

Creekside LifeGroup Study

Series: Before We Lose Our Minds

Topic: The Art of Simplicity

2020/09/20

LEADER NOTES

Welcome to a brand new series at Creekside called, Before We Lose Our Minds. In a world that is pulling us in every direction, full of distractions and busyness, we need an anchor or single point of focus to keep us from losing our minds. That single point of focus is to “seek first the kingdom of God”. This means to see Jesus as Lord and your identity as a citizen of his kingdom. As you look ahead to this fall, how will you prioritize God’s kingdom? What will you say no to in order to focus on God’s plan for your life? The goal of this study is to help you focus in on one or two things this fall that will help you live out your purpose as a citizen of God’s kingdom. The outcome of focusing on God’s kingdom is that the worry, anxiety and complexity this world can bring in our lives will be replaced with God’s peace.

ICEBREAKER: What is your morning routine like?

When you wake up in the morning, what are the first thoughts that go through your head?

LEADER NOTE: The goal of this icebreaker is not to shame or embarrass anyone. It is simply to get a picture of what the first hour or so of our day looks like. Make this fun. Are there any unique or quirky things group members do? The way we choose to begin our day and what we choose to think about can have a great impact on our focus for the rest of the day.

STUDY:

READ Mark 1:14-15 Q - What does Jesus teach us about the Kingdom in this passage?

LEADER NOTE: In this passage, Jesus begins to preach the Good News. The Kingdom is beginning. This is the place where Jesus lived every day he walked the earth, in the unshakeable Kingdom of God. Jesus’ preaching can be summarized in this proclamation that the Kingdom of God had come. The Kingdom of God is not tied to a physical location. It is all

about Jesus, our King, and His lordship in our lives. Note the response Jesus calls us to – repent (turn from our sins and yield to God) and believe (put our faith in Jesus).

READ Mark 1:32-39 Q – In what areas of your life do you have trouble saying no?

LEADER NOTE: A key verse in this passage is 38 – “But Jesus replied, ‘We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them too. That is why I have come.’” Everybody wants to get to Jesus and yet he’s able to say no. Jesus says “no” to something good (staying on and healing more people at Simon and Andrew’s home (vv. 29-34) in order to say “yes” to God’s best (continuing His mission of preaching the arrival of God’s Kingdom). Our world offers us a huge array of subjects and priorities to occupy our energy and focus. Like Jesus, we can be led by the Father to say “no” to distractions and lesser priorities in order to say “yes” to God’s best.

LIVING IT OUT:

One of the interesting things about the life of Jesus is that he says no to things that other religious teachers would have said yes to and he says yes to things that other religious teachers would have said no to. This is because he was rooted in a different kingdom.

Spend some time thinking about this fall season leading up to Christmas. Are there things you should say no to? Can you think of one thing (not two, not ten) that could be your focus? In other words, what is one area where you’d like to seek the Kingdom this fall?

LEADER NOTE:

To help your group members think about practical areas they might focus on this fall, here is a list. Read this list to the group. If you are willing, start the conversation by sharing an area or two where you are sensing God nudging you focus on this fall.

(examples, strengthen marriage, strengthen relationship with friend or child, personal growth, physical health, service in a ministry etc.)

RESOURCES TO CONSIDER:

The Marriage Course: www.creeksidechurch.ca/alpha

Alpha: A series of questions exploring the Christian faith www.creeksidechurch.ca/alpha

Sacred Rhythms: Spiritual Practices that Nourish Your Soul and Transform Your Life. Ruth Haley Barton. <https://www.amazon.ca/Sacred-Rhythms-Arranging-Spiritual-Transformation/dp/0830833331>

LIVING IT OUT - continued

We want to be like Jesus. Rooted in the unshakeable Kingdom of God. This is a place where we will experience peace of mind. A great way to do this is to establish a morning routine where we begin the day by setting our minds on the Kingdom of God.

LEADER NOTE: Ask someone in your group to read Colossians 3:1-4 out loud to the group. What might it look like to “set your minds on things above ...” as a first priority in the morning?

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your **minds** on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:1-4

Q - How might you change what your morning routine looks like? (ex - first thoughts, daily habits, priorities)

MY DAILY PRAYER

In your group right now begin to write a prayer that you’ll read every morning first thing that reminds you to “set your mind on things above”, particularly, the one way you are going to be seeking the Kingdom this fall.

Here an example of what you might write:

Dear Father – Thank You that I am a loved son/daughter of God and I live in your unshakeable kingdom. Today I will not be afraid. I will not worry. I will not live in shame because I know You love me and care for me. Today I want to seek the kingdom by _____).

MY DAILY PRAYER:

PRAYER PARTNERS

LEADER NOTE:

As a practical way to encourage your group members to focus on God's Kingdom priorities this fall, invite your group members to partner together and to check in with each other sometime this week to pray for each other. If you have a mixed group, encourage men to connect with men, women with women. Ask pairs to plan who will reach out to connect and when. Prayer partners can ask, "How are things going with your focus?" "How can I pray for you today?"