



Objectives

- Ask about quiet times and hold each other accountable to doing them.
- If your group is exploring the addendum from “two. be still” ask them about their times in contemplative prayer and/or devotional reading.
- Ask each person to explain a time where they have set goals and achieved them. What did the process look like? What drove them to set that particular goal?
- What do you believe to be your purpose in this life?

Last year my Brother in law challenged me to enter a 10 K Mud run obstacle course at Camp Pendleton Marine base. Being rather competitive I immediately accepted the challenge. The thing is I really didn't think about what it would take to train for the event.

I became rather disciplined in my training and somewhat torturous of myself, all that kept me going was the thought of finishing that race well and not being embarrassed.

When I think about it if my brother-in-law had challenged me to start running I would have laughed knowing that it simply wouldn't happen. I'm the type of person who needs to be able to see what it is that I'm striving for. Once I have that, I will train accordingly.

As followers of Jesus what is worthy and valuable as our purpose? One of the most common things that I hear Christians say and, to be honest, have said myself is, “I'm just not sure what God has for me”.

When these words come from my lips it's always when I've lost sight of the big picture of life, the big purpose, one of the main reasons for which I was created. This seems to be a mystery to us at times and for some it plagues them to the end of their days and renders them somewhat impotent.

On the flip side there are those who strive hard in life to achieve certain goals like a meaningless “To-Do



think

“The essential thing ‘in heaven and earth’ is. . . that there should be long obedience in the same direction; there thereby results, and has always resulted in the long run, something that has made life worth living.”

Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil

List” with the objective of completing the list purely to achieve the goal. Unfortunately, they are often no better off than the ones who are wandering aimlessly. One is searching for the means to get to an end and the other is servicing the means to get to the end. Either way, defining the end is imperative and the journey is what counts.

We hear Paul saying: *“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” Php 3:14*

We know a lot of Paul from the scriptures but what was his goal and is his purpose relevant to us today? I was driven to finish that 10K and not be embarrassed crossing the line. What was Paul driven to accomplish?

Here it is!

***Col 1:28-29 - “We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.
To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.”***

Questions to initiate discussion.

- **PROCLAIMING, ADMONISHING, TEACHING WITH WISDOM, and PRESENTING PERFECT WITH ALL HIS ENERGY--** how are these words and phrases manifest through us as followers of Christ? Discuss everyone’s successes, failures and solutions.
- **Are these some, if not all, the goals we labor toward? If so, how do we go about doing them in our every day living?**
- **What do our lives look like when God’s power is working within us? How does it feel like to have all of God’s power working within us?**

Any one of us can claim this purpose statement as our own LIFE FILTER. We could follow it through to the end of our days and know that our lives have been purposefully striving toward the heart of God. It’s important to note that Paul wasn’t aimlessly swinging

punches at ghosts in trying to achieve this goal, he was being intentional and as we know, landed most of the punches that he threw.

1 Corinthians 9:26—*“Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air....”*

He has an end that he’s called to achieve and everything that he does is run through that filter. **Once we live our lives this way (along with assistance from the Holy Spirit) the actions we take will be more in alignment with Jesus’ values and character.**

- **Luke 9:62—***“Jesus replied, No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”*
- **Mt 11:12—***“...the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.”*

Leader: consider exploring “More on Goals & Purposes” as an additional exercise for your group.

Conclusion

Have your people pray and answer the following question over the next week:

“What are the non-negotiables for your life?”

The reason we are asking the question is that we are about to develop a “Life Filter” statement in “four. Life filter,” that is defined by our non-negotiables.

Some non-negotiables could be spending time with the Lord, my time with my family/friends, purity issues, Bible reading, etc.

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society, by Eugene H. Peterson

More on Goals & Purposes:

Assign each member of your group read the following Scripture verses on goals and purposes. Give them 2-5 minutes to challenge each of them to meditate on their assigned verse. Have them share openly with the group and encourage everyone to share their thoughts.

- Proverbs 16:3
- Jeremiah 29:11
- 2 Corinthians 5:9
- 1 Corinthians 9:24
- 2 Timothy 2:15

**Discipler:
Read the next
session titled,
“Life Filter”**

More On Spiritual Goals:

In this section, ask your group the following question:

“How are we as followers of Jesus to strive for our spiritual goals?”

Have your group open their Bibles and look up and discuss the following Scripture verses:

- Luke 13:24
- 1 Corinthians 9:25
- Colossians 1:29
- Hebrews 12:1
- 2 Timothy 4:7

After discussing these scripture verses ask:

“How do these Scripture verses in sum speak to the way our lives are to be lived as followers of Jesus?”

The Life of a Disciple

Leader: Read these quotes to your group. Christian author, Dietrich Bonhoeffer in The Cost of Discipleship is quoted as saying:

“...when Peter called to walk on the rolling sea, he had to get up and risk his life. Only one thing was required in each case-- to rely on Christ's word, and to cling to it as offering greater security than all the securities of the world.”

Christian philosopher and author, Dallas Willard in The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God, is quoted as saying **(this quote is available for group distribution on page 3.6):**

“And as a disciple of Jesus I am with Him, by choice and by grace, learning from Him how to live in the kingdom of God. This is the crucial idea. That means, we recall, how to live within the range of

God's effective will, His life flowing through mine. Another important way of putting this is to say that I am learning from Jesus to live my life as He would live my life if He were I. I am not necessarily learning to do everything He did, but I am learning how to do everything I do in the manner that He did all that He did."

- What do you believe both authors are trying to communicate?
- How do you relate to what Bonhoeffer and Willard have said?
- Are you living the life that they are describing in the quotes? Why or why not?
- Scripture to read, reflect and/or memorize:
 - Matthew 16:24
 - Galatians 2:20
 - Philippians 1:21

Addendum Challenge

Have your group members pick any of the verses throughout "three. addendum" to memorize before the next meeting.

At your next meeting, have them recite the verse they memorized and explain why they chose it.

Invite each of your group members to ask questions about their scripture selection.



memorize



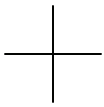
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