



GROUPS AT CROSS POINT

BREAKING THE ICE

Do you look at the “star” ratings before going to a restaurant or visiting a particular place? Why or why not?

What are some of your favorite places that you would give a “5-Star” rating to in the Nashville and surrounding areas?

MAIN CONTENT

Sunday’s message continued our look into what it would be like for us to be generous and live a 5-Star life.

1. What point or example in the message impacted you most, and why?

Gratitude has been a recurring theme throughout this series. Pastor Kevin shared a story of a man they encountered in Chicago and how his family gave their pizza leftovers to him. He then challenged us with the thought: “Have you ever thought how much easier it is to give from the leftovers than it is to give on the front end?” For instance, when King David said [in 2 Samuel 24:24] “...I will not offer...offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing.”



2. Why do you think it is easier for us to give what we have left over than to intentionally give something beforehand?

READ Luke 12:22-26

Jesus tells us not to worry, even though He knows we have a tendency to do so. He does not tell us that the things of this life (food, shelter, jobs, life circumstances) are unimportant; rather He simply tells us not to worry because God cares for us.

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3. Is it easy for you to think of God as One who cares for you and is concerned with the details of our lives? Why or why not?

4. Why is it so easy to revert to worry when we know that God is ultimately in control and will provide for us?

READ John 10:10

Worry and anxiety are some of the biggest weapons that the Enemy will use to rob us of our joy and take our eyes off of Jesus. Jesus came so we could have a 5-Star life, but allowing worry and anxiety to take over reduces that quality to one star. Worry causes us to focus inward on ourselves and will distract us from the best that God has to offer – we can miss out on 5-Star moments in life that we can never get back.

In verse 24, we see that even the birds are taken care of by God. They don't worry if the Lord will provide, but they do work to reap the blessings God has sown for them. The same is true for us. In this verse, God is saying, "I'm taking care of even the birds, so don't worry – I'm going to take care of you, too."

READ Luke 12:27-31

In this passage, Jesus reminds us that He has concern for the flowers – that He even takes care of what they're "wearing". He wants us to know that we are worth far more than our STUFF. We are not defined by the things we own or the possessions we have – they are not who God says we are.

We are called to seek first the Kingdom of God, and He will take care of the "things." If we seek first the "things", that opens the door for us to potentially miss the Kingdom. Seeking the Kingdom is synonymous with seeking God, and to seek Him is to know Him. As a result of knowing and loving Him, we are filled with His love for us.

5. What are some ways that we can practically seek God in our day-to-day lives?

As we grow in spiritual maturity, we live in complete dependence and trust in Him. A paradigm shift happens when we look at growing in natural maturity versus growing in spiritual maturity. Natural maturity moves us from dependence to independence. Spiritual maturity moves us from independence to dependence on God.

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If we want to increase our dependence on God, order matters. We seek first the Kingdom, and practically, one way to seek first can be found in our day. What we do first thing in our days can make a huge impact on our relationship with God, even if it's as simple as a verse or a prayer.

6. What are some ways that we can practically seek God in our day-to-day?

7. What are some things that you currently do (or can do) that align your thoughts immediately at the beginning of the day to the Lord?

Even on a weekly basis, we can choose to partake in actions that allow us to seek first weekly. It's why we, as a church, choose to take the first day of every week to worship together.

READ Hebrews 10:25

Our hearts are even formed by how we seek first with our resources. Throughout the Bible, there are a lot of firsts - firstborn of a flock, first crops of a harvest, a tithe (literally the first 10%) and so on. We can be faithful and generous with our resources, and what we are saying by doing that is "God, I recognize all I have comes from You, and I trust You."

Pastor Kevin made clear that tithing the first 10% will not earn us "things" or buy us our way into Heaven, but it will change our lives. When we return to God a portion of what He's entrusted to us as an act of worship and stewardship, we are saying, "God, I am trusting You that You are my provider - it's not all on me, it's on You. I'm believing YOU can do more with 90% than I can with 100%."

God doesn't want our money - He wants our hearts. He wants to be first in our lives. That is how we overcome worry and anxiety and live a 5-Star life. He is first in everything (the universe, creation, eternity), whether or not He's first in our lives. The question is, "Will He be first for me?" When we seek Him first, we are choosing to give to Him first and not just give Him our leftovers.

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CLOSING PRAYER

God, thank You for giving us your Son, Jesus, to show us what life full of generosity, love and prayer looks like. Help us to seek You first and to turn to You in prayer first always. Teach us how to pray. Show us that You dictate who we are, above all else, and in you, there is a fullness in life. Help us to be still in Your presence and give us the courage and openness to reach those who are far from You. Amen.

ACTION STEP

God has the power to move miraculously – it is up to us to choose to make Him first in our lives. When you look at your life, the order in which you do things matters. What are some areas of your life that you can re-prioritize to give precedence to your relationship with God? What are some things, even in your day, that you will do to seek God first? Share this with a close friend or member of your group this week.

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