

Week 2

Who Is God Calling Me to Be?

Small Group:

Why and what are they:

The purpose of small groups is to grow in the faith, to fellowship with believers, to encourage and be encouraged, and to discern the word of God in our life that we might live with purpose in our quest to be made in the image of God.

Small groups provide

1. Community: “None of us is supposed to live the Christian life alone. We gain strength and help from others
2. Intentionality: Our purpose is to become better disciples of Jesus Christ.
3. Accountability: We need others to ask hard questions about our prayer experience, temptations and struggles, and plans for spiritual growth. ¹

A few rules:

1. **Confidentiality is crucial.** What is said in small groups stays there unless permission is given to share. You want to foster safe places to grow in the faith.
2. **Give:**
 - a. encouragement as often as possible
 - b. advice, once in a great while
 - c. reproof, only when absolutely necessary
 - d. Judgement, NEVER ²



¹ Graybeal/Smith 1999, p. 9

² *ibid.*

Gather:

In person or on Zoom, use this time to catch up with each other. If this is the first time with each other, share names, inquire about one another. Be curious (not nosy)

Share:

Share how you have seen God at work recently. Has he brought peace in the midst of trouble, healing, used you to be generous or kind, or has someone been generous or kind to you, etc.

Prayer:

Use the following prayer or have someone open up in prayer.

Lord Jesus, we bring our life before you this day that we might discover the depths of your love, experience your presence, be encouraged by your Spirit, and be humble enough to hear your word for our life. We come as individuals and community to become the people you have called us to be. Amen

Lesson: Who Is God Calling Me to Be?

Recap and Overview

Discipleship involves **CALLING** on God, **LISTENING** when God speaks, and **RESPONDING** to God's direction.

Stewardship is discipleship. Stewardship is about being caretakers of what God has given us in order to enrich our lives, our environment, and the lives around us **to reflect the Kingdom of God**. Our resources are our **time, talent, and fruit of our labor**. Our **life** is our #1 resources. No matter who we are, the amount of talent we have, the circumstances we are born in, our mental and physical capabilities, we all have the **ability and responsibility** to be good stewards of our life.

Together Read: Psalm 139:14

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

Watch Video: 24 minutes

Self Reflection:

When you look in the mirror do you see someone fearfully and wonderfully made? Do you imagine yourself as a part of the fellowship of the Holy Trinity?

Discuss:

- 1. Pastor Cory talked about being “in tune” with God. What do you think that looks like and how does one “tune In” to Jesus our Maestro?**

Rev. Hollums referenced Gen. 1 and humankind being made in the image of God. He talks about the image being the perfect relationship of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and how we are invited into the heart of that relationship. He connects that with the vs. “Love the Lord your God with every ounce of your being, and the second is like it, Love your neighbor as yourself”. He quotes theologian and author Dr. Mulholland Jr., explaining that the phrase “is like it” is an equalizing statement meaning “in other words”.

- 2. How do you understand the relationship between Gen 1 and Jesus’ statement, and is it challenging to think of the Loving your neighbor as yourself another expression of loving God with every ounce of your being?**
- 3. Rev. Hollums continues and says his calling is to love himself through the eyes of how God sees him, and then to love his God by loving others. What does that look like in practice?**

One of the greatest struggles we have in tuning in to God’s notes for us, in hearing who He is calling us to be are the loud noises from the world. From a young age we are being groomed by seemingly good things to be identified by. A.W. Tozer says there are 4 things in general we tend to use to create our identity. Identity through Work, Identity through Education, Identity through Pleasure, and Identity through Thrills. All of these things fade and when they are gone, either the career has changed, the thrill has worn off, our capacities to achieve have faltered, then the question is very loud ‘who am I’³

- 4. What are the things that identify you? What is it like when those things fail or you fail those things? How does your internal dialogue (how you speak to yourself) reflect how you think God would speak to you?**

In some translations, Rev. 4:11 says it is by God’s pleasure that he created all things. The struggle we have in living out Jesus’ command to Love God by loving others is embracing with faith, that God desires us for relationship. Tozer says, “We do not

³ Tozer 2009, p.38-42

believe we are as dear to God as He says we are. We do not believe we are as precious or that He desires us as much as He says He does”⁴ Rev. Hollums then talks about his wife, Rev. Tiffany Hollums, saying that God doesn’t have to love us but he chooses to and that is called Grace. We often talk about love as something we have no control over; “I fell out of Love, or it’s difficult to love so and so, or “I don’t feel like loving ____”. But Grace and love is not described as outside or our control, but something we can actually choose to do.

- 4. We may find it hard to feel like God loves us, but what does it look like to practice life as if God really does love us? What does it look like to choose to love ourself as God loves us and to in turn love God by loving others (even those who irritate us)?**

Read 1 Peter 2:9-10

The Message

9-10 But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.

Take 5 minutes to Read silently through this verse a couple of times. Write down at least 3 observations. What words ‘jumped out’ at you? What sentence spoke to you? Did anything seem odd or challenging, or inspiring?

- 5. Share with each other some observations you made?**

Pastor Cory asked D.G. what he thought it would take for us to embrace God’s image for us. Rev. Hollums said that it’s different for each person but that he believed for many of us that it usually comes through going through valleys in our life when we get “enough of our self” out of the way to hear God’s love for who we can really be.

- 6. What do you think of that? What has been your experience?**

⁴ Ibid. 52

D.G. says that there is a reason that Jesus invites us to “celebrate the memory of who we are in relationship with God through a meal” and it is that we have a constant reminder every time we eat that we have a God who loves us.

7. **How can you incorporate this into a daily habit of reminding you of who you are called to be?**
8. **Reflecting back on D.G.’s call to remember there are people outside the faith community who long to know who they are, How does knowing who you belong to and who you are called to be impact your understanding of stewardship?**

Plato said that the unexamined life is not worth living. Scripture is very clear that we need to bring our life before God

This series is about asking 3 questions of God to help us in our daily examen. Scripture is full of prayers in which the people call upon God especially when they realize that doing things the way they had been doing them wasn’t working anymore. We need to follow their example if we want to be renewed and have a transformation of the mind.

The Three Questions:

1. Who are you calling me to be?
2. Where are you calling me to go?
3. What are you calling me to give?

Remember, when the people of scripture walked well with God, they:

1. Called Out to God
2. Listened to God
3. Responded to God

Here are 3 prayers from the book of Psalms I would encourage you to memorize and include them in your daily examen. Have someone, or several someones, look up and read these verses.

Psalm 119:133-136

Psalm 119:105

Psalm 139:23-24

Homework:

1. Reflect on these verses and on the ones from Peter, Revelation, and Genesis.
2. Take inventory of your habits and if they match your goals
3. Make a commitment to adjust your habits to meet your goals.

For example:

- a. **Reading scripture more**
 - b. **Praying more**
 - c. **Blessing someone this week**
 - d. **Listen for God's prompting and acting on it**
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10. **Some of you shared how we could pray for you and your goals last week, how did it go?**
 11. **How can we as a group best pray and support you this week?**
(this is for each person to answer as they are comfortable)

11. **Share any prayer requests in the group**

Remind everyone that what is said in small group is confidential unless permission is given to share. Respect each others privacy and build a safe place in which you each can grow in your faith in mutual encouragement and accountability.

12. **Choose someone to pray for the group**

Next week we will look at Romans 12 and John 17 as we explore the second question

Where is God Calling Me To Go?

Footnotes:

Smith, James Bryan. 1999. 'A Spiritual Formation Workbook: Small-group resources for nurturing Christian growth'. HarperCollins Publishers.

Tozer. A.W. 2009. "The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship". Regal.