, what would it be?

Big Idea:

When you serve more, you take less. We live our best lives when we think less of ourselves and more of others.

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 23:11

"The greatest among you will be your servant."

Matthew 25:34, 36,40

"... 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' ... 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'"

1 Samuel 17:17-18

"One day Jesse said to David, 'Take this basket of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them quickly to your brothers. ... See how your brothers are getting along, and bring back a report on how they are doing.'"

Luke 19:31

"If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying[the colt]?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"

John 13:4-5

"... so [Jesus] got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet ..."

Discussion:

1. Who do you know who always does kind things for others? How do people view that person?
2. Read Matthew 23:11. Who do you get tired of (or dislike) serving? What would happen if you viewed serving them as the greatest thing you do?
3. Has someone ever joyfully helped you with something “small”? How did it make you feel?
4. What are some “little things” you tend to consider beneath you? What do you think would happen if you started doing some of those things anyway?
5. What “little things” do you do that others probably don’t notice? Why do you think God views these small acts of service as great?
6. Read John 13:4-5 and Matthew 25:34, 36, 40. Jesus clearly teaches and demonstrates the crucial nature of serving. How can you more faithfully serve your friends, family, and community?

Wrapping It Up:

Bring a lunch (1 Samuel 17:17-18), offer a ride (Luke 19:31), and carry a towel (John 13:4-5). How can you do more of these this week? When you do something “small” for others this week, jot it down somewhere—even with just a tally mark. At the end of each day, thank God for all the truly great ways you were able to serve Him.

Memory Verse:

“The greatest among you will be your servant.” **Matthew 23:11**



SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

Rank how generous you are on a scale of 1-10. Why that number?

Big Idea:

When you give more, you need less. We live our best lives when we are generous.

Key Scriptures:

Proverbs 21:26 ESV

"All day long he craves and craves (the sluggard), but the righteous gives and does not hold back."

Haggai 1:6,7,10 NKJV

"... You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes. Consider your ways... Why? Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies yourself with your own house."

Deuteronomy 28:2, 5

"All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: ... Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed."

Luke 6:38

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap..."

Exodus 13:2 NLT

"Dedicate to me every firstborn among the Israelites. The first offspring to be born, of both humans and animals, belongs to me."

Proverbs 3:9-10

"Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing ..."

Discussion:

1. Who is the most generous person you know? Why do you describe them as so?
2. Read Proverbs 21:26 and Haggai 1:6, 7, 10. What do these passages seem to suggest about those who are not generous?
3. Read Deuteronomy 28:2, 5 and Luke 6:38. What do these passages seem to suggest about those who are obedient to God and who are generous?

Discussion:

4. What's the scariest thing about giving more of what you have?
5. When is the last time you gave away so much it scared you? What happened next?
6. Read Exodus 13:2 and Proverbs 3:9-10. What do these passages suggest will happen to those who are faithful with bringing the first of their income to God? If you are not currently tithing, what holds you back from doing so?
7. Do you currently have the bag (never enough), basket (there is enough), or barn (there's way more than enough) mindset? What does that look like for you?
8. What would it take to move toward the barn mindset? What's a specific step you can take?

Wrapping It Up:

Ask God in prayer this week for specific opportunities to be generous. Then, obey and watch what He does.

Memory Verse:

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. ..." Luke 6:38



grateful in the grind

week 4

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking it off:

In what area are you most likely to think “when _____, then _____ in your own life as you’re looking around the corner for that next big thing?

Big Idea:

What if the work is the reward? What if the prize is in the process? Be grateful in the grind.

Key Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

“For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”

Philippians 2:17

“But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering ... I am glad and rejoice with all of you.”

1 Corinthians 10:31

“... whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.”

Acts 20:24

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.”

Discussion:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-10. What would it mean in your life to say that you are becoming who God wants you to be, because His grace for you was not without effect?
2. In this week’s message, three enemies of true reward were mentioned: the pillow (comfort), the shiny thing (distraction), and the towel (quitting). What area of comfort keeps you most from God’s purpose for you?
3. What shiny thing distracts you from allowing God’s grace to have a deep effect upon you?
4. Read Philippians 2:17. Sometimes we feel that what we’re doing is a waste of time. What good things are you tempted to quit? How can you let God’s purpose for

Discussion:

- them create passion in you?
5. There is a higher calling, and it's not a selfish passion but a selfless purpose. How might you begin to follow God's purpose and see passion ignite within you?
 6. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. In this week's message we heard that "The prize isn't in what you accomplish occasionally; the prize is in what you do daily when you do it for the glory of God." What are you doing now that you can begin to do for God's glory?
 7. Perhaps up to this point, God's grace in your life has been without effect, because it hasn't yet touched your heart—you haven't yet been changed by it. You are in the right place at the right time to be available to the work of God, and maybe your story might become "but, by the grace of God, I am now who I am." Are you willing to surrender to His purpose?
 8. Read Acts 20:24. How might the things you do daily in the grind of life give testimony to God's grace?

Wrapping It Up:

Be intentional this week with looking at your daily grind as an opportunity to testify to God's grace.

Memory Verse:

"... whatever you do, do it for the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:31



living my best life



*Lord, I put my life in your hands.
I trust in you, my God,
and I will not be disappointed.
My enemies will not laugh at me.
No one who trusts in you will be disappointed.
But disappointment will come
to those who try to deceive others.
They will get nothing.
Lord, help me learn your ways.
Show me how you want me to live.
Guide me and teach me your truths.
You are my God, my Savior.
You are the one I have been waiting for.
Remember to be kind to me, Lord.
Show me the tender love that you have always had.
Don't remember the sinful things I did when I was young.
Because you are good, Lord, remember me with your faithful love.
The Lord is good and does what is right.
He shows sinners the right way to live.
He teaches his ways to humble people.
He leads them with fairness.
The Lord is kind and true to those
who obey what he said in his
agreement.
Lord, I have done many wrong
things.
But I ask you to forgive them all to
show your goodness.
When people choose to follow the
Lord,*

**“When people
choose to
follow the Lord,
he shows them
the best
way to live.”**



A Song of David

Psalm 25

ERV

*he shows them the best way to live.
They will enjoy good things,
and their children will get the land God promised.
The Lord tells his secrets to his followers.
He teaches them about his agreement.
I always look to the Lord for help.
Only he can free me from my troubles.
I am hurt and lonely.
Turn to me, and show me mercy.
Free me from my troubles.
Help me solve my problems.
Look at my trials and troubles.
Forgive me for all the sins I have done.
Look at all the enemies I have.
They hate me and want to hurt me.
Protect me! Save me from them!
I come to you for protection,
so don't let me be disappointed.
You are good and do what is right.
I trust you to protect me.
God, save the people of Israel
from all their enemies.*



Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
 - Take time to prepare.
 - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
 - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
 - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
 - What is the purpose of our group?
 - What is the vision for our group?
 - What are your expectations?
 - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
 - What are some things we value as a group?
 - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
 - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
 - Encouraging and challenging one another
 - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
 - Childcare _____
 - When we will meet (day of week) _____
 - Where we will meet (place) _____
 - We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
 - We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
 - Our primary worship service time will be _____
 - Date of this agreement _____
 - Date we will review this agreement again _____
 - Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____
-



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